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Shutterstock.com (glitter); Whitney Curtis/AP Images for Scholastic, Inc. (Jordan Reeves)

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Nothing Can Stop Her

Jordan Reeves was born with a disability. But she says her difference doesn't hold her back—it makes her amazing!

FEBRUARY 4, 2019 ([HTTPS://SN4.SCHOLASTIC.COM/ISSUES/2018-19/020419.HTML](https://sn4.scholastic.com/issues/2018-19/020419.html))

By Tricia Culligan

When Jordan Reeves was 8 years old, she couldn't wait to start a new dance class. But as she was warming up, she noticed that some of the kids were staring at her. Was her leotard on backward? Had she spilled something on herself? Nope. The kids were looking at her left arm. It stops above the elbow.

"I've had to deal with people staring at me my whole life," Jordan, now 13, explains.

Although Jordan sometimes feels uncomfortable when people stare, she's proud to be different. And she's using her difference to inspire other kids with disabilities.

"You can do cool things—just give it a try," Jordan says. "You might have to do it differently than other people, but it's worth trying."

Tackling Challenges

Each year, about 2,000 babies in the United States are born with limb differences, like Jordan was. That means they are missing all or part of an arm or a leg. Doctors aren't sure why this happens.

With only one hand, Jordan can have a tough time doing certain activities, such as tying her shoes. She sometimes uses a **prosthetic** arm to help her do things like ride her bike.

What Jordan Wants You to Know

Not sure how to act around someone who's different from you? Here are Jordan's tips.

- **Talk to me, not about me.** It's OK to ask me questions about my disability. But please say hi and introduce yourself to me first.

- **Stop staring.** Imagine if someone were looking at you and whispering. It's not fun.

- **Don't make a big deal about people who look different.**

That's embarrassing. We're not aliens from another planet. We're just like you!



Glitter Girl

Growing up, Jordan attended camps for kids with limb differences. Then, three years ago, she was invited to a special workshop. She was challenged to design a new prosthetic arm—one that would turn her disability into a “superpower.”

Jordan teamed up with designers to create an arm that shoots glitter. They used a 3-D printer to create the prosthetic arm. Instead of paper, the 3-D printer used plastic to create

an arm shaped like a unicorn's horn. Jordan called her invention Project Unicorn.

“It was a really cool experience to show that you can build onto your difference to make it awesome,” says Jordan. “Not that it wasn’t already awesome!”

Born Just Right

Jordan’s mom shared the story of Project Unicorn online, and it quickly spread on social media. Jordan was already a **mentor** to other kids with disabilities. Now she had a bigger audience and could share her message with more people.

In 2017, Jordan and her mom formed an organization called Born Just Right to help other kids with limb differences. They’re making it possible for kids from across the U.S. to create their own limbs, like Jordan did.

“We want to show kids that anything is possible,” Jordan says.

Sure, people still sometimes stare. But Jordan uses those moments to educate others. And she has a message for kids who feel different.

“Your differences are amazing,” Jordan says. “You never know what amazing things you can do with them.”

CREATING PROJECT UNICORN

- 1 Jordan sketched her idea for a glitter-shooting arm.
- 2 A designer helped Jordan take measurements.
- 3 Jordan designed her new limb on a computer, like this one.



Courtesy of Sarah O'Rourke/Autodesk

Continue the Learning Journey

- Watch the video "What's Good, Jordan Reeves?" below. When you're done, imagine that you have the opportunity to interview Jordan. What would you ask her? Write down 5-10 interview questions. Be sure to include questions about Jordan's activism!
- Think Jordan's 3-D printed arm is awesome? We do too! To see 3-D printing in action, watch the below video "Dream It, Print It". In your notebook, sketch out a design of what you would make on a 3-D printer.

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Teaching Resources

VIDEOS (2)



What's Good, Jordan Reeves?

SOCIAL STUDIES

Watch a video interview of youth advocate Jordan Reeves from Born Just Right.



Dream It, Print It

SCIENCE

Watch a video to learn more about 3-D printers.

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