



TM

PHOTOS SPEAK M1



Photos positively representing Samantha Rowlands

IMAGINE



HELP FROM THE ANGELS

... yourself as an angel. Your wings lift you up. You can fly to or from anything. You radiate beauty, are full of joy, and can help other people. Samantha Rowlands wished to be an angel. She learned about angels while learning to read. Reading was something no one ever thought she would be able to do. Samantha surprised everyone with her self-control, courage, and grit.

Samantha Marie Rowlands was born mentally challenged. Her life was difficult. Her parents were very supportive of her. But, other people were not as encouraging or accepting. Samantha was teased and felt very lonely. Though Samantha believed in herself, others did not. "People tell me I cannot, some say do not, some say, just give up. I reply: I will not!"

When Samantha was 5 years old, her grit and perseverance made her determined to learn to read just like everyone else in her class. Her doctors tried to make it clear to her parents that Samantha would never be able to learn to read at the same rate of other kids. Samantha would not hear it. Her wisdom and belief in herself led her to ask her parents to hire a tutor. Samantha understood self-control at that early age. She knew she had to work hard and be disciplined to use the "muscles" she needed to learn how to read.

At first, Samantha's tutor, Teresa, was a little afraid working with a child with disabilities. She feared she would not be able to help her. But after a few weeks, Teresa saw progress. She also saw Samantha get frustrated when she struggled. But, Samantha continued to show self-control and never gave up. In addition, Teresa noticed that Samantha was very interested in a picture of a beautiful angel. Samantha became almost more interested in the picture than in learning to read. Teresa asked Samantha's parents if they noticed how well she was doing and her fascination with

the angel picture. They explained, "Samantha wished she could have wings just like the angel. She wants wings to carry her spirit and hoped others would look at her as if she were beautiful."

Teresa knew she had to include books with angels into the tutoring sessions as often as she could. Samantha responded well, and Teresa saw that her reading became more natural – just as if an angel was helping her. Teresa told Samantha this, and she "giggled and told me she did have a little angel helping her." Samantha pointed to Teresa.

Samantha went on to be at the top of her class and read two books a month. The doctors are still shocked when they see what Samantha accomplished. But Samantha, who wishes to help other people learn to read, knew that the character traits of self-control, grit, and courage were what she needed to defy the odds. How can you use self-control to accomplish something difficult and help write your own best TrueSuccess lifestory?

QUESTIONS LEAD TO UNDERSTANDING M2/5

1. How did Samantha show self-control in overcoming her disability?

2. Define other behavior skills Samantha used to learn to read and how she used them?

3. What can you learn from Samantha's lifestory? How can you use self-control in your life to overcome difficult obstacles?

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