The Difference Between Tyler and Everyone Else

There's something different about Tyler. He's a lot like many other people. Still, there's a huge difference between Tyler and everyone else.

Tyler is twelve years old, 4'11" tall, and weighs 90 pounds. He has hazel eyes and dark hair like his father, skin color like his grandmother, and a smile that is all his own. Tyler's height, weight, eye color, skin color, and the shape of his nose and mouth are a few of Tyler's *physical characteristics.*

Tyler is usually happy, and often determined, loving and nice to others. He works hard at school. Being happy, determined, loving, nice, and hard working are parts of Tyler's *personality.*

Tyler can play the piano and write his own songs, beat just about anyone at Monopoly®, and carve animals from wood. Music, Monopoly, and woodworking are just a few of Tyler's many *talents.*

Tyler has *personal preferences*, things that he likes and things that he doesn't. He likes soda, pizza, and video games. Tyler does not like asparagus, clearing the table, or doing homework.

Tyler lives in on a farm in Wisconsin with his parents and three brothers. He goes many places and does many things. Tyler has been to Disney World. Where Tyler lives, where he goes, and what he does are his *experiences.*

Tyler is diagnosed with autism. To Tyler, the diagnosis of autism means that he needs more help and practice than his brothers to stay organized, and to make friends at school.

Tyler has physical characteristics, personality traits, talents, personal preferences, experiences, a family, friends, and autism.   But, there is something that makes him different from everyone else. In the United States, there are about 109,025 people named *Tyler,* so that's not it.

There are millions of people with….
- brown hair,
- hazel eyes, or
- nice smiles.

That's like Tyler except that…it isn't. None of them look like Tyler.

There are millions of people who are…
- happy,
- determined,
- loving,
- nice, or
- hard working.

That's like Tyler except that…it isn't. None of them are like Tyler, or have Tyler's voice.

There are thousands of people who…
- can play the piano,
- win at Monopoly, or
- work with wood.

That's like Tyler except that…it isn't. Tyler's wood carvings are definitely one-of-a-kind.

There are millions of people who like…

- soda,

- pizza, or

- video games.

That's like Tyler except that…it isn't. They may not like Tyler's favorite soda, pizza toppings, or video games.

There are many people who don't like…

- asparagus,

- clearing the table, or

- doing homework.

That's like Tyler except that… it isn't. If each of those people were asked what they don't like, not one of them would list asparagus, clearing the table, *and* doing homework. That's Tyler's list of dislikes.

There are about…

- 20,000,000 to 50,000,000 million people who visit Disney World each year, and about

- 5,726,398 who live in Wisconsin, and about

- 2 million farms in the United States.

That's like Tyler, except that… it isn't. Tyler's experience living in Wisconsin on a farm, or visiting Disney World is not exactly like anyone else's experience doing those same things.

Many people have a diagnosis, and many have lifelong disorders like autism. In the United States, there are about 871,590 children diagnosed with autism. That's like Tyler except that… it isn't. No one will experience autism exactly like Tyler.

Tyler is a lot like everyone else except that he isn't. Whether looking at his physical characteristics, his personality, his experiences, his autism, or anything else, it's always the same thing that makes Tyler different. He's a *person*, and there's only one of each.

This is, of course, true for everybody. What really makes Tyler different from everyone else is the same thing that makes everyone different from Tyler. Each one is a person. Like… like Tyler.