

Riding the Ups and Downs

Dame Tanni Grey Thompson - Going for Gold

Life is full of ups and downs, sometimes we find things easy, sometimes we don't. Sometimes we feel great, sometimes we don't. This is true for all of us - we call these ups and downs a state of flux; always changing, and this is a normal part of life.

Show a picture of Tanni Grey Thompson – who recognises this woman? Share thoughts.



Tanni was born with spina bifida. By the time she turned seven, she was paralysed and needed to use a wheelchair.

Tanni's parents' were determined that Tanni should have the same opportunities as other people, to have a good education, to be fit and active and to enjoy sports. She was raised to just get on with things, focusing on what she could do and to figure out how to manage the things that she found tricky.

What does this tell us about her character?

What qualities can we identify about her?

Over her career, Tanni won a total of 16 Paralympic medals, including 11 golds, held over 30 world records and won the London Marathon six times between 1992 and 2002.

(Can we add any further qualities to our list?)



Watch

Day of Small Things: Tanni Grey-Thompson On Disability Stereotypes (03:29 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOibo73hy4>

Tanni talks about people describing her as brave which she isn't too keen on. What qualities are revealed from this interview?

Tanni talks about the difficulties that some people (not in wheelchairs) face just getting up and leaving the house in the morning. What sorts of difficulties might she be referring to? Why might some people in wheelchairs find things difficult when Tanni doesn't seem to? (draw out the theme of range, different people have different needs, some may be physical, some may be mental).

Tanni has faced many ups and downs in life, as we all do in different ways. How have Tanni's personal qualities helped her to manage these ups and downs, what helped her to smooth the path?

Why do you think Tanni is a good role model?

Think of a quality that you really admire in a person. Consider how you can further develop that quality in your own life.