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## Challenging the disability misconceptions

By Amanda Nelson

I vaguely remember receiving my first large print book in school. I felt different, my peers did not understand why I was getting large print and neither did I. I remember the first magnifier I received. My peers teased me and judged me about the equipment I was using. Flash-forward to college, it was a beautiful day as I was sitting on a bench waiting for the bus, when someone came up and asked if I needed help-all because I was using my white cane. Now let's take a look at this past week. It has been filled with lots of bumps; bumps of having people judge me all because of my disability.

Ever since I heard the words, "You have low vision and that means that you are visually impaired, because of your Nystagmus," I have felt judged about what I can and can not do.

This has made me go back and think about society as a whole. Ever since I've been labeled, "Someone with a visual impairment," I have felt judged by teachers, doctors, my family, and employers, and I felt misunderstood too.

Ever since I was little, I was either told, you're visually impaired enough or you're not visually impaired enough. I have also been questioned by people who do not understand my visual impairment. When I was little my mother had to fight for my rights to get my work in large print because, at first, the doctors and teachers thought I would be able to achieve regular classroom work without any problems, however after I started struggling with accessing regular print, she took me to many specialists who stated I needed large print. I was tested and assessed by how well I could see and achieve daily tasks, and it was decided that I was visually impaired.

From that time, I have been judged.