

# Unit 11 - They Can Never Stop Me

achievement  
approximate

astound  
challenge

confident  
decline

detect  
impressive

independent  
reliable

## **11A Introduction**

This song tells the true story of an extraordinary boy named Ben Underwood. Despite being blind, Ben invented an incredible way of moving through the world.

## **11B Song Lyrics**

*Listen. This is the real life story of Ben Underwood, one of the most amazing people you'll ever know. Guaranteed.*

Little Ben was born in California,  
A little baby but he's looking quite normal.  
So his mom was so surprised  
To find he had cancer in his eyes.  
The doctors said, "We can save his eyes,  
But if the cancer spreads, your boy could die."  
His mom thought for a while, then she **declined**,  
She said, "No, I don't care if my boy's blind."  
So the doctors removed his eyes,  
Now he couldn't see, but they had saved his life.  
So yeah, you think your life is hard?  
Try growing up with no sight at all.  
Life **challenged** Ben, it made him fight,  
So Ben learned to see without the light.  
Yes, this will shock and **astound** you,  
Ben learned to see using sound, dude.  
He started making clicks, and it's strange,  
When he walked around, yeah the sound would change.  
He could hear a "click" sound bounce around,  
You know, bounce off a wall or off the ground.  
So he could discover and **detect**



Cars and walls, and he wouldn't forget.  
 No one told him, "You can't; just quit it,"  
 So Ben just did it!

*Had the chips stacked against him, but he rose up!  
 Had the chips stacked against him, but he rose up!  
 Had the chips stacked against him, but he rose up!  
 But he rose up, but he rose up!*

Listen up, man, can you believe it?  
 This kid Ben rocking this amazing **achievement**?  
 Something he did and it was never easy,  
 But he did it with a smile like it was breezy.  
 And he didn't feel sad for himself or bad for himself,  
 He learned to rap for himself.  
 You won't believe it, but hold up, wait,  
 He learned to play b-ball and rollerblade.  
 'Cause with his clicks he could **approximate**,  
 Figure out roughly where the basket lay.  
 I mean, he wasn't starring in the NBA,  
 But his jump shot was pretty good—ha ha.  
 He invented a **reliable** way,  
 Something he could depend on for like finding his way.  
 He was a fighter, like Cassius Clay or Rocky,  
 You say, "You can't"; he says, "Watch me!"

Hook

'Cause he was **confident**, believed in himself,  
 He was **independent**, not needing your help.  
 To see this kid surfing, it's so **impressive**,  
 So amazing, I mean it will leave you breathless.  
 Ben saw like a dolphin does,  
 With his clicks bouncing off the walls and stuff.  
 No one told him, "You can't; just quit it,"  
 So Ben just did it!

## **11C Words Defined**

### **achievement**

**(noun)** Something done successfully; something gained by working or trying hard. *Robby's biggest **achievement** was winning the spelling bee.*

Other forms: *With enough hard work, you can **achieve** (verb) anything.*

## The Word Up Project: Level Indigo

### approximate

**(adj)** Not exactly, but close enough to be reasonably correct. *The police asked Jonathan if he could tell them the **approximate** time that he had last seen his cat, Mr. Pickles.*

**(verb)** To take an educated guess about. *I couldn't be sure, but I **approximated** that it would take us four hours to drive from Boston to New York City.*

### astound

**(verb)** To fill with surprise and wonder; to amaze. *Carla was **astounded** to learn that the tree on her street was 120 years old.*

### challenge

**(noun)** A difficult job or task. *It was a real **challenge** for Opie to not eat all the cookies in the jar—they were so delicious!*

**(verb)** To invite others to take part in a contest. *“You dare to spit on my shoe?” the prince yelled. “I **challenge** you to a duel!”*

Other forms: *That last level of the video game was definitely the most **challenging** (adj).*



challenge

### confident

**(adj)** 1. Certain; sure. *Are you **confident** that one plus one is two?* 2. Sure of oneself. *Kelly is so **confident** that people often think she is three years older than she really is.*

Other forms: *Leroy has so much **confidence** (noun) when talking to people; he gets along well with both kids and adults.*

### decline

**(verb)** To refuse to accept; to say “no” to. *Nicole was offered a spot on the basketball team, but she **declined** because she'd rather learn how to break-dance.*

### detect

**(verb)** To find or discover something; notice. *Scientists recently **detected** a powerful earthquake underground.*

Other forms: *Smoke **detectors** (noun) figure out if there is smoke in your house and then set voff an alarm.*

### impressive

**(adj)** Having a strong effect, commanding attention. *The young man, easily one of the most **impressive** high school basketball players, soared through the air toward the basket.*

Other forms: *My sister thought you were a great dancer, but she's easily **impressed** (verb).*



impressive

### independent

**(adj)** 1. Not under the power or influence of something else. *Pascal doesn't just follow rules all the time; he's an **independent** thinker.* 2. Able to live or do something alone, without help. *I can't wait till I get my driver's license; I will be so much more **independent**.*

Other forms: *America won its **independence** (noun) from England in the Revolutionary War.*

**reliable**

**(adj)** Deserving trust, dependable. When Annuska told us that she had been born on the moon, I realized she might not be the most **reliable** storyteller.

Other forms: If you ever need a friend, you can **rely** (verb) on me.

**11D Synonyms**

Circle the word on the right that matches the meaning of the word or phrase on the left.

- |                                |           |             |             |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. something done successfully | challenge | confidence  | achievement |
| 2. to amaze                    | astound   | detect      | challenge   |
| 3. trustworthy                 | reliable  | independent | impressive  |
| 4. to take an educated guess   | decline   | approximate | rely        |
| 5. commanding attention        | confident | impressive  | challenging |

**11E Fill in the Blank**

Write the word in the blank so that the sentence makes sense.

1. I had to \_\_\_\_\_ Laura's invitation to the dance because I wanted to go with someone else.

- detect                      decline                      astound**

2. The policeman \_\_\_\_\_ a strange odor in the room where the crime took place.

- approximated              challenged              detected**

3. When it comes to music and fashion, Darci is pretty \_\_\_\_\_: She dresses in her own style and listens to music we've never heard of.

- independent              reliable                      impressive**

4. Dad put me in charge because he was \_\_\_\_\_ that the other kids would listen to me.

- impressive              confident                      independent**

5. Marvin \_\_\_\_\_ Stacy to a bean-eating contest; I'm not sure I want to be in the room when that happens!

- detected                      declined                      challenged**

### **11F Connections**

Each sentence has a strong connection with one of the words from the unit. Write the correct word on the line below.

1. Listening to Ivan's tone of voice, I thought I heard a little sarcasm.

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2. You can always count on Billie to show up for school on time.

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3. When the waitress offered me broccoli, I refused as politely as I could.

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4. Marisa was certain she was going to get an A on the test.

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5. Now that my brother is 18, my parents let him do whatever he wants to do.

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### **11G Applying Meanings**

Circle the letter that makes sense or answers the question.

1. Which of these might be a **challenge** to someone who is short?

- (A) a stepladder
- (B) someone who is tall
- (C) dunking a basketball
- (D) a dwarf

2. Which of these things is usually **approximate**?

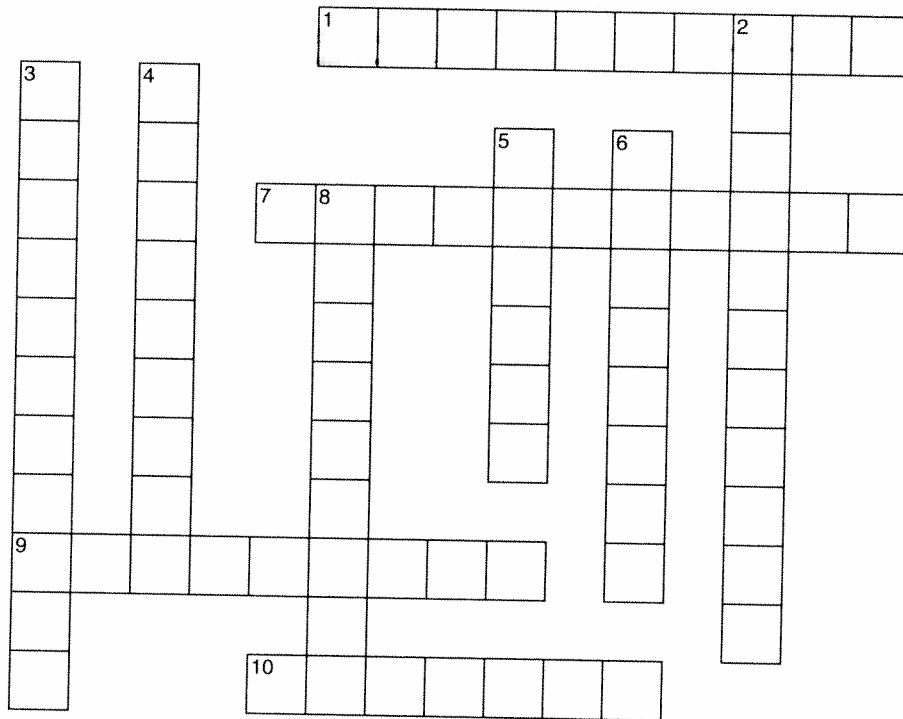
- (A) weather forecasts
- (B) football scores
- (C) yardsticks
- (D) scissors

3. Who or what is an important **achievement** in American history?

- (A) Christmas
- (B) landing a man on the moon
- (C) taxes
- (D) Abraham Lincoln

### **Bonus: Crossword Puzzle**

Solve this crossword puzzle. Note: Some answers may be different forms of the vocab words from this unit.



#### **ACROSS**

- 1 Bernard's shoe-tying skills are \_\_\_\_\_; he can tie bows faster than anyone else I know.
- 7 So far, the \_\_\_\_\_ of which I'm most proud is my ability to solve a Rubik's Cube.
- 9 I was \_\_\_\_\_ when Dorothy told me she was born a monkey.
- 10 I'll have to \_\_\_\_\_ your invitation to the movies tonight; I just have too much homework to do.

#### **DOWN**

- 2 Ricardo is an \_\_\_\_\_ thinker; he always surprises me with his ideas.
- 3 I was surrounded by about 50 Martians, but that's just an \_\_\_\_\_ number.
- 4 The boxer was so \_\_\_\_\_ he would win the fight that he didn't even bother to train.
- 5 To find or discover something.
- 6 Dependable.
- 8 Nell wasn't sure if she could climb the rope, but she was willing to take the \_\_\_\_\_.