



Dear Kindergarten friends and parents,

My name is Owen Wigger. I am 6 years old and I will be in your class this year. I am very excited to be part of Mrs. Yonker's class with all of you!

I love pickles, cool ranch Doritos, riding my bike and scooter, going on the swings, jumping on my trampoline and especially my Pom poms. I am giving each of you your own set of Pom poms so that we can play with them together sometime.

I am similar to my classmates in a lot of ways. I like to learn, have fun, dance and go to chapel. I am a little different than my classmates in a couple ways. I was born with something called Down syndrome. Sometimes Down syndrome means it takes me a little longer to learn things that might come easily to other kids in my class. When I was three I was diagnosed with something called autism. Autism means that I don't use words to communicate, I use an iPad and American Sign Language. You can tell a lot about how I am feeling by the look on my face, just like all my friends. Autism also makes me want to move my body a lot of the time that I am at school. Moving my body helps me to learn better sometimes. You will also hear me make some grunting or yelling sounds sometimes. This happens sometimes when I am feeling a lot of emotions. Either happy or sad or frustrated. Just like how you show your emotions when you feel those things. It's ok if this scares you or surprises you. And it's ok to ask the teacher why I am making those sounds.

I understand everything you say to me, even if I don't reply with my words.

I am really good at some things too. I taught myself how to ride a scooter, a bike and how to jump on my trampoline. This past summer I learned how to swim all by myself! I am good at being a good friend, even if I don't respond sometimes when someone speaks to me. I am working hard on that skill. I love to praise God and I love watch and join in while other people are playing and having fun.

My parents want you and your parents to know that we love to answer any questions you have about me or Down syndrome or Autism. You can look up my moms contact info in the school directory. I am so excited that we go to a school where we are taught that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made.

I can't wait for a great year together in Kindergarten!

In Christ,
Owen Wigger