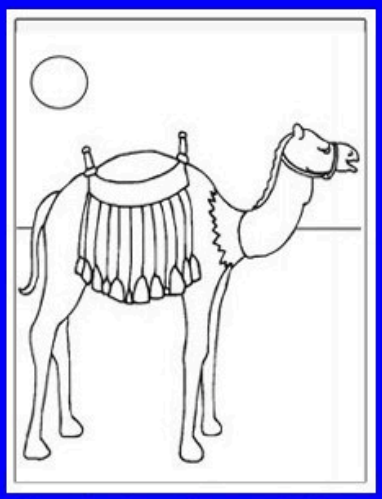
Just for Kids!



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Endurance in History

A triathlon is a race in which the competitors swim, cycle and run. There is a father-son triathlon team that is different than any other triathlon competitor. This team is made up of Dick Hoyt and his son, Rick Hoyt. Rick suffers from cerebral palsy -a condition involving permanent tightening of the muscles caused by damage to the brain at the time of birth. Rick was disabled at birth by a loss of oxygen to his brain because his umbilical cord was wrapped around his neck.

When Rick was born in 1962, doctors told his parents that they had no hope for Rick. But Dick and his wife, Judy, did not give up. The couple brought their son back home, determined to raise him as normally as possible.

Did you spot the "I Will"? Even though the professionals had given up on Rick, his parents determined to do their best to help their son.

When Rick was ten years old, the couple managed to raise $5,000 to get a special interactive computer built that allows him to write out his thoughts using slight head movements making it possible for him to communicate with people.

Did you spot the "I Will"? The Hoyts persisted until they found a company willing to build a machine to help Rick communicate

In 1977, Dick Hoyt participated in a 5-mile run. Dick pushed Rick in a wheelchair, and although they finished second to last, Rick told his father that he did not feel handicapped when they were competing. Over the next four years, Team Hoyt competed in other marathons. Then, the father-son team decided it was time to try another competition; a triathlon.
At this point, Dick did not know how to swim. He determined to learn as well as working out 5 hours a day, 5 days a week even though he worked full-time. He wanted to be a good role model for Rick, showing him that when you start something, you stick with it.

Did you spot the "I Will"? Even though it was exhausting, Dick stuck with the plan to prepare for a triathlon.

Since Rick suffers from cerebral palsy, he does not swim. He does not cycle. He does not run. During triathlons, Dick pushes Rick in a modified wheelchair. While Dick swims, he pulls a small boat as Rick lies in it. When they are cycling, Rick sits in a seat attached to the front of the bike. Some of their amazing achievements are: 65 Marathons, 25 Boston Marathons; 20 Duathlons; and 216 Triathlons, 6 Ironman distances. The Hoyts serve as modern-day heroes. Their endurance has helped to improve public opinion and attitudes toward mentally and physically challenged people.

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Concept by Character First