

IDENTIFYING THE WEALTH IN PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS THROUGH
LITERARY ARTISTRY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROAD AND THE ORAL
NARRATIVE MOTIF OF THE PRINCESS WHO COULD NOT SMILE.

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This paper defines what makes Literature; oral and written. After observing that Literature is a mirror reflection of what happens in society, we argue that it should also be a guide as to how society was, is and should be. The portrait of people with special needs in Literature therefore, is significant to how this category of people was viewed, is viewed and should be viewed. With reference to The Road, a play by Wole Soyinka and variants of the narrative *The princess who could not smile*, the paper argues that the literary artist has a very unique portrait of persons with special needs. Through scrutiny of literary creations we observe that people with special needs have a reservoir of knowledge that can salvage society from various trials and tribulations. The analysis warns us that we often ignore the potentials hidden in these persons and hence society continues to grapple with problems that could have been addresses if these potentials were tapped. Society is therefore challenged to decipher these potentials and propagate them to all and sundry so that this often ignored wealth is utilized to the wellbeing of the society at large.