

# Ask®

## Get Your Game On!

This issue of ASK magazine celebrates the world of competitive sports. In addition to a strong body and mindset, athletes also rely on highly developed equipment and a fair playing field. Students will learn that many factors contribute to the success of a champion.

### CONVERSATION QUESTION

What makes a great athlete?

### TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn that genetic design and serious training contribute to the success of an athlete.
- Students will learn how innovations in sports equipment need to be evaluated for fairness in competition.
- Students will learn about the historic games that were played during the first Olympics.
- Students will compare and contrast slow twitch and fast twitch muscles.
- Students will collect and analyze data from a nonfiction text.
- Students will collect evidence from the text and provide accurate statements.
- Students will write a descriptive paragraph using the second person perspective.
- Students will create a timeline depicting inventions that influenced competitive sports.
- Students will research the process by which a new sport is accepted into the Olympic Games.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core STEAM skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

### SELECTIONS

- **Becoming a Champion**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~500L
- **No Fair!**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~900L
- **The First Olympics**  
Expository Nonfiction, ~700L

# Ask® Teacher Guide: February 2021

## Becoming a Champion

pp. 6–11, Expository Nonfiction

On your mark, get set...GO! This article examines the making of a champion from body type to mindset. Students will learn that training and practice are just as important as genetics.



## RESOURCES

Compare and Contrast

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn that genetic design and serious training contribute to the success of an athlete.
- Students will compare and contrast slow twitch and fast twitch muscles.
- Students will write a descriptive paragraph using the second person perspective.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **propelling** (p. 6) driving or pushing you to move forward
- **agility** (p. 8) the ability to move quickly and easily; nimble
- **endurance** (p. 9) the capacity of something to last or to withstand wear and tear

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** What makes a great athlete?

Pose the question: Are athletes born or made? Allow students to discuss the question in small groups and then present their ideas to the class. Read aloud the sentence on page 7 of the article that jokes, 'Pick your parents wisely'. Ask students to unravel the meaning of that comment as it pertains to athletes.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key vocabulary terms on the board. Have the students use resources to define them and then display the given definitions. Read aloud the title, "Becoming a Champion" and ask the class to predict the content of the article using the three vocabulary words to state their prediction.

## READ & DISCUSS

Reinforce comprehension of the concepts presented in the article by using the following prompts to direct discussion.

1. What factors contribute to someone becoming an excellent athlete?
2. How can you improve muscle strength?
3. Why does endurance training help athletes to go faster for longer periods of time?
4. Explain what it feels like to be 'in the zone'.
5. How is modern technology helping athletes to perform better?

## SKILL FOCUS: Compare and Contrast

**INSTRUCT:** Students will compare and contrast the functioning of slow twitch and fast twitch muscles. Instruct pairs of students to reread the text and to underline information that will be helpful for this purpose. Introduce the graphic organizer, *Which Twitch?* and have the partners record the data on their charts.

**ASSESS:** Review *Which Twitch?* worksheet. Be sure that the students have collected accurate and pertinent information. Evaluate their ability to define each muscle type, as well as to provide correct examples of sports that use each.

## EXTEND

**Language Arts** Reread the first paragraph of the article which begins, "Your toes grip the edge of the pool. Your heart pounds..." Guide students to identify the point of view as second person perspective (uses the pronouns *you* and *your* to address the reader). Have students select an action that they perform and write a paragraph using the second person point of view to convey the experience. Invite students to read their paragraphs aloud, allowing the class to guess the activity that is being described before it is revealed. Discuss how this perspective can make a personal account more relatable to the reader.

## Which Twitch?

**Compare and Contrast:** Refer to the article to locate information that will help you define each muscle type and corresponding sport. Use critical thinking skills to add other activities that belong in each group.

Slow Twitch Muscles	Fast Twitch Muscles
Definition:	Definition:
Sports/Activities:	Sports/Activities:

## No Fair!

pp. 18-23, Expository Nonfiction

Are inventions created to enhance an athlete's performance actually 'fair play'? Students will read about a variety of alterations and sport innovations that spurred ethical debates in the athletic community.



## RESOURCES

Collect and Analyze Data

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how innovations in sports equipment need to be evaluated for fairness in competition.
- Students will collect and analyze data from a nonfiction text.
- Students will create a timeline depicting inventions that influenced competitive sports.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **aluminum** (p. 19) a very light, silvery-gray metal
- **plywood** (p. 20) a strong, thin, wooden board
- **polyurethane** (p. 22) a smooth, water-resistant plastic
- **carbon fiber** (p. 23) a very strong lightweight synthetic fiber

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** What makes a great athlete?

Have students consider a time when they felt that someone had an unfair advantage over them. Invite students to share their experiences. Why is it important to have a level playing field, particularly during competitions?

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and discuss the key terms and definitions. Activate prior knowledge by asking students where they may have heard these words. Display the title of the article, "No Fair!" and tell students that in this text the words will refer to specific materials that sporting equipment is composed of. Encourage students to circle the vocabulary words as they appear in the article and to connect the material with the correct sport.

## READ & DISCUSS

Read the article aloud with the class. Have students reread the article in small groups to answer the questions below. Discuss responses.

1. Why have most kids' teams switched from solid wood bats to hollow aluminum bats?
2. How was Howard Head able to keep perfecting new skis?
3. How did making the face of a tennis racket larger lead to better game play?
4. What inspired the C-shape of prosthetic running blades?
5. Why does cost for specialized equipment need to be considered when judging its fairness in competition?

## SKILL FOCUS: Collect and Analyze

**INSTRUCT:** Direct students to reread the article independently and underline passages that discuss specific innovations in sports equipment. Distribute copies of the *Let's Play* graphic organizer and instruct the students to collect and analyze information related to the influential inventions listed.

**ASSESS:** Circulate and converse with the students as they are working. Collect and review worksheets to evaluate individual abilities to analyze information, and evaluate their response to the question in the **Think Tank**.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies** Have students review the article and highlight all of the dates. Instruct students to arrange the dates of the inventions in chronological order and to create a timeline. They can enhance the timeline by adding pictures, captions and a title.

## Let's Play

**Collect and Analyze:** Refer to the article to obtain the information needed to complete the chart. Use a separate sheet of paper to answer the question in the **Think Tank**.

Sport	Influential Invention	Permitted in competition? (Y/N)
Skating		
Baseball		
Skiing		
Tennis		
Swimming		
Running		

**Think Tank:** Choose one of the inventions from the completed chart. Write a paragraph taking the opposite position on its eligibility in competition. Include reasons and details that support your viewpoint.

## The First Olympics

pp. 24-25, Expository Nonfiction

The tradition of the Olympic Games has endured for over 2,500 years, although the rules and events have certainly changed over time. Informative text and whimsical drawings will teach readers about the games and rules of the past.



## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** What makes a great athlete?

Draw a word web on the board and write this question in the center: *How are rules enforced?* Have students meet in small groups to discuss the question as it pertains to school, driving, public conduct and sports. Allow groups to add their responses to the web. Introduce the title of the article and tell students that during the first Olympics rules were enforced by stick-wielding referees...Ouch!

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key terms and discuss the definitions. Instruct students that they will be creating a word search puzzle using those three words, in addition to another 18 Olympic-related words. Suggest that they highlight topical words as they read for use in the word search. Share the puzzles with another class for use as a pre-reading exercise for this article.

## READ & DISCUSS

Pose the following questions to the students to prompt meaningful discussion following the reading of the article.

1. When and why did the first Olympics take place?
2. What were some of the main differences between the first games and the Olympics of today?
3. What was the sole goal of the competitors in the first games?
4. List the prizes that were awarded at the first Olympics. Compare them with the prizes of today.
5. Why do you think that women were excluded from participating in and watching the first games?

## SKILL FOCUS: Collecting Evidence

**INSTRUCT:** This article presents the reader with an abundance of simply stated information regarding the history of the Olympic Games. Tell students that they are going to look for errors in summary statements and collect evidence that will help them to make the sentence true. They will need to consult the article to gather accurate information. Review the instructions on the graphic organizer, *Winner Takes All*.

**ASSESS:** The objective of this lesson is to help students to practice the ability to discriminate information, as well as to practice the skill of collecting evidence. Create dialogue as students are working on their charts, and then collect organizers to evaluate individual understanding.

## EXTEND

**Sports** As of this writing, the 2020 Summer Olympics have been rescheduled to begin on July 23, 2021 in Tokyo. Several new sports have been added this year (karate, skateboarding, sport & climbing and surfing). Have students research the approval process for adding new events to the Olympic Games.

## RESOURCES

### Collecting Evidence

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the historic games that were played during the first Olympics.
- Students will collect evidence from the text.
- Students will research the process by which a new sport is accepted into the Olympic Games.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **javelin (p. 24)** a light spear thrown in a competitive sport
- **discus (p. 24)** a heavy disc thrown in competition in an attempt to mark a farther distance than the competitor

## Winner Takes All

**Collecting Evidence:** Circle the word that makes the sentence incorrect. Look back at the article to collect detailed evidence that will help to make the sentence true. Write the correct words in the boxes below.

1. The first Olympics took place in Greece to honor Thor, king of the gods.
2. Winners got a crown of holly leaves from the king's temple.
3. Contestants swam in armor at the first games.
4. Javelin is a sport where competitors throw a disc as far as they can.
5. There was also poetry reading and a drumming competition in the early games.
6. Any woman caught watching the games would be forced to compete.
7. As many as 20 to 30 horses would run in a race.
8. Today, male and female athletes from all over the world compete every 2 years in the modern Olympic Games.

1.	5.
2.	6.
3.	7.
4.	8.