

Amazing Young Sports People Mandy Loader

Aims

- To make students interested in the book.
- To increase students' awareness of different sports, young sports people and sporting events.
- To allow students to gain some understanding of what disabled people experience.

NB: You may find that many of the activities described below can be exploited better in your students' own language or mother tongue, if you speak it. The mother tongue, if used carefully as a resource, can facilitate your students' progress in English and help them to understand the context of the story, thus preparing them to understand it better when they read it.

Pre-reading Activities

- 1 Tell students the title of the book (*Amazing Young Sports People*) and tell them it is a factbook. Make sure they understand what a 'factbook' consists of. Ask students *What famous young sports people do you know? What sports are they famous for?* Write their suggestions on the board.
- 2 Ask students to look at Illustration 1 (a diagram of the buildings in the first Olympic Games) and at Extract 1, which tells what these buildings are. Working in pairs, students talk about what they have learned from the illustration and the extract and then feedback to the whole class. Ask *What do you know about the Olympic Games today? Is it the same as this?* Teach any relevant vocabulary (e.g. events, stadium, pitch, coach, goalkeeper).
- 3 Working in pairs, ask students to list some of the sports that take place in the Olympic Games. Now ask them to try to think of a new sport for the Games by combining two or more existing sports. They should think about how this new sport is played (e.g. how many players there are in a team). Then they should give the sport a name. For example, a sport combining swimming and basketball could be called Aqua Basket or Water Basketball. Feedback to the whole class and vote for the most popular sport. (NB Students are not allowed to vote for their own sport.)

- 4 Ask students to read Extracts 2 and 3. Now ask them to do a piece of writing in which they imagine that they go to the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games or the X Games. Ask them to explain which one they would choose and why. Then students think of themselves as athletes in one of the games. Which sport would they want to compete in?
- 5 Ask students to read Extract 4 and look at Illustration 2 (blind football). Ask *Is blind football easy to play? What does a blind footballer need to play a game of football?*
Suggested answers: a hard football pitch – not grass – so they can hear the ball, goalkeepers who can see, coaches who can see so they can shout and help the players, fans who are quiet so the players can hear the ball, a small pitch with a wall around it.
- 6 Ask students to look at Illustration 3 (Travis Pastrana doing a trick on his motorbike in the X Games). Students think of a caption for the picture and they then vote for their favourite caption. (NB Students are not allowed to vote for their own caption.)
- 7 Ask students to read Extracts 5 and 6, which are about two young sports people. Students now think of more information about the two girls (e.g. Sonja Henie's favourite food, likes and favourite place). They could also think of favourite books, favourite films, pets, places to go on holiday or numbers of brothers and sisters. Feedback to the whole class.
- 8 Ask students to invent an athlete and to write a profile for them. Share these with the whole class.
- 9 Ask students to read Extracts 7 and 8. Working in pairs, students discuss the similarities and differences between the two girls and their sports (teach similarities and differences, if necessary). They then write two lists, one with the heading 'Similarities' and the other 'Differences'. Feedback to the whole class.
- 10 Ask students to imagine that either Sonja Henie has travelled forward in time, or Ayumi Kawasaki has travelled back in time so that the two girls meet. Using only dialogue, students now do a piece of writing about this meeting. Role play these pieces

of writing with one student being Sonja and the other Ayumi and discuss them afterwards. Ask *Did the two girls like each other? Did they like the other girl's sport?*

Post-reading Activities _____

- 1 Start a discussion with the phrase: *I think the Olympic Games are a good thing because ...*
- 2 Ask students to do a piece of writing starting with the phrase: *The young sports person in this book I most admire is ... because ...* (Teach 'admire', if necessary.)
- 3 Ask students to choose one of the young sports people in the book. Working in pairs, the students take it in turns to answer questions from their partner as if they are that sports person.
- 4 Ask students to choose a different sports person to the one they chose in Activity 3. (They should not choose Sonja Henie.) Now ask them to make notes about what happens to them in the rest of their life. Share these either with the whole class or in groups of students who have chosen the same sports person.

Extract 1 _____

- 1 Runners practised here for the running races.
- 2 The swimming pool was only used for fun. There weren't any swimming races.
- 3 Athletes practised here for the long jump competitions.
- 4 This hotel was for important people.
- 5 Forty thousand people sat in this stadium.
- 6 The horse races were here.

Extract 2 _____

The Paralympic Games are for physically disabled athletes. Paralympic athletes have many different disabilities. Some Paralympic athletes can't walk or run. They play their sport in wheelchairs.

At the Paralympics there are lots of wheelchair sports – for example, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball and wheelchair rugby. The athletes have special wheelchairs. They can go very fast. There are also wheelchair races at the Paralympics. Sometimes athletes go at thirty kilometres an hour.

Extract 3 _____

The X Games are for extreme action sports. Extreme sports are very different from Olympic sports. In the X Games, athletes do special tricks.

In the Summer X Games, athletes do tricks on motorbikes, bikes, skates and skateboards.

In the Winter X Games, athletes do tricks on skis and snowboards and have races on snowbikes.

Extract 4 _____

Blind football is a fast and exciting game.

There are five players on a team.

Each half of the match is twenty minutes long.

The football has got a bell in it – blind football players can't see the ball, but they can hear it!

My notes _____

Extract 5

Name: Sonja Henie

Sport: figure skating

Job: figure skater and actress

Born: 8 April, 1912

Died: 12 October, 1969

Height: 1.60 metres

Nationality: Norwegian

Lived: Oslo, Norway and Los Angeles, USA

Name: Ayumi Kawasaki

Sport: in-line skating

Job: student and professional skater

Born: 27 July, 1984

Height: 1.52 metres

Nationality: Japanese

Lives: Higashi, Japan

Favourite food: fish

Likes: hip-hop and learning English

Favourite city: Los Angeles, California, USA

Extract 6

Sonja Henie started dancing lessons when she was five years old. She loved dancing and wanted to be a dancer. Then, on her sixth birthday she got some ice skates and she started skating. Now she wanted to dance and skate.

Sonja decided to be a figure skater.

Then Sonja saw Anna Pavlova, the famous Russian dancer. Sonja thought Anna's dancing was beautiful. She wanted to copy Anna Pavlova – on ice. She practised hours every day.

Her skating was new, beautiful and interesting. The other skaters wore long skirts and brown boots, but Sonja wore a short skirt and white boots. She was different and everybody loved her skating. Sonja won a gold medal at the next two Winter Olympics.

My notes

Extract 7

In the X Games the in-line skaters skate on a wall. The wall is like a big 'U'. The competitors skate up the wall and fly off the top. Then they do tricks in the air. They must go up very high in the air and their tricks must be very difficult. Then they must skate on the wall again and they mustn't fall. They must do their tricks in one minute.

When Ayumi Kawasaki was nine, she saw a film about in-line skating. She loved it and wanted to skate too. After three years she was a very good skater. She could do lots of jumps and tricks because she was small and light.

How did Ayumi become a champion? It wasn't easy. She went to the skate park after school every day and she practised for three or four hours. After this she went back to her house, tired and hungry. She had dinner, did her homework and went to bed.

My notes

Illustration 1 _____



Illustration 2 _____



My notes _____

