

A Born Champion

by Emile LeClair

At home, she tries to be a regular person. She hangs out with friends, goes to the movies, shops at the mall, and dreams about the future.

But she's no regular person, and many of her dreams have already come true.

Her name is Tara Lipinski.

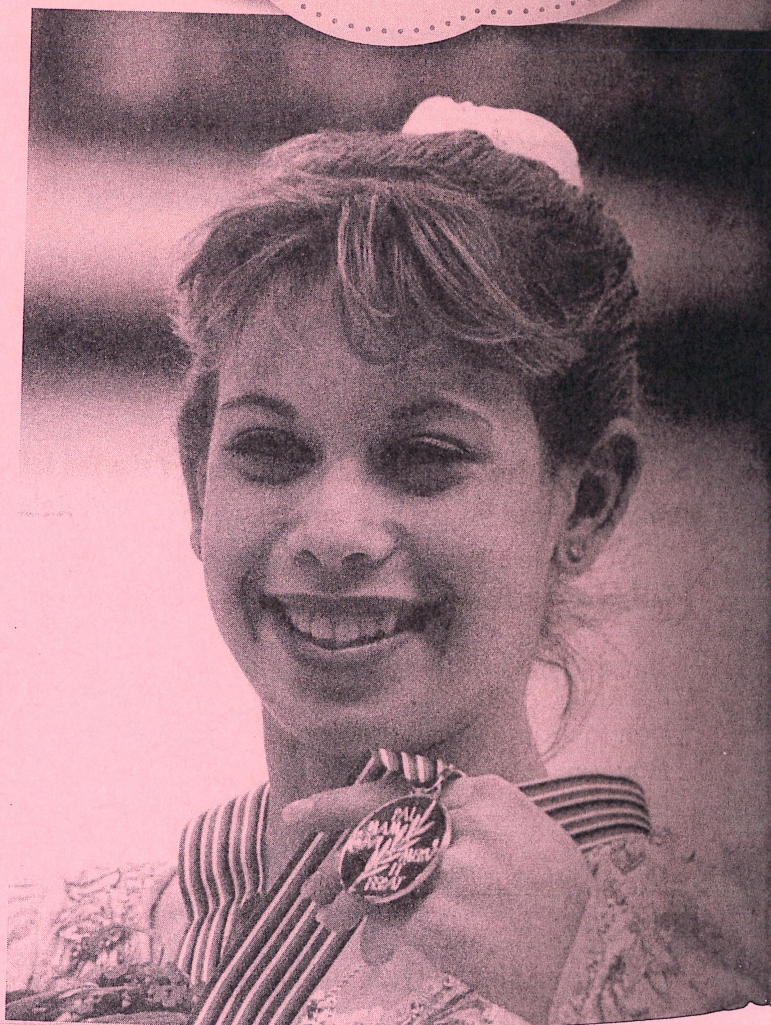
When Tara was only three, she zoomed around on roller skates. Walking and running were not speedy enough for her. At age five, she won a roller-skating championship!

Then, at age six, Tara **realized** she could go faster on ice skates. Her first experience on the ice was a **wobbly** one. Her father said she flopped around. But when Tara left the ice that day, she was skating as if she were on roller skates. In only a few years, she proved she was a natural born ice-skater.

In 1988, Tara went to Nagano, Japan. Amateur athletes from around the world had come to **compete** in the Winter Olympic Games. Two weeks before the Games, Tara talked to a reporter:

Set Your Purpose

What is a champion? How does someone become a champion? Read this article to find out.



Reporter: Why do you like figure skating?

Tara: Skating is fun. I love it because I can be myself when I am on the ice.

Reporter: What's the hardest trick you do?

Tara: I do two triple loops in a row. I jump in the air, spin around three times, land, and do it again right away. It's tough!

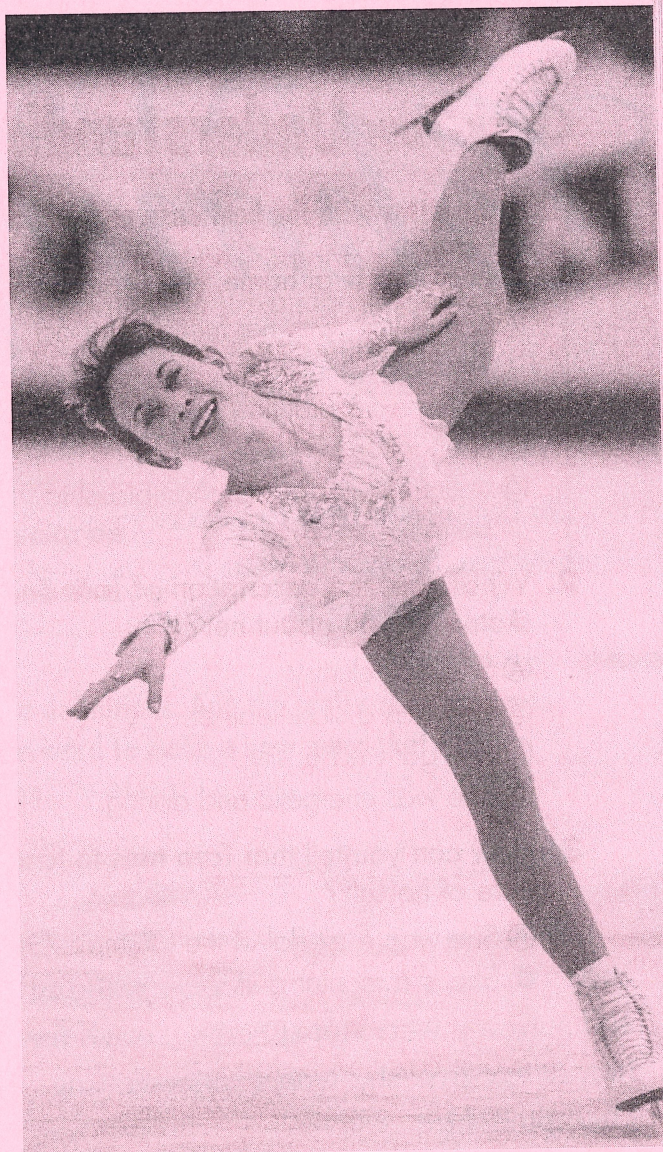
Reporter: How do you keep up your skills?

Tara: I practice! I'm at the rink by 8 a.m., and I practice until 3 p.m. I also eat **pasta** and other healthy foods to stay strong.

Reporter: Do you have a message for kids?

Tara: Work hard and believe in yourself!

Tara made history in Nagano. She won a gold **medal!** She was only 14 years old, and she was the youngest girl ever to become an Olympic figure-skating champion!



Think About It

What do you think makes Tara a champion? Would you be willing to do what she does to be a champion? Why or why not?

Check Your Understanding

Fill in the letter with the best answer for each question.

- When Tara is at home, she likes to
 - spend time with her friends and act like a regular person.
 - get in extra practice time with her coach.
 - spend time by herself.
 - watch movies of her championship performances.
- What does the description of Tara on roller skates tell you about her?
 - She was clumsy.
 - She was a slow learner.
 - She got tired easily.
 - She was energetic and daring.
- How can you tell that Tara tries to take care of herself?
 - She won a medal at the Olympic Games.
 - She is a regular person.
 - She goes to the movies.
 - She eats healthy food.
- Why did Tara start ice-skating?
 - She liked the idea of being able to move really fast.
 - Her father wanted her to ice-skate.
 - All her friends were ice-skaters.
 - She didn't like roller skating.
- What conclusion can you draw from Tara's words?
 - Ice-skating is easy.
 - She is a dedicated and talented ice-skater.
 - An Olympic champion can't be a regular person.
 - Tara is afraid of hurting herself.

Vocabulary

Find each vocabulary word in the selection. The words and sentences around it will help you figure out its meaning.

Fill in the letter with the best definition of the underlined word.

- At six, Tara realized she could go faster on ice skates.

(A) tried	(C) went faster
(B) figured out	(D) was born
- At first, she was wobbly on the ice.

(A) shaky	(C) steady and straight
(B) perfect	(D) easy
- Athletes from around the world compete in the Olympics.

(A) watch	(C) talk about
(B) forget about	(D) try to win
- Tara eats pasta and other healthy foods.

(A) pastry	(C) lunch
(B) kind of noodle	(D) type of cake
- Tara won a gold medal.

(A) something that is not important
(B) speech
(C) object given for winning a contest
(D) message

Word Work

Synonyms are words that have similar meanings. For example, *child* and *kid* are synonyms.

Fill in the letter of the synonym of the word in dark type.

- The skater **realized** that she would have to practice a lot to win.

(A) lost	(C) practiced
(B) said	(D) understood
- I wonder if ice skaters get dizzy when they **spin** around.

(A) twirl	(C) stand
(B) sit	(D) rest
- She's famous, but she acts like a **regular** person.

(A) scary	(C) ordinary
(B) hungry	(D) tired
- The audience cheered when the **champion** received her gold medal.

(A) loser	(C) reporter
(B) winner	(D) artist
- She is a **speedy** skater who likes to zoom around the ice.

(A) forgotten	(C) wrong
(B) fast	(D) slow

A **prefix** comes at the beginning of a word and changes the meaning of the word. Knowing the meaning of a prefix helps you figure out the meaning of the whole word. The prefix **dis-** means "not" or "lack of." The prefix **mis-** means "bad, wrongly, or badly."

disagree → not to agree

misbehave → to behave badly

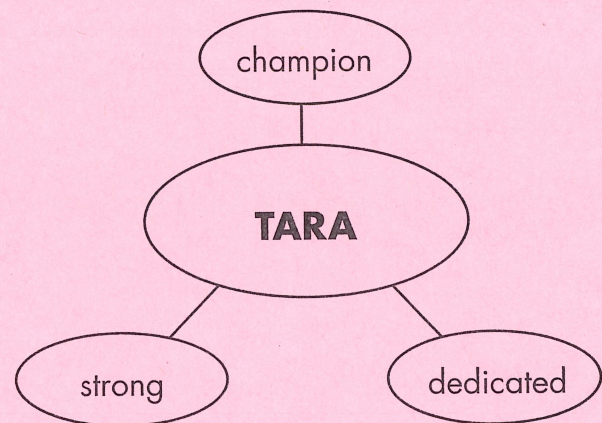
Read the definitions. Add the prefix **dis-** or **mis-** to the base word to make a new word that fits the definition.

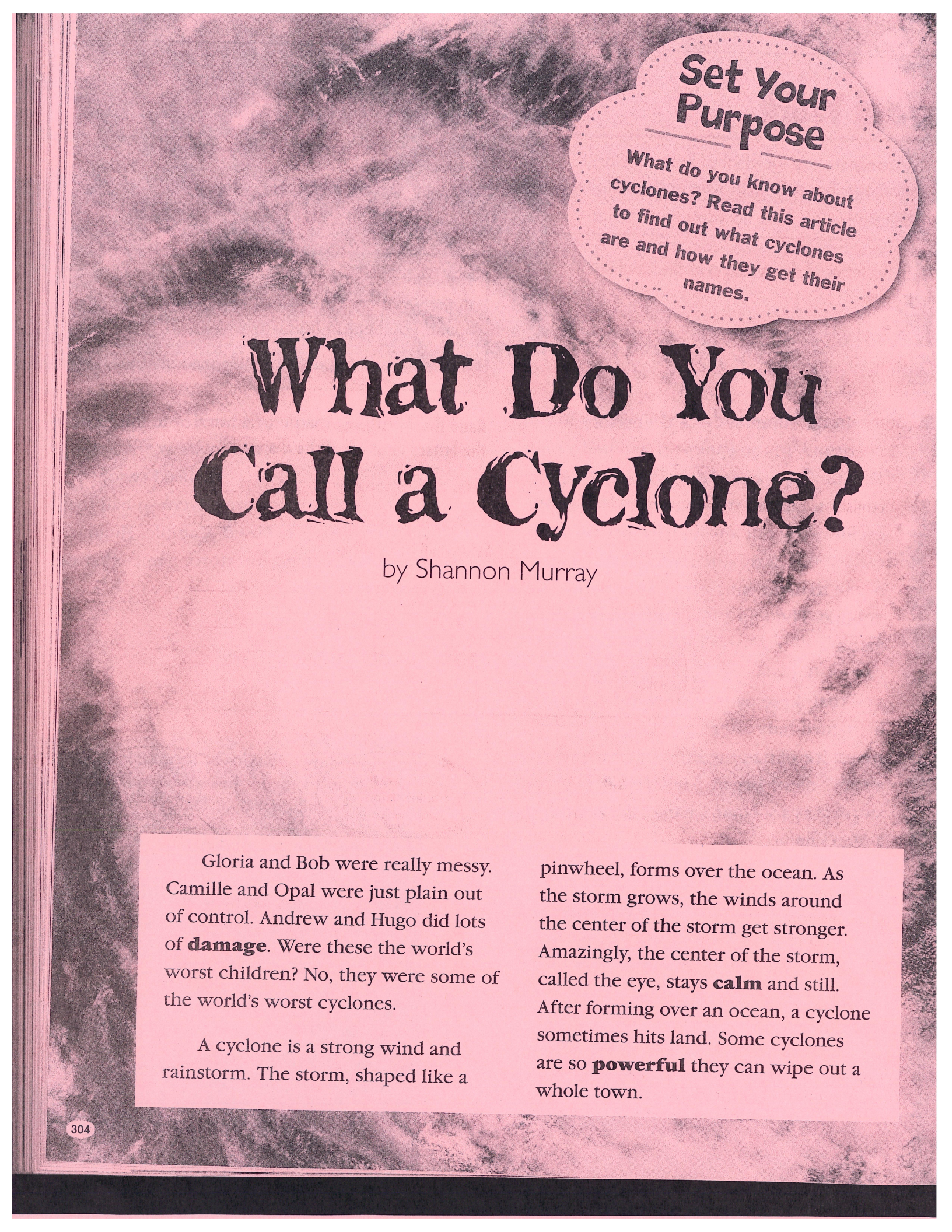
- lead wrongly ___lead
- not approve ___approve
- not continue ___continue
- guided badly ___guided
- lack of belief ___belief

Write Now

Look at the web. It tells about Tara Lipinski.

- Plan to write a description of someone you know well. Make a web like the one shown. Add details that tell about the person you will describe.
- Write your description. Use the details in your web. Make the person come alive in the minds of your readers. Give specific details that show how the person talks and acts and feels. If you wish, add a drawing of the person.





Set Your Purpose

What do you know about cyclones? Read this article to find out what cyclones are and how they get their names.

What Do You Call a Cyclone?

by Shannon Murray

Gloria and Bob were really messy. Camille and Opal were just plain out of control. Andrew and Hugo did lots of **damage**. Were these the world's worst children? No, they were some of the world's worst cyclones.

A cyclone is a strong wind and rainstorm. The storm, shaped like a

pinwheel, forms over the ocean. As the storm grows, the winds around the center of the storm get stronger. Amazingly, the center of the storm, called the eye, stays **calm** and still. After forming over an ocean, a cyclone sometimes hits land. Some cyclones are so **powerful** they can wipe out a whole town.



In the Atlantic Ocean, a cyclone is called a hurricane. In the Pacific, it is called a typhoon. You may have heard of hurricane Hugo or typhoon Linda—two famous cyclones. But cyclones did not always have names. In the early 1900s, a weathercaster in Australia began to name hurricanes after people he did not like. Then, in 1952, forecasters started naming all tropical storms with women's names. But some women complained. They said that these dangerous storms should not be named only after women. In 1979, the **practice** of naming every other storm with a man's name began. This means that if one storm gets a woman's name, the next will get a man's name.

Today the name of a hurricane might be used once and then again in six years. Some names, though, will never be used twice. That's because these storms were so bad that their names were **retired**. Camille, Hugo, Andrew, and Katrina are storm names that we will never use again.

Think About It

What did
you learn about
cyclones?



Check Your Understanding

Fill in the letter with the best answer for each question.

- What conclusion can you draw about cyclones?
 - Cyclones never hurt anyone.
 - A cyclone is a snowstorm.
 - Since 1979, there haven't been any powerful cyclones.
 - Some cyclones are stronger than others.
- What conclusion can you draw about where cyclones form?
 - Cyclones form only over the Atlantic Ocean.
 - Cyclones form over both the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.
 - Cyclones form only over the Pacific Ocean.
 - The worst cyclones form over the Pacific Ocean.
- A bad cyclone can
 - blow a house down.
 - not blow a house down.
 - not be stronger than a rainstorm.
 - be too weak to blow anything down.
- When did people begin naming cyclones?
 - 1952
 - the early 1900s
 - 1979
 - the 18th century
- What is the difference between a hurricane and a typhoon?
 - A hurricane occurs in the Atlantic Ocean, and a typhoon occurs in the Pacific.
 - A cyclone is never called a typhoon.
 - A hurricane is stronger than a typhoon.
 - A typhoon is stronger than a hurricane.

Vocabulary

Find each vocabulary word in the selection. The words and sentences around it will help you figure out its meaning.

Fill in the letter with the best definition of the underlined word.

- Cyclones can do a lot of damage.
 - wind
 - rain
 - noise
 - harm
- The eye of the storm stays calm and still.
 - having to do with the ocean
 - violent and noisy
 - quiet and peaceful
 - lucky
- Some cyclones are so powerful they can wipe out a whole town.
 - very strong
 - hungry
 - brief
 - very weak
- The practice of using a man's name for every other storm began in 1979.
 - usual way of doing something
 - unusual way of doing something
 - mistake
 - fear
- Some storms were so bad that their names were retired.
 - written in a book
 - no longer used
 - thought to be false
 - used again and again

Word Work

A **suffix** is a word part that comes at the end of a base word. Knowing the meaning of a suffix helps you figure out the meaning of the whole word. The suffix **-ful** means "full of."

color + ful = colorful

Write a word that fits the definition by adding the suffix **-ful**.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. full of fear | fear _____ |
| 2. full of respect | respect _____ |
| 3. full of cheer | cheer _____ |
| 4. full of harm | harm _____ |
| 5. full of joy | joy _____ |

Add the suffix **-ful** to the base word in dark type to complete the sentence.

- The **power**_____ storm could bring terrible winds and flooding.
- I tried to be **help**_____ by finding the flashlights and candles.
- We were **hope**_____ that the storm might turn and head back out to sea.
- The storm finally turned, and I was **joy**_____ that our home was safe.
- Some people lost their homes, and they were **sorrow**_____.

Write Now

In "What Do You Call a Cyclone?" you read about cyclones and how they are named. Answer the questions below. You can find the information in the selection.

- What is a cyclone?
- Where are cyclones formed?
- What sort of damage can cyclones do?

- Pretend you are a cyclone. Plan to write a poem telling your name and where you are forming. Describe what you look like and what you are doing. Finally, tell what it feels like to be a powerful cyclone. Jot down ideas for your poem. The pictures in the selection and the answers on your chart will help you.
- Write your poem. Remember to write as if you were a cyclone speaking.

READ THE PASSAGE

Think about the main idea of the passage and the details that support it.

Born to Ride

In 1995, Miguel Indurain (een-doo-RANE) won the Tour de France for the fifth time in a row. The Tour de France is the most difficult bicycle race in the world. No one before Miguel had ever won five Tour races in a row. What made Miguel such a successful athlete?

Miguel grew up on a farm and learned the value of hard work at an early age. His father taught him that work is something you always do, no matter how difficult it is. Miguel had large lungs and a strong heart, both of which helped him endure the 2,200 miles of the Tour de France. He was naturally calm, which allowed him to stay focused on the course. And he trained hard, had a good bike, and was surrounded by excellent teammates who helped him succeed.

In addition to the Tour de France, Miguel won the Giro d'Italia, another national bicycle race, in 1992 and 1993. He captured a gold medal in track cycling during the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. Later that year, he retired from competitive racing at the age of 31.

Miguel's long list of accomplishments assures him a place among the top athletes in history. But fans will especially remember his relaxed and friendly attitude. "My strength," Miguel said, "was that I was more balanced than most other riders."

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which of the following is *not* given as a reason for Miguel's success?
 - his natural calmness
 - the fact that he values hard work
 - the quality of his team
 - his aggressive nature
- Which sentence best describes the main idea of the passage?
 - Miguel Indurain was friendly.
 - The Tour de France is a difficult bicycle race.
 - Miguel Indurain was an extraordinary athlete.
 - To win, a rider needs a good bicycle.
- Which statement is best supported by the passage?
 - Big lungs are an advantage for bike racers.
 - The Giro d'Italia is more difficult than the Tour de France.
 - Olympic track cycling is easy.
 - Miguel would rather have been a farmer.
- When did Miguel win his first Tour de France?
 - 1992
 - 1991
 - 1993
 - 1995

STRATEGY PRACTICE

List two main reasons that Miguel's fans will remember him.

READ THE PASSAGE

Look for details that help you picture the characters and events in the story.

Natural Entertainment

When the days grew long in the middle of summer, Leticia liked to go to the park, stretch out on her back, and watch the clouds. Sometimes the clouds looked like animals, everyday objects, or people she knew. One thing was certain—clouds never stayed in place for long.

One day, Leticia saw a cloud that looked like a dragon. After a few minutes, it changed from a standing dragon to a flying dragon. Then it appeared to change direction. Another cloud floated in to mix with it, and the dragon turned into a dancing penguin with a hat. Then it turned into a sitting dog, then a barking dog, then an alligator. “This is better than TV!” Leticia proclaimed.

Mr. Espinosa, the music teacher at Leticia’s school, was flying a kite with his children at the other end of the park. He recognized Leticia’s voice. He gave the spool of kite string to his son and came over to greet Leticia.

“Hi, Mr. Espinosa!” Leticia said. “Look at those clouds. They keep changing! First they looked like a dragon, then a penguin, then a dog, and now an alligator!”

Mr. Espinosa looked up. “An alligator?” he said. “That looks like a speedboat to me.”

Leticia looked again. He was right! “How do clouds know how to make so many shapes?”

“It’s a mystery,” answered Mr. Espinosa. “Definitely better than TV, though.”

“Definitely,” Leticia said, as the speedboat turned into a chicken.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which one did Leticia *not* see in the clouds?
 - a teacher
 - a dog
 - a chicken
 - a dragon
- Which statement best expresses the main idea of the passage?
 - Penguins can turn into alligators.
 - Mr. Espinosa visited the park with his children.
 - Clouds can stir the imagination.
 - Everyone should watch television.
- Why did Mr. Espinosa come to the park?
 - to meet with his students
 - to fly a kite with his children
 - to look at clouds
 - to walk his dog
- Which idea goes with the story and is also suggested by the title?
 - Kite flying is a way to have fun without technology.
 - Watching clouds change shape is fun.
 - Dogs and alligators get along very well.
 - Watching TV is naturally entertaining.

STRATEGY PRACTICE

Explain which cloud description was easiest for you to visualize and why.

READ THE PASSAGE Number the sequence of events at Oak Island as you read.

Underground Secrets

Oak Island lies off the east coast of Nova Scotia, Canada. Some people say that pirate gold is buried there. Others say it's the hiding place for the lost jewels of a former queen of France. Most people who have heard of this place suspect that it holds some kind of treasure.

The legend of the treasure first started in 1795, when a teenager named Daniel McGinnis noticed odd markings on a tree. The marks led him to think a rope had been tied to the tree and used for lowering a weight into a hole. The next day, McGinnis and his friends dug into the ground and uncovered a layer of stones just two feet down. After that was a barrier of logs every 10 feet.

Years later, McGinnis returned with a crew. They found even deeper layers of charcoal and clay, as well as a stone tablet with symbols that appeared to be a secret code. The crew continued to dig, but the pit filled up with water and they had to give up. According to the legend, the tablet was later translated. It claimed that a treasure lay 40 feet below it!

Since then, others have taken up the search. Around 1970, a team sent a video camera down into the pit, but the images were not clear. Divers also looked for clues, but the water was too dark and cloudy. Maybe one day we will know if the legend of the Oak Island treasure is true.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- What did Daniel McGinnis discover first?
 - lost jewels
 - a barrier of logs
 - a layer of clay
 - odd markings on a tree
- What was the last thing Daniel McGinnis found before he abandoned the site?
 - a layer of charcoal
 - a stone tablet
 - a layer of logs
 - pirate treasure
- Which list shows the order in which things were found at the Oak Island pit site?
 - stone layer, logs, charcoal and clay layers
 - stone layer, marks on tree, stone tablet
 - logs, shallow pit, charcoal and clay layers
 - stone tablet, logs, stone layer
- What happened when a video camera was lowered into the Oak Island pit?
 - The camera showed a stone tablet.
 - The camera showed divers looking for clues.
 - A layer of charcoal was discovered.
 - The image quality was poor.

STRATEGY PRACTICE Look back at the events you numbered. Use them to summarize what happened at Oak Island.

READ THE PASSAGE Read slowly and pay attention to the sequence of events.

The Loneliest Tree

Many centuries ago, the Sahara was full of trees. The climate there was different from what it is now. As time passed, the land became dry and hot, and trees became scarce. But one acacia (uh-KAY-shuh) tree in the Ténéré (TAY-nay-RAY) region of Niger survived longer than the rest.

Caravans transporting goods across the vast expanse of desert used the tree of Ténéré as a landmark. This tree was so important for navigating the sandy landscape that no one dared to cut off its branches for firewood. It was the only tree for almost 250 miles around.

In 1938, French military engineers dug a well near the tree. They discovered water more than 100 feet underground. That's how deep the roots of the acacia tree had reached to keep itself alive. Unfortunately, one of the military vehicles backed into the tree during the digging operation. The accident damaged one of the tree's main branches.

After World War II, trucks became the main form of transportation for caravans in the area, replacing camels. In 1973, the acacia tree was once again struck by a truck. This time the tree could not withstand the force. The remains of the world's loneliest tree were taken to the Niger National Museum. However, travelers still have a landmark to help them cross the desert. A metal monument now stands where the tree once grew.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- What happened just before the first accident caused damage to the tree of Ténéré?
 - French engineers started digging a well.
 - A metal monument was built.
 - The climate in the region changed.
 - People cut off tree branches for firewood.
- What happened as the weather changed in the Sahara?
 - Trucks replaced camels in caravans.
 - Trees in the region died out.
 - People stopped traveling through this area.
 - Camels became more popular than trucks.
- What happened before the French dug a well near the tree?
 - Engineers found water far below ground.
 - Remains of the tree were shipped to the Niger National Museum.
 - People used the tree for navigation.
 - A truck struck the tree.
- The tree of Ténéré died _____.
 - many centuries ago
 - in 1938
 - in 1973
 - before World War II

STRATEGY PRACTICE Describe what the Sahara probably looked like many centuries ago.

READ THE PASSAGE Think about the main idea and the sequence of events in the story.

Homemade Pasta

When Darnell and his older sister Lucy found an easy recipe for homemade pasta noodles and tomato sauce, they couldn't wait to try it. Their parents had said they were now old enough to cook dinner for the family, and spaghetti was their favorite food.

First, they made the noodles. They mixed together flour, water, eggs, salt, and a little olive oil to prepare the dough. Lucy used a rolling pin to press the dough flat. Next, she used a knife to carefully cut the dough into thin strips. Then, she put the noodles aside for later.

Darnell chopped up a large onion and a bunch of fresh basil leaves. He put a clove of garlic into a small garlic press and smashed the clove. Lucy helped him cook the onions and garlic in some olive oil in a pot. When the onions and garlic were soft and golden, Darnell added a can of crushed tomatoes, the basil, and some salt and pepper. Then he turned the heat down low.

When the sauce was almost ready, Lucy boiled water in a large pot to cook the noodles. Darnell was relieved to find out that fresh pasta cooks much faster than dried pasta from the store. Everyone was very hungry by the time dinner was ready.

"This is delicious!" Mom said. "You two did such a great job."

"Thanks, Mom," Lucy said. "It was pretty easy." Darnell was too busy eating to respond. They both knew that this would not be the last time they made dinner for the family.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which statement expresses the main idea?
 A Tomato sauce always includes onions, garlic, and basil.
 B Cooking can be easy, rewarding, and fun.
 C Everybody loves spaghetti.
 D Big sisters can be helpful.
- When does Darnell chop the basil?
 A while the sauce is cooking
 B after he adds crushed tomatoes
 C before he smashes the garlic clove
 D right before dinner is served
- Which statement is *not* supported by the passage?
 A Darnell sometimes needs Lucy's help.
 B Fresh noodles cook faster than dried noodles.
 C Lucy and Darnell are successful cooks.
 D The kitchen is a big mess.
- When the sauce is almost ready, _____.
 A the family sits down to eat
 B Darnell puts the fresh noodles into the sauce
 C Lucy helps Darnell cook the onions.
 D Lucy boils a pot of water for the noodles

STRATEGY PRACTICE Summarize how Lucy and Darnell made dinner.

READ THE PASSAGE

Think about the two people in the story and where the event takes place.

Grand Opening

Jess's brother Ted had told her that the new city gymnasium was nice, but this was better than anything she could have imagined. The two-story ceiling of the gym was high enough to allow for a tall climbing wall. Dozens of sports balls of all kinds lined the south wall, each kind in its own special rack. Three full-size basketball courts were filled with kids playing pickup games.

"Pretty awesome, isn't it?" Ted asked. Jess's mouth hung open. She was speechless. Ted waved his hand in front of her face. "Yo, Jess? Isn't it cool?"

"It's perfect," Jess managed to say. She was checking out the volleyball court. Jess loved lots of sports, but volleyball was her favorite. The new net was just waiting for the first spike.

Ted continued, "You can practice your volleyball serves, and I can work on my basketball layups—well, when the crowd thins out, anyway. If we come here every day this summer, tryouts this fall will be a snap."

Jess nodded as she tried to take it all in. Smiling, Ted turned his eyes to the soccer balls. "Or maybe we could kick a soccer ball around while we wait for the courts to clear," he said. "That is, if you're ready to eat my dust!" He made a sudden move toward the balls.

Startled out of her visions of volleyball glory, Jess turned and sprinted ahead of Ted. "Oh yeah?" she called over her shoulder. "You'll never get past me!"

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Where does the story take place?
 - at an Olympic training center
 - on a high school basketball court
 - on a rock-climbing wall
 - at a new city gymnasium
- Which of the following best describes Jess?
 - She is not as competitive as her brother.
 - She is athletic and loves sports.
 - She is not impressed by the new gym.
 - She is more interested in books than exercise.
- Which two sports are probably Ted's favorites?
 - rock climbing and basketball
 - soccer and volleyball
 - basketball and soccer
 - volleyball and basketball
- How does the story's setting affect Jess?
 - She feels like going home.
 - She is impressed with the new gym.
 - She is disappointed with the new gym.
 - She is inspired to try rock climbing.

STRATEGY PRACTICE

The story begins with many details of the gym. How do they help tell the story?

READ THE PASSAGE

Think about Marie Marvingt's traits and what made them special for the time period in which she lived.

The Amazing Flying Marie

In October 1909, the cold wind whipped across the English Channel. A 34-year-old French woman strapped on a helmet, stepped into a hot-air balloon, and made history. That was how Marie Marvingt became the first woman to fly a balloon over the English Channel. The following year, she became the third woman in the world to earn her pilot's license.

Marie may have been happier in the air than she was on the ground. She began flying at a time when flying was for either the very brave or the very foolish. Nevertheless, she flew as a bomber pilot and as a reporter in World War I. As a trained nurse, Marie also delivered medical supplies and rescued injured soldiers with her airplane.

In those days, flying was more dangerous than it is now. But Marie knew the risks. Her tiny one-person airplane would rise and drop with the wind, like a bird in a storm. She knew how to take control and steer the airplane through rough weather. Flying through the wind and rain were all part of the adventure of early air travel.

In addition to being a pioneer in aviation, Marie was also one of the longest-flying pilots. At age 80, in 1955, Marie learned how to fly a helicopter. She proved to the world that she could be at home in any aircraft, at any age.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which sentence does *not* describe Marie?
 - She was afraid of flying small airplanes.
 - She was a pioneer in aviation.
 - She was happier in the air than on the ground.
 - She was a bomber pilot in the war.
- Which sentence tells you that Marie was a good pilot?
 - The cold wind whipped across the English Channel.
 - In those days, flying was more dangerous than it is today.
 - Marie knew how to steer the plane through rough weather.
 - Flying was for the brave or the foolish.
- What is the setting of the first paragraph?
 - Marie's childhood home during World War I
 - a warm, rainy day on a battlefield
 - a cold October day on the English Channel
 - Marie's first day at flight training school
- Which fact best suggests that Marie flew for a long time?
 - She delivered medical supplies during World War I.
 - She flew a hot-air balloon at age 34.
 - She flew a helicopter at age 80.
 - She was the third woman in the world to earn a pilot's license.

STRATEGY PRACTICE

How do you visualize Marie Marvingt? Describe the picture in your mind.

READ THE PASSAGE Think about the main message of the passage.

Prometheus Defeated

In the summer of 1964, a scientist cut down a tree in Nevada. The event started a debate about the importance of scientific study versus protecting the environment. The tree, a bristlecone pine, was the oldest living thing in the world. Some people called the tree “Prometheus,” after a tragic hero in Greek mythology. Others knew it as “WPN-114.” The two names show how different communities of people felt about the tree.

WPN-114 was likely a seedling around 3100 BC. Scientists knew that the tree was old. They just didn’t know how old. But they knew they could find out by examining the tree rings, which form every year inside the trunk. Scientists argued that there was no other way to get valuable information about different time periods long ago. They believed that the knowledge they could gain by cutting down the tree was worth sacrificing it. In fact, scientists did learn a lot.

On the other side of the debate were people who loved the tree as a part of nature. Destroying the tree, they thought, was a horrible mistake. In *The Sierra Club Bulletin*, wilderness photographer Galen Rowell argued that “the wood belonged in the mountains.” Friends of the tree used words like *murder* to describe what was done to Prometheus. To them, the knowledge gained by cutting down the tree wasn’t worth the loss. They believed that experiencing the tree alive, as the oldest living link to the past, was equally important.

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. What is one theme of the passage?
Ⓐ Science and nature are sometimes in conflict.
Ⓑ Scientists should do their work in labs.
Ⓒ People need to agree on names for trees.
Ⓓ WPN-114 was the world’s oldest tree.
2. What did the scientists believe?
Ⓐ The wood belonged on the mountains.
Ⓑ The knowledge gained was worth cutting down the tree.
Ⓒ Destroying the tree was a horrible mistake.
Ⓓ The tree was a link to the past only while alive.
3. What did friends of the tree believe?
Ⓐ It was necessary to sacrifice the tree.
Ⓑ Bristlecone pines are not really very old.
Ⓒ It is important to enjoy living trees.
Ⓓ The tree was really named Prometheus.
4. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?
Ⓐ People can view the same issue differently.
Ⓑ Scientific investigation is always good.
Ⓒ Nature is more important than people.
Ⓓ Debate kills trees.

STRATEGY PRACTICE How does the author use a compare-and-contrast structure to present the debate?

READ THE PASSAGE Think about the message of the story.

Practice Makes Perfect

Minh was excited when his grandmother invited him into her pottery studio. After all, Nana did not give all her grandchildren such an invitation. Minh looked forward to sinking his hands into some wet clay and placing his bowl in the heated kiln until it hardened like stone.

“Be careful with that,” Nana said as Minh picked up one of the bowls. The boy gently put the bowl back on the shelf and stuck his hands inside his pockets. He was anxious to get started on the lesson Nana had promised him. And he didn’t want to risk losing that chance by breaking any of her finished pieces of pottery.

Five hours later, Minh was frustrated and tired. His first attempt, a black blob that looked more like a rock than a bowl, was a failure. His second attempt was hardly any better. However, he had at least figured out how to make a smooth opening in the center of the clay. Meanwhile, Nana was keeping busy. A wide, shallow bowl and a deep, narrow bowl rested on Nana’s worktable. Her practiced hands began to shape yet another spinning lump of clay. “I’ll never get it!” Minh said, watching her work.

Nana looked at her grandson and sighed. “Don’t worry, you’ll get it,” she reassured him. “The only way you won’t learn is if you give up.”

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- How does Minh feel when he first arrives at the studio?
 - afraid
 - interested
 - defeated
 - reassured
- What problem does Minh face?
 - The clay is too hard.
 - He cannot decide what to make.
 - Making pottery is difficult for him.
 - Nana is too busy with her other grandchildren.
- What theme does the title suggest?
 - The more you do something, the better you get at it.
 - Do not even try to do something unless you can do it well.
 - Family members can help you learn.
 - You do not need practice if you are perfect.
- What is one theme of the story?
 - Stay focused and avoid distractions.
 - Try new things only if they are easy.
 - Keep trying even when a task is difficult.
 - Take a break if you get frustrated.

STRATEGY PRACTICE Underline the words that help you visualize Nana’s studio. Describe your picture of it.

READ THE PASSAGE

Think about the location featured in the passage, and look for details that tell you what the author believes about nature.

The Old Man of Crater Lake

Oregon's Crater Lake—or, rather, the site for this deep, clear lake—was once a volcano. The lake formed when the peak of the volcano caved in and the hole filled up with rain and snow. The area is now home to diverse wildlife, evergreen forests, and chilly mountain water. The lake also boasts an unusual feature: a 30-foot-tall tree stump, known as the Old Man of the Lake, that rises out of the water about four feet above the surface.

The Old Man of the Lake is special for a few reasons. First, it floats vertically, bobbing up and down in the water and moving freely across the lake. Second, it has been there since at least 1896! The lake's cold water has preserved the wood. But how does the long stump float upright? Scientists think that when the tree tumbled into the lake long ago, rocks were probably wedged inside its root system. They served as weights, holding the root end of the tree underwater.

Because the Old Man drifts all over the lake, boaters alert each other about its location. Scientists have tried tying up the stump to keep it in place. But they noticed that whenever the Old Man was tied up, bad weather arrived. When they released the stump, the weather improved. This strange coincidence is one of the many intriguing things that bring visitors to Crater Lake.

Although the Old Man of the Lake remains a mystery to visitors, one thing is certain. This fascinating piece of floating wood—and the legendary waters that surround it—are examples of nature's beauty and strength.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which word does *not* describe Crater Lake?
(A) deep
(B) muddy
(C) chilly
(D) clear
- What makes the Old Man of the Lake special?
(A) It floats horizontally in the water.
(B) It is stuck to the bottom of the lake.
(C) It causes the weather to change.
(D) It has floated upright for more than 100 years.
- One theme of the passage is that _____.
(A) volcanoes are helpful
(B) trees can survive in cold water
(C) nature is mysterious and beautiful
(D) visitors should avoid floating stumps
- What is the main mystery about the Old Man?
(A) how it got in the lake
(B) how it moves from place to place
(C) why bad weather comes when it is tied down
(D) why the wood has not become rotten

STRATEGY PRACTICE

How do the ideas in each paragraph lead up to the main message?
