

Canada's Tiger

Olympians Lesson 5 | Suggested Grades: 4-7

Lesson Plan

Objectives:

Students will....

- complete a think, pair, share activity
- imagine they are a Olympic athlete and write personal Olympic stories
- learn about Nancy Greene's career accomplishments

Curricula Links:

- Language Arts
- Personal Planning

Materials:

- Paper and pencil
- Overhead copy of appendix 5.1
- Photocopies of appendix 5.1 (optional)
- Overhead copy of
- Nancy's Greene's picture (appendix 5.2)

The Big Idea

Nancy Greene's thrilling ski race for the gold at the 1967 World Cup inspires students to follow their dreams and have the "confidence" to make their dreams become a reality, even when they may appear impossible.

Opening Motivator: Think, Pair, Share Activity (10 min)

Display Nancy Greene's picture on overhead projector and ask your students the following questions:

- Who is this important British Columbian?
- What was her chosen sport?
- Has she won any important races?
- Is she currently involved with her chosen sport?

Teaching Tip

This discussion could be structured using the Think, Pair, Share teaching strategy. Students are to:

- "Think" independently about the question
- "Pair" up with a peer and discuss their ideas
- "Share" their ideas with the class

Classroom Activity: Writing Personal Olympic Stories (60 min)

Read Nancy's account of her First World Cup win to your students out loud (see Appendix 5.1). After reading Nancy's story, ask students to brainstorm what "inner qualities" Nancy demonstrated during those two pressure-filled days. After students share their thoughts, conclude the brainstorm by sharing the following information with your class.

Despite the pressure from the crowd and the racing announcer, Nancy stayed in control and focused on giving best performance possible. In a high-pressure situation, Nancy realized that she did not "have to win". She instead focused on believing in herself and because of that she gained a tremendous sense of calm and confidence. It was the inner quality of "confidence" that helped her capture the win.

2) Ask students to complete a 2 minute silent write about the meaning of the inner quality "confidence". During the silent write, students should also write about any other important "inner qualities" that they feel Nancy displayed in

this high-pressure racing environment.

3) Inform students that they are to write their own fictional stories of themselves winning a race at a Winter Games. The theme of their stories should focus on the main character displaying confidence and believing in themselves while in the face of adversity.

4) Explain to your students that their descriptive stories should take the reader through each step of the race. They may use Nancy's story as a template or starting point if they wish, but the story should be in their own words.

Teaching Tip

You may need to discuss the meaning of a descriptive story with your students. We have also provided a suggested writing strategy to assist your students through the writing process.

To get creative juices flowing and give students some writing inspiration, students can watch Nancy's thrilling Olympic win, view historical and current pictures of Nancy in the "Student Area" in the computer lab.

Some students might find it helpful to incorporate sensory elements into their story. Encourage them to think about the sights, touch feelings, sounds, etc. that they would experience in a situation like Nancy's.

Conclusion and Reflections (10 min)

Once students have finished moving through the writing process, they could then illustrate their published stories and share them during a literary round table or make them available for the school to read by publishing them for their class webpage.

Extension Ideas

Students could write another story, but about a sport of their choice instead of specifically a Winter Games sport.

To learn more about the many unique athletes inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame, students could create a classroom Hall of Fame. Students could complete mini online research projects using the information found on the Sports Hall of Fame website, or create short dramatized skits highlighting their chosen athletes' accomplishments.

The class could organize a British Columbia Sports Hall of Fame day and students could arrive to school dressed in their "role". The classroom would be set-up as a live Hall of Fame in which other classrooms could tour. The visiting students could test the students' knowledge of their athlete's story by asking questions.

Web Links

<http://www.sportfitcanada.com/sports>

Great collection of videos and training exercises about a myriad of sports.

<http://www.nbclearn.com/olympics>

For those interested in learning more behind the science of winter sports like skiing.

<http://www.nancygreene.com/>

Nancy Greene's Personal Website

<http://www.sportbc.com>

Sport BC's official website.

Appendices

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Appendix 5.1

Nancy Greene's World Cup Win

Like all great champions, Nancy's most exciting victory was her first World Cup. For her, that happened on an Easter weekend in 1967 at Jackson Hole, Wyoming. It's chapter one in her book, and it's called "Showdown at Jackson Hole". That's exactly how Nancy won her first World Cup. It was a showdown in the grand old western' shoot 'em up style. The world cup is an international tour in which racers collect points in slalom, giant slalom and downhill. At the end of the season, the skier with most combined Cup points is declared champion.

Going into the final meet of the season at Jackson Hole, Marielly Goitschel of France was the overall leader with 169 points; Annie Famose of France was next with 158 points, and Nancy stood third with 151 points. In order for Nancy to take the World Cup, she had to win all three races at Jackson Hole. Under the complicated scoring system, nothing less would do. The first two races were giant slaloms and Nancy had little trouble in winning both. There was one scary moment when she went through a gate backwards, aside from that, no sweat. That brought things to the 'showdown' - the final race on Sunday, which was a Slalom.

"Saturday night was my night of nerves, when I couldn't sit still, couldn't wax my own skis, couldn't relax," she says in her book. Nancy then goes on to say how she stayed up until early in the morning in her room with two younger teammates who were upset over injury and poor performance. "The three of us sat there in that motel in Jackson a few hours before I was to make a run for the World Cup, and what did we talk about until two in the morning? Failure. Next morning, I felt unearthly. My ears were ringing with fatigue, my head was dizzy and my sense of equilibrium seemed all out of whack."

Nancy didn't shake her ailments until she was going up the slalom to memorize the course. The slalom is a two-run race and in the first run Nancy finished third. "That was okay by me", she said, "I'd skied a good race. I prefer to trail slightly behind the leader after the first run. Then I know I have to win on the second run. It was harder to memorize the second run. I climbed up the course and I kept telling myself that it was just another race. But it wasn't. Fortunately, I did notice that there seemed to be one exceptionally tricky section which offered all kinds of dangers of a bad spill."

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Appendix 5.1



Nancy had third starting position for the second run and the girl in front of her fell and knocked down several gates, so there was a delay while the gates were being reset. The delay, however, was a blessing in disguise. To fill in time, the PA announcer dramatically announced: “Nancy Greene must be very nervous at this moment she has to win this race to gain the World Cup. She has to ski her best right now . . .” Nancy could hear people around her saying things like “Why doesn’t that bird shut up? He’s rattling Nancy.”

But Nancy recalled that she “thought it was about the announcer’s fourth ‘has to win’ that something snapped inside me. ‘What does he mean?’ I thought to myself. ‘I don’t have to win anything; it isn’t the end of the world if I lose’. And I relaxed. A great, marvelous calm came over me.”

In a few minutes, Nancy was off and she skied beautifully all the way down. She had no problems and finished in an excellent time. Then, there was a few excruciating moments at the bottom waiting to see how her rivals did, in an effort to bump Nancy out of first place. They didn’t and she won her first-ever World Cup!



Appendices

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Appendix 5.2

