

In Her Footsteps

Lesson 4: In Her Footsteps | Suggested Grades: 4-5

Lesson Plan

Objectives:

Students will...

- learn about swimmer, Ann Meraw
- make predictions
- read an interview transcript

Curricular Links:

- English Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Personal Planning
- Physical Education
(See Appendix 4.1)

Materials:

- 1 envelope per 2 students
- Appendix 4.2 - Sort & Predict worksheet. 1 copy per pair. Cut out words and place into envelopes
- Appendix 4.3 - 1 copy per student or access online.

The Big Idea

Ann Meraw broke and set World Records for long distance and endurance swimming. Students will learn about Ann's feats by reading a transcript of one of Ann's interviews.

Opening Motivator - Sort and Predict Activity (15 min)

Do the following Sort & Predict activity to engage your students' curiosity (Appendix 4.2). Have your students work in pairs.

1. Tell students that they are going to study some words that will be in their reading. Working with their partners, students should predict what they think this reading will be about.
2. Distribute one envelope containing the words to each pair.
3. Instruct students to sort the words into categories. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' categories. After students have sorted their words into categories they should work together to make a prediction about the reading.
4. Select a few pairs to share their predictions with the class.

Classroom Activity - Interview Transcript Reading (40 min)

If you have access to a computer lab, you may choose to have students read the Ann Meraw interview online. Just go to www.bcsportshalloffame.com then click on Hero In You, then Student Area, then In Her Footsteps Lesson Four. If you are working in the classroom, have a copy of Appendix 4.3 ready for each student.

1. Tell students that they will be reading an interview transcript. Discuss with students how an interview transcript differs from other text. (For example, there are spaces between the interviewer's question and the interviewee's answer and the person who is speaking is identified by name each time they are speaking.)
2. Distribute Appendix 4.3 and ask students to silently read the interview with Ann Meraw.
3. After students have finished reading Ann Meraw's interview transcript, have them Pair-Share with their partner from the Sort & Predict activity to see how their prediction was alike or different from the transcript.

Conclusion and Reflections

Ann Meraw competed in swimming for 30 years. She set seven world records, four of which still stand. Ask students to write about what they have learned from Ann's transcript. You can choose from the following questions to guide your students' writing.

- How did your prediction differ from what you learned in the transcript?
- Tell me what you think Ann Meraw must be like. What character traits do you think she might possess? Provide evidence from the transcript to support your ideas.
- How does an interview transcript differ from other types of writing? What can we learn from an interview transcript that might be different from what we learn in a “story”?

Extension Idea

Using a tape recorder, have your students conduct a short 2-3 minute interview with a classmate. The pair can work together to transcribe the interview onto paper or a classroom computer.

Appendices

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Appendix 4.1

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Prescribed Learning Outcomes for this lesson

- English Language Arts**
- Gather information for specific purposes and identify sources, including people, print, audio-visual media, and electronic media
 - Manage and organize information by grouping and sorting it into charts, webs, subtopics, or logical sequences
 - Identify and use sources of information, including people, print, audio-visual media, and electronic media

- Social Studies**
- Gather information from a variety of sources

- Personal Planning**
- Identify the talents and skills of people they admire

- Physical Education**
- Describe the importance of exercise and its effect on the body
 - Identify the nutritional needs related to physical activity
 - Identify and describe positive benefits gained from physical activity in a natural setting

*From BC Ministry of Education Integrated Resource Package

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Appendix 4.2

Appendix 4.2 - Sort & Predict

Ann Meraw	Swim
Awards	Long Distance
Attempts	Bowen Island
Stanley Park	Okanagan Lake
Challenge	Endurance
Muscle	Ginger Ale
Macaroni & Cheese	55 Miles (89 km)
Ocean	Shark
Jellyfish	Seal
Hum a Tune	World Record

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Appendix 4.3

Ann Meraw Interview Transcript

What inspired you to start swimming?

Ann: I thought I could swim as far as I could see! So that's more or less how I got started. I swam 10 miles (16 Km.) when I was 10 years old. I entered a 2 ½ mile (4 Km.) swim race and I came first and I wound up with two trophies and thirteen prizes out of this swim and it was at the PNE that they were giving the trophies out. And they had me up on stage and they said, "Do you have an amateur card?" I said "No, what's that?" They asked, "Well, do you belong to a swimming club?" I said, "I don't belong to a swimming club." So they said, "Sorry we can't give you your awards." With that, the president of the Vancouver Swimming Club rushed up on the stage and said, "If she joins the club right now will she get her awards?" They said, "Yes." So I got mixed up in swimming then. In competition that is.

When did you decide to start to swim long distances?

Ann: Oh, when I got into the Vancouver Swimming Club. No one could beat me after it got a half a mile (.8 Km). Well, I went up to mile (1.6 Km) swims. So then I started swimming distance and I kept making it longer and longer.

Let's talk about your Bowen Island swim.

Ann: Alright, when I swam to Bowen Island, people thought it couldn't be done. So I did it in 7 hours and 14 minutes. In 1934, I swam across the Strait of Juan De Fuca. And I swam around Stanley Park.

Could you talk about the Okanagan Lake Swim?

Ann: I was asked if I'd try Okanagan Lake, to try and break the 32 mile (51 Km) record across Lake Ontario. So I decided to swim and it wasn't too favourable on the first swim. But I did 42 miles (68 Km.). I established a World Endurance Record for women at that time. I carried on the following year. In 1958, I tried the long one of 55 miles (89 Km.), which I did in 32 hours and 10 minutes. I had a challenge from Bill Sadler of Little Rock who was a world champion. He challenged me \$5000. He started with me but was taken out at 12 0' clock at

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Appendix 4.3

night because the water was too rough and too heavy a chop. So he lost \$5000. I went on and continued to swim and broke a new World Distance Record, broke the Men's Endurance Record, the Women's Endurance Record-which was my own-and set a new Distance Record for Women, Men, and Endurance for both Women and Men.

When you swim that kind of distance, what happens to your body?

Ann: Well, you prepare before you go in the water. You watch everything you eat for a good three months before. And you build muscle. I would put 2 pound (9 Kg) lead weights on both ankles and both wrists and do all my swimming with that on. And I would swim in the morning from 5 'til 9 o'clock. Then work all day and start again from 7 o'clock to 11 at night.

What does it feel like to lose weight while swimming?

Ann: I took 17 pounds (7.7 Kg.) off in one swim of 25 hours. Now, on the other 2 swims, I never lost an ounce because I had followed exactly what I was to eat. I had some macaroni and cheese because it would dissolve in your system. If you feel you are going to get sea sick, you drink ginger ale.

When you were swimming for long, long periods of time, what kept you going?

Ann: Well, you sort of forget everything else and you keep your swimming rhythm. I used to hum tunes to myself, like "Sidewalks of New York". It was good timing. And if you did a slow song to yourself, why your stroke would slow down. You'd hum something to yourself that was a little faster than your stroke and you'd try and keep up with it. So it kept your stroke up.

I know you swim in the ocean. Can you tell me some of the encounters you have had with sea life?

Ann: I got stung by a jellyfish. And then I was followed by a shark one time but it didn't bother me; followed right alongside 'til I got to the shore. When I would swim in English Bay, a seal would swim behind my feet. He'd follow me to Jericho Beach and I wouldn't see him again. And next morning, same thing. But that was about all, I never had any problems in the water.