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and the Moon



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Blind Triathletes



Written by Jonny Webster

Word Count	951
Text Type	Information Report
High-Frequency Word Focus	
Content Words	bicycle, cord, guide, marathon, race, triathlete, triathlon
Language Features and Text Structure (specific text features, sentences, punctuation, vocabulary, sound and letter knowledge)	captions; letters producing different sounds – e, plural nouns

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Front cover photographs: Caroline Gaynor helps blind athletes compete in triathlons. Leona Emberson from Ottawa, trains with Gaynor in Central Park for the New York City Triathlon, Robert Caplin; background, shutterstock.com/Juanan Barros Moreno. Alamy/JHP Sports, 11, /ZUMA Press, Inc. 17; Dreamstime.com/Anke Van Wyk, 5 top, 9; Fairfax Syndication/Mark Goodwin, 6; Getty Images/Bongarts/Moritz Winde, 4, /Brian Bahr, 13, /Denver Post, 21–22; Newscom/Actionplus/Leo Mason, 14–15; photonewzealand/Corbis/Leo Mason, 5 bottom, 7; photonewzealand/REUTERS/Hugh Gentry, 3; shutterstock.com/Juanan Barros Moreno, 1–7 background, 12–13 background, 18–19 background, /Martin Good, 10–11 background, 14–17 background, 24 background, /patrimonio designs ltd, 18, /Rena Schild, 8–9 background, 20–23 background.

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GETTING STARTED

Activating prior knowledge: Ask students if they know what a triathlon involves. Have them describe what they think a person who competes in triathlons would be like. Ask students how they think someone might prepare for a triathlon.

Book introduction and prediction: Using the interactive digital book, or the printed version, read the title to students. Ask why they think the athletes on the cover are linked together. Ask students to flick through the book or the screens, looking at the photographs, diagrams, and layout. Have them use the graphics and structure to suggest the text type and to predict what the book may be about. Read the entries on the contents page to confirm their predictions. Identify and discuss any words or features that may cause concern.

Outlining focuses: Explain to students that as well as reading about blind triathletes, they will talk about captions, diagrams, less formal language, the letter *e* producing different sounds, and plural nouns.

DURING THE READING SESSION

■ Literacy

Modelling: Depending on what is appropriate to the group, you can remind students of and model specific reading strategies, such as how to approach unfamiliar words and identify signal words.

Guiding: Ask students to read their books independently. As you move about the group, use your knowledge of each student's ability to help you decide when to intervene or assist. For example, if a student cannot read a word, or can read it but appears not to understand it, give prompts or clues to assist. Suggest strategies, such as using picture cues and knowledge of letter/sound patterns.

Interacting, interpreting, analysing and evaluating: At appropriate intervals and/or at the conclusion of reading, ensure students make meaning from the text by asking questions and encouraging discussions. How important is the

guide in a triathlon? What has Aaron Scheidies achieved? How is an Ironman different from a triathlon? Why was Patricia Walsh's Ironman race so incredible? Have students discuss whether this is an imaginative, informative, or persuasive text and the audience to which they think the author was directing the book.

■ Literature

Responding and examining: Ask students if reading this book in any way changed their preferences for reading informative texts or fictional texts.

■ Language

If you are using the digital book, invite students to take turns operating it for the following activities.

Text structure and organisation: Use pages 6 and 7 to discuss the use of captions. Ask students why photographs with captions are an important feature of an informative text.

Discuss the relevance and importance of the diagram on pages 18 and 19. Ask how it supports the text.

Expressing and developing ideas: Use the following passages from pages 4 and 8 to discuss the use of less formal language – *takes a lot of guts; it is called pep talk*. Ask students how they might rephrase these into more formal language. Discuss different groups of people to whom we tend to speak more or less formally.

On page 10, draw attention to the words *complete, details, legs, and length*. Discuss the different sounds produced by the letter *e*. Have students look for more examples of each sound pattern throughout the text.

Use the words *triathletes* and *bodies* on page 14 and *themselves* on page 22 to revise the rules for changing nouns to their plural forms.

PUTTING THE LEARNING INTO PRACTICE

Small group/independent activities: Have students reread the text independently, then proceed to the activities listed in the Teacher Guide.

Blind Triathletes

For teachers' inspection ONLY

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Introduction

She's been swimming non-stop in the open water for over an hour. All she can hear are the waves crashing around her. All she can feel are the cold waves. She can see absolutely nothing. She's blind.

It may sound like a scene from a scary movie. In fact, this is the start of a triathlon race.

A blind triathlete swims during the first leg of a triathlon in Hawaii, US.

For teachers' inspection ONLY



A triathlon is a very tough race. The first leg is a 1,500-m swim in the sea. The next leg is a 40 km bike ride. The last leg is a 10 km run. It is a demanding task, or **challenge**, for any athlete.

To compete with a limiting physical or mental condition, or **disability**, takes a lot of guts. Imagine what it would be like to bike, swim, and run without your eyes to guide you. It is a huge challenge, but many people with disabilities do it.



Triathletes complete the swimming leg of a triathlon in Germany.

Triathletes bike in the second leg of a triathlon in South Africa.



Triathletes run in the third leg of a triathlon in London, UK.



The Guide

Most blind triathletes use a person with normal vision as a guide. This special plan, or **strategy**, helps blind triathletes compete in triathlons.

For teachers' inspection ONLY



A guide leads his blind partner to their bike for the second leg of a triathlon.

For the swim and the run, blind triathletes are tied to a guide with a cord. The cord connects their waists or wrists. The guide tugs on the cord. This guides the blind triathlete in the right direction. The two stay close together. The guide is the blind triathlete's "eyes." This strategy helps make up for their disability.



A blind triathlete can feel which way to run because the guide tugs on the cord.