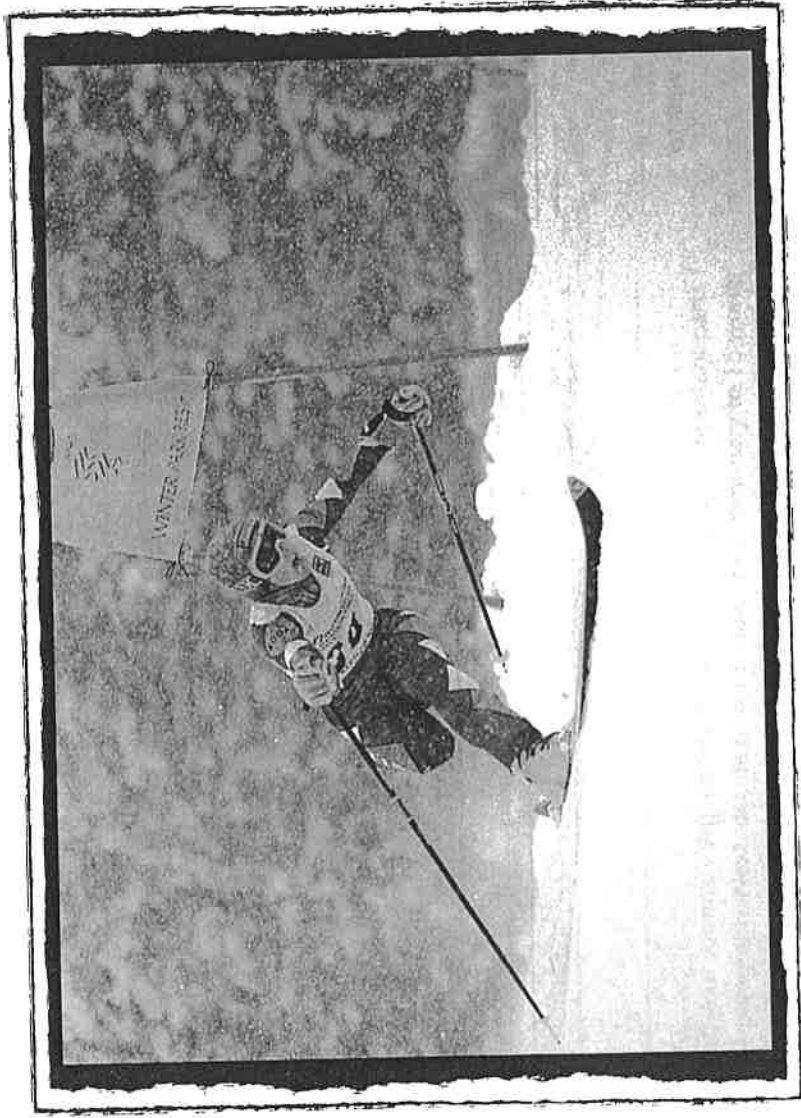


# DIANA GOLDEN

## Go for the Gold



*Olympic gold medalist Diana Golden zooms down a Colorado mountainside.*

**D**iana Golden was 12 years old when she found out she had cancer. She was walking home one day after playing in the snow when her right leg simply gave out. Doctors diagnosed the problem as bone cancer. They recommended amputating her leg above the knee.

<sup>2</sup> When Diana heard the news, she asked the first question that popped into her mind: "Will I still be able to ski?"

<sup>3</sup> "When the doctors said yes," she later recalled, "I figured it wouldn't be too bad."

<sup>4</sup> That attitude typified Diana's outlook on life. Losing a leg would devastate most children, but Diana refused to dwell on the negative. Instead, she told people again and again that it was no big deal. "Losing a leg?" she'd say. "It's nothing. A body part."

<sup>5</sup> Most of all, Diana didn't want to let cancer stop her from doing what she loved. And what she loved was skiing. Diana had been on skis since the age of five. Her home in Lincoln, Massachusetts, was just a couple of hours from New Hampshire's Cannon Mountain, where her family owned a vacation house. After the amputation, Diana worked hard to get back to the mountain. "I always skied,

and I intended to keep on skiing. There was never any question in my mind about that," she declared. Seven months after losing her leg, Diana met her goal. She was back out on the slopes.

<sup>6</sup> Skiing wasn't quite the same with just one leg, but Diana made the best of it. She used outriggers—special ski poles that were like crutches with small skis attached. She learned to go faster on one leg than most people could go on two. In high school, Diana became a member of her school's ski racing team. And in 1979, when she was just 17, she earned a spot on the U.S. Disabled Ski Team.

<sup>7</sup> After high school, Diana Golden went on to Dartmouth College. There she saw how top two-legged skiers trained. Determined not to be left behind, Diana began training with the Dartmouth team. When they ran around the track, she followed them on crutches. When they ran up and down the steps of the football stadium, she went up and down the steps too—by hopping. "I had to adapt," she later explained. "I was an athlete. I had one leg, which meant I had to do it differently."

<sup>8</sup> In 1982, Diana entered her first international ski race. She went to the World Handicapped Championships in Norway, where she won the downhill

competition. She came in second in the giant slalom.

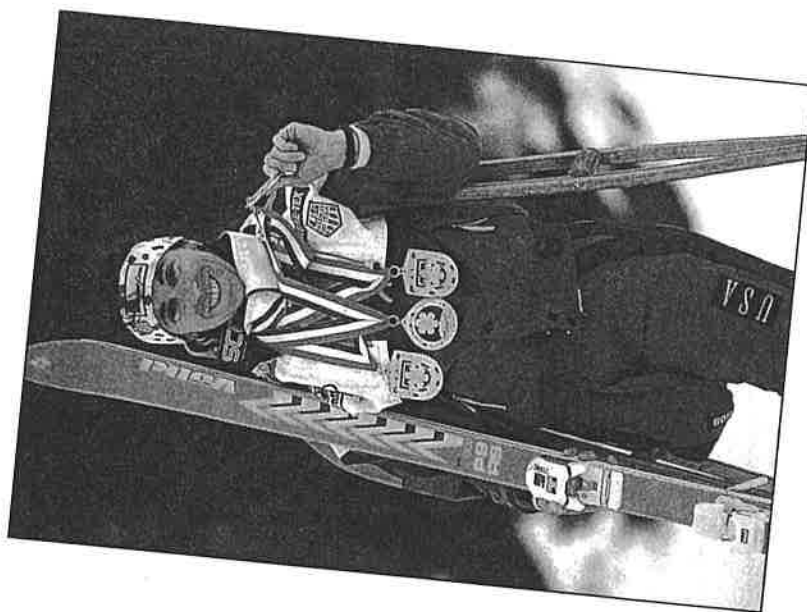
<sup>9</sup> Soon after that, though, Diana quit skiing. She didn't like the fact that people thought of her as "the inspirational girl who overcame cancer." So for two years she did no racing at all. Then, in 1984, she went skiing with a friend. While on the mountain, she saw gates set out for a ski race. That did it; the old desire came flooding back. Diana decided to return to ski racing. Only this time, she didn't just want to be a top disabled skier. She wanted to be a top skier, period. She wanted to prove herself against racers with two legs, not just those with one. As she put it, "I wanted to be recognized as a top-notch athlete, as the best in the world."

<sup>10</sup> In order to be the best, Diana had to give up her outriggers. She taught herself to ski with regular ski poles. That meant learning a new way of balancing herself. It also meant lifting lots of weights to strengthen her stomach, arms, and leg. With regular poles, she was able to reach speeds of 65 miles per hour.

<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, Diana still competed in ski races for the disabled. In fact, within a year of returning to the sport, she won gold medals in four big international races. But she also skied against

nondisabled athletes. She lobbied to get the United States Ski Association (USSA) to welcome disabled skiers into its regular races.

<sup>12</sup> Her efforts led to passage of the USSA "Golden Rule." This rule reserved slots for



*Diana Golden poses after winning the World Disabled Ski Championship.*

top disabled skiers early in a race. No longer would Diana and other disabled skiers have to wait until the end of the day to make their runs. Now they were allowed to go after the top 15 regular racers. That way they could ski the course before it became too rough.

<sup>13</sup> In 1986, Diana won the Beck Award, which is given to the best American racer in international skiing. The next year, she placed 10th in a race against some of the best nondisabled skiers in the country. And in 1988, she was named *Ski Racing* magazine's U.S. Female Alpine Skier of the Year.

<sup>14</sup> One of Diana's biggest thrills came in 1988. That was the year she went to the Olympic Games. Diana won the gold medal in the disabled giant slalom event. The U.S. Olympic Committee named her its Female Skier of the Year.

<sup>15</sup> As a result of her courage and determination, Diana has changed the way the world looks at disabled athletes. Instead of seeing them as sad and pitiable, people have begun to see them as strong and competent. "Everyone has some kind of 'disability,'" Diana says. "It's what we do with our abilities that matters."

<sup>16</sup> Diana was proud to have made a difference. But it wasn't something she had intended. "I never went into it to change things for the disabled," she said. "It was a quest within myself." Still, she acknowledged that her quest opened doors for others. "It was in the process of chasing my dreams that things happened...."

<sup>17</sup> In 1990, Diana retired from racing for good. By then, she had won 29 gold medals as a disabled skier. She was recognized as one of the greatest skiers the

United States has ever produced. Best of all, she had done what she set out to do. People no longer thought, "Diana Golden, disabled skier." Instead, they simply thought, "Diana Golden, great skier." ❧

*If you have been timed while reading this article, enter your reading time below. Then turn to the Words-per-Minute Table on page 71 and look up your reading speed (words per minute). Enter your reading speed on the graph on page 72.*

### Reading Time: Lesson 2

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_  
Minutes Seconds

## A Finding the Main Idea

One statement below expresses the main idea of the article. One statement is too general, or too broad. The other statement explains only part of the article; it is too narrow. Label the statements using the following key:

M—Main Idea      B—Too Broad      N—Too Narrow

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Doctors amputated Diana Golden's leg after they discovered that she had bone cancer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. After losing a leg to cancer, Diana Golden became a champion skier in both disabled and nondisabled events.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Diana Golden is one of the greatest skiers the United States has ever produced.

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 15 points for a correct M answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 5 points for each correct B or N answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: Finding the Main Idea

## B Recalling Facts

How well do you remember the facts in the article? Put an X in the box next to the answer that correctly completes each statement about the article.

1. Diana Golden found out that she had cancer when she was
  - ☐ a. 5 years old.
  - ☐ b. 12 years old.
  - ☐ c. 17 years old.
2. Diana learned to ski on one leg using
  - ☐ a. regular ski poles.
  - ☐ b. crutches.
  - ☐ c. outriggers.
3. After winning the downhill competition in her first international ski race, Diana
  - ☐ a. quit skiing for two years.
  - ☐ b. began training with the Dartmouth ski team.
  - ☐ c. earned a spot on the U.S. Disabled Ski Team.
4. When Diana returned to ski racing, she
  - ☐ a. only competed in races for the disabled.
  - ☐ b. competed in races against disabled and nondisabled skiers.
  - ☐ c. only competed in races for the nondisabled.
5. In 1987, Diana raced against some of the country's best nondisabled skiers and
  - ☐ a. won the Beck Award.
  - ☐ b. was named Female Alpine Skier of the Year.
  - ☐ c. placed 10th.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: Recalling Facts

## C Making Inferences

When you combine your own experience and information from a text to draw a conclusion that is not directly stated in that text, you are making an inference. Below are five statements that may or may not be inferences based on information in the article. Label the statements using the following key:

C—Correct Inference      F—Faulty Inference

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Disabled skiers do not have as much athletic ability as nondisabled skiers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When Diana Golden trained with the Dartmouth ski team, she had to work harder than the two-legged skiers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Diana loved to compete.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Most people thought Diana Golden was sad and pitiable because of her disability.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Diana retired from ski racing because she had lost interest in the sport.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: Making Inferences

## D Using Words Precisely

Each numbered sentence below contains an underlined word or phrase from the article. Following the sentence are three definitions. One definition is closest to the meaning of the underlined word. One definition is opposite or nearly opposite. Label those two definitions using the following key. Do not label the remaining definition.

C—Closest      O—Opposite or Nearly Opposite

1. Losing a leg would devastate most children.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a. terrify  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. encourage  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. greatly sadden
2. "I had to adapt," she later explained.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a. make some adjustments  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. refuse to change  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. fight hard
3. She lobbied to get the United States Ski Association (USSA) to welcome disabled skiers into its regular races.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a. voted  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. used her influence  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. did not act
4. Instead of seeing them as sad and pitiable, people have begun to see them as strong and competent.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a. powerful  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. unfit  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. well-qualified

5. She acknowledged that her quest opened doors for others.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. mission  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b. positive attitude  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c. inactivity

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 3 points for each correct C answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 2 points for each correct O answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total Score: Using Words Precisely**

## Author's Approach

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer.

- Which of the following statements from the article best describes Diana Golden?
  - ☐ a. "Diana refused to dwell on the negative."
  - ☐ b. "Diana had been on skis since the age of five."
  - ☐ c. "She learned to go faster on one leg than most people could go on two."
- From the statements below, choose the one that you believe the author would agree with.
  - ☐ a. Diana lacked confidence.
  - ☐ b. Diana never felt sorry for herself.
  - ☐ c. Diana should have competed only in disabled ski races.
- What does the author imply by saying that Diana "didn't like the fact that people thought of her as 'the inspirational girl who overcame cancer'"?
  - ☐ a. Diana thought people pitied her because she was disabled.
  - ☐ b. Diana didn't want people to know that she had had cancer.
  - ☐ c. Diana wanted to be respected for her ability, not for her disability.
- The author probably wrote this article in order to
  - ☐ a. describe the events in an international ski competition.
  - ☐ b. inform readers about disabled skiers.
  - ☐ c. inspire readers with Diana's courage.

Enter the four total scores in the spaces below, and add them together to find your Reading Comprehension Score. Then record your score on the graph on page 73.

**Score**      **Question Type**      **Lesson 2**

\_\_\_\_\_ Finding the Main Idea

\_\_\_\_\_ Recalling Facts

\_\_\_\_\_ Making Inferences

\_\_\_\_\_ Using Words Precisely

\_\_\_\_\_ **Reading Comprehension Score**

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on page 74.

## Summarizing and Paraphrasing

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer for questions 2 and 3. Follow the directions provided for the other question.

1. Look for the important ideas and events in paragraphs 6 and 7. Summarize those paragraphs in one or two sentences.

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2. Below are summaries of the article. Choose the summary that says all the most important things about the article but in the fewest words.

- ☐ a. After Diana Golden lost a leg to cancer, she learned to ski on one leg.
- ☐ b. Diana Golden won many medals as a disabled skier. She changed the way people look at disabled athletes.
- ☐ c. After losing a leg to cancer, Diana Golden worked hard to become a championship skier and a respected athlete.

3. Choose the sentence that correctly restates the following sentence from the article:

"Determined not to be left behind, Diana began training with the Dartmouth team."

- ☐ a. Diana trained as hard as she could because she didn't want to come in last.
- ☐ b. Diana worked hard to keep up with the other members of the ski team.
- ☐ c. Diana trained hard because she wanted to be the best skier on the team.

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on page 74.

## CRITICAL THINKING

### Critical Thinking

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer for questions 1, 2, and 5. Follow the directions provided for the other questions.

1. Which of the following statements from the article is an opinion rather than a fact?
- ☐ a. "Diana had been on skis since the age of five."
- ☐ b. "It's what we do with our abilities that matters."
- ☐ c. "Diana won the gold medal for the disabled giant slalom."

## Personal Response

Describe a time when you had to overcome an obstacle or work hard to accomplish something that was important to you.

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## Self-Assessment

From reading this article, I have learned

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2. Based on what Diana Golden said, you can predict that she

- ☐ a. will continue to face obstacles in her life with courage.
- ☐ b. will never ski again.
- ☐ c. will begin training so that she can compete in another sport.

3. Choose from the letters below to correctly complete the following statement. Write the letters on the lines.

On the positive side, \_\_\_\_\_, but on the negative side \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. some people couldn't see past her disability
- b. she had to retire before she won a medal as a nondisabled skier
- c. Diana became a champion skier

4. Read paragraph 10. Then choose from the letters below to correctly complete the following statement. Write the letters on the lines.

According to paragraph 10, \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. she wanted to ski with regular ski poles
- b. Diana had to learn a new way to balance herself
- c. she wanted to ski at 65 miles per hour

5. What did you have to do to answer question 2?

- ☐ a. find an opinion (what someone thinks about something)
- ☐ b. find a description (how something looks)
- ☐ c. draw a conclusion (a sensible statement based on the text and your experience)

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on page 74.