

Reread

When you read a biography, you may need to clarify what the author thinks is important about each of the events in the subject's life. As you read "She Had to Walk Before She Could Run," you can pause to reread difficult sections to make sure you understand the points the author is making in them.



Find Text Evidence

You may need to reread the section "Against All Odds" on page 253 to make sure you understand the significance of what happened to Rudolph when she was a young child.

page 253

Against All Odds

Though Wilma Rudolph inspired many during that 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome, Italy, her childhood had been riddled with hardships. Wilma was one of 22 children born to an impoverished Tennessee family. While she was a toddler, her health **deteriorated** because of life-threatening illnesses.

When she was four years old, Wilma contracted polio, a severe disease that causes paralysis. As a result, Wilma lost the use of her left leg. Having polio could have been **devastating** for Wilma. Instead, she faced this physical challenge with a positive attitude and never lost sight of her goal.

I read that Rudolph had poor health as a toddler and contracted polio at age four. That tells me that Rudolph's greatest challenges arose when she was still very young.

Your Turn



How does the author show Rudolph's determination once her leg braces were removed? Reread "An Inspiring Comeback" on page 253–254 to answer the question. As you read, remember to use the strategy Reread.

Author's Point of View

The author of a biography usually expresses a personal point of view about the subject. As you read a biography, identifying this point of view can help you determine whether the author's assertions are backed by evidence or are unsupported.



Find Text Evidence

As I reread "She Had to Walk Before She Could Run," I can look for details that reveal the author's attitude toward Wilma Rudolph. Then I can decide when statements about Rudolph are supported.

Details	Author's Point of View
The author refers to Rudolph as an "amazing athlete" at the Olympics.	
Rudolph faced the challenges of her illness with a "positive attitude."	

Your Turn



Reread "She Had to Walk Before She Could Run." Identify more details that show how the author feels about Rudolph. Then explain how this point of view is, or is not, supported by evidence.

Go Digital!

Use the interactive graphic organizer

Biography

“She Had to Walk Before She Could Run” is a biography.

A **Biography**:

- Often focuses on a certain time period or important aspect of the subject’s life
- May include text features that provide specific details



Find Text Evidence

This biography of Wilma Rudolph focuses on the ways she dealt with the difficult challenges she faced. The information in the table gives me specific details about her accomplishments.

page 255

Wilma Rudolph’s Olympics Statistics

Date	Event	Time	Medal
1956	200 Meters	Not in finals	None
1956	4 x 100 Meters Relay	44.9 seconds	Bronze
1960	100 Meters	11.0 seconds	Gold
1960	200 Meters	24.0 seconds	Gold
1960	4 x 100 Meters Relay	44.5 seconds	Gold

In her individual sprints, Wilma outshone her competition and won two gold medals with ease. During the relay event, however, the team comprised of four athletes from Tennessee State found themselves in hot water. After a poor baton pass, Wilma had to pick up her pace and run like the wind to complete the last leg of the race. She successfully overtook Germany’s last runner to win the race. Wilma became the first American woman in track and field to win three gold medals. Of her feeling of accomplishment, she said she knew it was something “nobody could ever take away from me, ever.”

Giving Back

The **summit** of Wilma’s career might have been her achievements as an Olympic athlete. Instead, she went on to accomplish much more. After graduating from college, she taught school and coached track. Soon Wilma was traveling the country, giving speeches to school audiences.

To inspire others to do their best in spite of all challenges, she would note that “the triumph can’t be had without the struggle.” Wilma achieved her dreams and, ever after, helped others to reach theirs.



Make Connections

Talk about how Wilma met personal challenges to become a successful athlete. **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

Describe a time when someone you know had a personal challenge and overcame it. **TEXT TO SELF**

Text Features

Tables Tables show detailed information in an organized way.

Photographs Photographs show the subject at the time described.

COLLABORATE



Your Turn

Identify a challenge that Rudolph faced after recovering from polio. How does this information reflect the author’s focus in this biography? Tell why the author chose to separate the information in the table from the main text.

Idioms

The expression *it's raining cats and dogs* is an idiom. As a whole, the expression has a meaning that goes beyond the individual definitions of the words. If you read an expression that does not make sense in “She Had to Walk Before She Could Run,” consider whether the phrase might be an idiom. Look for context clues to help you understand it or verify what you think it means.



Find Text Evidence

The phrase put her shoulder to the wheel confuses me. It doesn't make sense that Rudolph would place her shoulder against a wheel in school or on the track. But the sentence also says that Wilma became too ill to run. I think the expression is an idiom that means "Wilma worked extremely hard."

In 1958, having put her shoulder to the wheel both in class and during track-and-field events, she became too ill to run.

Your Turn

COLLABORATE



Use context clues to determine the meaning of each of the following idioms in “She Had to Walk Before She Could Run.”

she never lost her cool, page 253

Wilma never looked back, page 254

found themselves in hot water, page 255



Readers to . . .

In a biography, the author uses transition words and phrases to let readers know when and how the subject's life changed. Transitions such as "In this case" and "after returning home" clarify shifts in the subject's circumstances. Reread the excerpt from "She Had to Walk Before She Could Run" below.

Expert Model

Transitions

Identify the **transition words and phrases**.

How do they signal **shifts in time or location**?

After high school, Wilma was awarded a full scholarship to major in education at Tennessee State University. But once again, Wilma had to overcome challenges. In 1958, having put her shoulder to the wheel both in class and during track-and-field events, she became too ill to run. After she had a tonsillectomy, however, she felt better and started to run again.

Writers



Editing Marks

- ^ Add
- ^, Add a comma
- ↷ Take out
- ∨ Add an apostrophe
- / Make a lowercase letter

Mara wrote about why her best friend deserves recognition. Read Mara's revisions.

Student Model

Talking With Our Hands

My best friend Lena deserves much

credit for dealing with a big challenge.

Just after she turned three,

^ Lena developed a high fever that left

her deaf. ^{When} ↷ She transferred to my school

from one for hearing-impaired kids. ↷ It

was often difficult for Lena. She felt

hurt when kids stared at her hearing

aids. Using the sign language Lena had

taught me ^{years before,} ↷ I signed, "Show kids how to

talk with their hands. They will think it's

cool!" Lena listened ^{to me} ↷ —and it worked!

Because of her effort,

^ Lena has the acceptance she deserves.

Grammar Handbook

Subject and Object Pronouns

See page 462.

Your Turn

COLLABORATE



- Identify the transitions that Mara used.
- Tell why she added the phrase "Just after she turned three."
- Why did Mara add "to me" in the second-to-last sentence?
- How did the revisions improve her writing?

Go Digital!

Write online in Writer's Workspace