

Nine Gold Medals



Reflect and Respond

- I Work in pairs. Discuss the difference between Olympics, Special Olympics, and Paralympics.
- II Work in pairs to match the words ‘empathy’, ‘sympathy’, and ‘compassion’ to the sentences given in the table below.

I am so sorry for what is happening to you. It is sad, do you want something to eat?

I can imagine how you feel. I understand that you are upset and why.

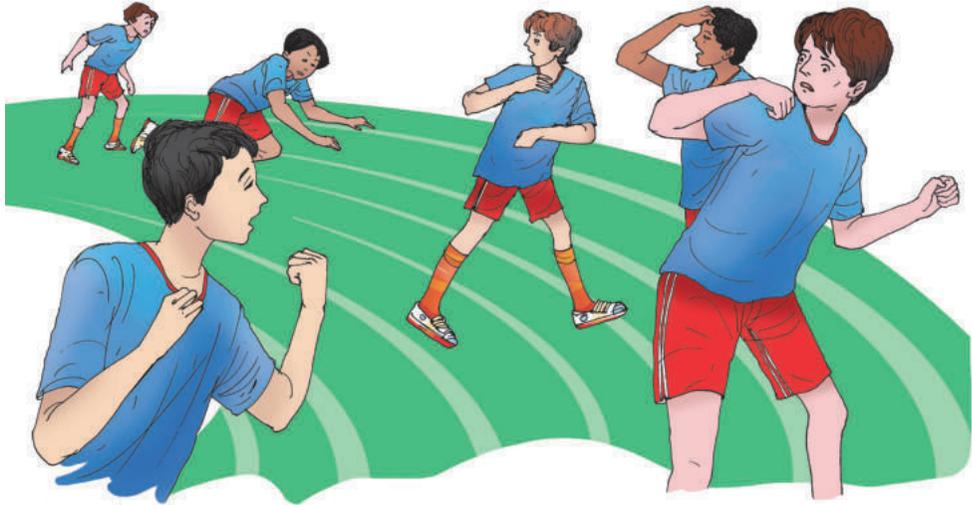
I understand why you feel terribly low. I will spend some time with you, so that you don't feel lonely.

- III Work in pairs. List the words you associate with ‘empathy’. Share your responses with your classmates and teacher.



Reading for Appreciation

1. The athletes had come from all over the country
To run for the gold, for the silver, and bronze
Many weeks and months of training
All coming down to these games.



2. The spectators gathered around the old field
To cheer on all the young women and men
The final event of the day was approaching
Excitement was high to begin.
3. The blocks were all lined up for those who
would use them
The hundred-yard dash and the race to be run
These were nine resolved athletes in the back
of the starting line
Poised for the sound of the gun.
4. The signal was given, the pistol exploded
And so did the runners all charging ahead
But the smallest among them, he stumbled
and staggered
And fell to the asphalt instead.
5. He gave out a cry of frustration and anguish
His dreams and his efforts dashed in the dirt
But as sure as I'm standing here telling this story
The same goes for what next occurred.

Nine Gold
Medals

157



6. The eight other runners pulled up on their heels
The ones who had trained for so long to compete
One by one they all turned round and went
back to help him
And brought the young boy to his feet.
7. Then all the nine runners joined hands and
continued
The hundred-yard dash now reduced to a walk
And a banner above that said (Special Olympics)
Could not have been more on the mark.



8. That's how the race ended, with nine gold medals
They came to the finish line holding hands still
And a standing ovation and nine beaming faces
Said more than these words ever will.

DAVID ROTH



Check Your Understanding

- I Work in pairs. Match the words and phrases in Column 1 with their meanings in Column 2. You may read the poem again and infer the contextual meaning. Check your answers with the teacher.



Column 1	Column 2
1. dashed in the dirt	(i) walk or move with difficulty
2. stumbled	(ii) destroyed
3. staggered	(iii) a hard black substance used to make roads and paths
4. anguish	(iv) step awkwardly, lose balance and almost fall
5. asphalt	(v) extreme pain or suffering

II Identify the gist of each stanza. Write the number of the stanza in the boxes given.

- Spectators cheered participants of different events and waited enthusiastically for the final event to start.
- All runners dashed ahead as soon as they heard the gun shot; suddenly, one of the athletes tripped and fell on the ground.
- The race finished with nine athletes holding hands and winning the well-deserved gold medals; their smiles, and spectators standing up to applaud, conveyed everything.
- Participants got ready at the starting line and nine determined athletes waited for the sound of the gun.
- Athletes from various parts of the country had gone through months of training; had big dreams of winning a medal.
- The eight athletes stopped to help the young fallen athlete stand up, forgetting that they were competing.

Nine Gold
Medals

159



7. Nine athletes held the banner and walked hand in hand; this gesture represented the ethos of Special Olympics.
8. The young athlete felt his dreams were shattered and cried in pain and disappointment, but something unique happened.

III Let us appreciate the poem.

1. Two examples of alliteration from the poem are (i) _____ and (ii) _____.
2. Give three examples of visual imagery from the poem.
(i) _____ (ii) _____
(iii) _____
3. Give an example of auditory imagery from the poem. (i) _____
4. How does the use of imagery make the poem more appealing?
5. How does the poet's tone change from the beginning to the end of the poem?
6. What is the overall mood created by the poem?
7. What is the message being conveyed by the poem?



Critical Reflection

- I Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.
 1. *The eight other runners pulled up on their heels
The ones who had trained for so long to compete
One by one they all turned round and went back to help him
And brought the young boy to his feet.*
 - (i) Select the correct option to complete the sentence.



The phrase 'pulled up on their heels' means that the runners _____.

- A. moved aside
- B. stopped running
- C. tried to run faster
- D. jumped ahead

- (ii) Mention one character trait common to all the eight other runners.
- (iii) What is the tone of the poet in these lines?
- (iv) How might the young athlete have felt on being helped by the others?
- (v) Would you consider this incident as a turning point in the poem? If yes, why? If no, why not?

2. *That's how the race ended, with nine gold medals
They came to the finish line holding hands still
And a standing ovation and nine beaming faces
Said more than these words ever will.*

- (i) How did the nine contestants feel when they reached the finishing line together?
- (ii) Why do you think all the nine contestants were given gold medals?
- (iii) Complete the sentence appropriately.
The holding of hands signifies a feeling of _____.
- (iv) Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.
The spectators giving a 'standing ovation' indicates that they were _____.
 - A. amazed
 - B. speechless
 - C. distracted
 - D. thoughtful
- (v) Explain the last line of the extract.



Nine Gold
Medals

161



II Answer the following questions.

1. Describe how the setting established in the first two stanzas of the poem create a vivid atmosphere for the events that follow.
2. How do you think the youngest athlete might have felt when he fell?
3. Why were the athletes eager to begin the race?
4. What does the transformation of the hundred-yard dash to a walk symbolise?
5. How might the poem be different if the focus was solely on individual achievement rather than collective support?
6. How does the poet's use of language and tone enhance the reader's engagement with the poem?
7. What might be the poet's purpose of writing this poem?



Vocabulary in Context

I The phrase 'standing ovation' is an example of an adjective–noun collocation. Identify two other similar examples from the poem.

Collocation is a pair or group of words that habitually appear together.

II Complete the table given below by writing four nouns in Column 2 that collocate with the adjectives in Column 1. One example has been done for you. You may take the help of a dictionary.

Column 1	Column 2
1. big	disappointment, failure, surprise, decision
2. heavy	



3. strong	
4. large	
5. great	

III Choose the correct adjectives from those given in the box for the underlined words given in the sentences below. Ensure you do not use the same adjective twice.

positive significant youngest
noisy loud

- The littlest athlete was moving at a steady pace.

- The eight athletes had a smiling attitude.

- When the athlete fell, he gave a huge cry of pain.

- The spectators saw a terrible difference in the athletes who had only come to compete.

- The gaudy crowd cheered the runners enthusiastically. _____



Listen and Respond

I You will listen to a radio-talk about Patrick Gomes, a coach of special athletes. As you listen, write true or false for the statements given. (Transcript for teacher on page 268)

- Patrick Gomes began his career in sports with track events.
- Patrick Gomes has been coaching special athletes for 10 years.
- Patrick Gomes does all the household work himself.



II You will listen to the radio-talk once again. As you listen, choose the correct option for each question.

1. When the speaker uses the phrase 'push your boundaries', he wants listeners to _____.
 - (i) challenge themselves
 - (ii) meet new people
 - (iii) be open-minded
2. Patrick Gomes is a _____ at present.
 - (i) special athlete
 - (ii) coach of special athletes
 - (iii) value education teacher
3. Special Olympic Games held at Connecticut was a _____ for Patrick Gomes.
 - (i) motivational year
 - (ii) turning point
 - (iii) gradual change
4. As a special athlete, Patrick Gomes mostly participated in _____.
 - (i) track events
 - (ii) jogging
 - (iii) football
5. Patrick Gomes believes that sports is essential because it encourages _____ along with fitness.
 - (i) a positive outlook
 - (ii) a peaceful mind
 - (iii) an active life



Speaking Activity

I Work in pairs. Take turns to express your points of view regarding Special Olympics.

Use the key points given below to develop the conversation.



Key points:

- Importance of Special Olympics (promotes inclusion)
- Impact of Special Olympics on sportspersons with special abilities
- How to create awareness regarding Special Olympics

Use the sentence starters given in the table below when you speak.

Asking someone for a point of view	Expressing a point of view
• What is your opinion on...?	• Personally, I believe that...
• How do you feel about...?	• I hold the opinion that...
• In your view, is...?	• It's my belief that...
• What is your take on...?	• I have a strong feeling that...
• Do you think that...?	• From my perspective...



Writing Task

- I Work in pairs to write three creative slogans on Special Olympics.

One example of a slogan on Special Olympics has been given below.

Special Olympics: Igniting a Universe of Potential

Present your slogans in a creative manner and share with your classmates and teacher.





Special Olympics: Igniting a Universe of Potential

Steps to write a slogan

- Understand the theme on which you want to write a slogan.
- Brainstorm ideas and use them to create the slogan.
- Keep it brief and simple.
- It should not be more than eight to ten words.
- Make the slogan catchy.

Now, create a poster based on the inspiration you have drawn from the poem. Present your poster to the class and display it on the classroom board.

Steps to design a poster

- Include all vital information.
- Write down the ideas.
- Remember to place the slogan you created.
- Use top, bottom, and sides of the poster for other important information.
- Include some illustrations, a call for action, if needed.
- Colour and decorate your poster.
- Present your poster as a box item.





Learning Beyond the Text

I Read the information given below about some athletes who participated in Special Olympic Games 2023 held in Berlin, Germany.

RAVIMATHI ARUMUGAM

She is an athlete who made India proud by clinching the gold medal in the 400 metre, Level C women's race.

AANCHAL GOYAL

She won the gold medal in the 400 metre, Level B women's race.

SAKET KUNDU

Saket Kundu achieved a rare double in track and field by winning a silver medal in the Level B mini javelin event and a bronze in the Level B 400 metre men's race.

Find out more about other Indian achievers of Special Olympics.



Nine Gold
Medals

167



III Read the information given below in the infographic.

OLYMPICS

A GLIMPSE

THE FIRST OLYMPIC GAME TOOK PLACE IN 776 BC

The original Olympics began as a part of an ancient Greek festival, which celebrated Zeus, the Greek God of sky and weather. It is held every four years, alternating between summer and winter editions. The Olympic motto is 'Citius-Altius-Fortius-Communiter'. The words translate to 'Faster-Higher-Stronger-Together'.

THE OLYMPIC TORCH IS A REMINDER OF THE GAMES' GREEK ORIGINS

The Olympic torch symbolises peace and friendship. A few months before the opening of the Games, a flame is lit at Olympia, Greece. The flame is carried over several weeks before reaching the host city. The Games begin by lighting the cauldron with the Olympic flame.

THE OLYMPIC SYMBOL WAS DESIGNED TO INCLUDE EVERYONE

The Olympic rings were produced in 1913. The Olympic symbol expresses the activity of the Olympic Movement and represents the union of the five continents and the meeting of athletes from throughout the world at the Games.

PARALYMPICS

The Paralympics, for athletes with disabilities, are held showcasing the participation of para-athletes in various sports. The Paralympic symbol, also known as the *Agitos* from the Latin meaning "I move", is the visual representation of the Paralympic Movement.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The Special Olympics provides sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics strives to create a better world by fostering the acceptance and inclusion of all people.



Now, create an infographic on any sport and present it in the class.