

The Mountain Bike Challenge

by Patrick Morgan



Book Summary

This book follows Myra Moller as she trains and rides a 30-mile mountain bike race through dense forest, and over rocks, streams, mud, and up and down huge hills.

Features of the Book

- Labeled diagrams
- The cross section of the terrain
- Family photographs
- Images that suggest motion
- Photomontages
- Quotes from the subject
- The map of the whole course
- The author's commentary on the race

Purpose

The Mountain Bike Challenge can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** establishing a purpose for reading a text;
- S** discussing the effect of images;
- S** analyzing the writer's style;
- S** interpreting maps and cross sections;
- S** presenting information in different formats;
- S** recognizing and retelling events in sequence.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Establishing a purpose for reading a text
- S** Discussing the effect of images
- S** Analyzing the writer's style

Introducing the text

Draw on the students' background experience by talking about sports they are involved with or races they have taken part in. Discuss the cover and the title of the book. Discuss and clarify the word "challenge" and begin a class list of things the students can predict about the book.

- *What sport is shown here?*
- *Where is it taking place?*
- *Do you think there are other people involved?*

Ask the students to discuss the equipment they can see in the photograph and to suggest why the rider might need it.

Look at the blurb on the back cover.

- *Who is talking here?*
- *Can you tell what kind of race the book is about?*

Ask the students to look at the title page and the table of contents and discuss whether these give any clues to the content of the book.

- *What do the chapter headings tell you about the way the book has been written?*

Read the paragraph in italics on page 3. Ask the students to discuss the information this gives the reader. Add their suggestions to the class list.

Ask the students to write down a reason for wanting to read the book. For example:

- I want to find out what happens to Myra.
- I want to find out more about a mountain bike race.
- I want to look at the special equipment they use.

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read chapter 1 independently.

- *As you read, make a note of the different ways the text has been presented.*

When everyone has finished reading, discuss the way that the text includes body text as well as quotes from Myra in a different typeface.

- *How can you tell when it isn't the author speaking?*
- *What is the difference between the writing in the quotes and what the author has written?*

Discuss the language that Myra has used in the quotation marks and how it differs from the factual writing of the author.

- *Do you think this style of writing is effective?*

Ask each student to look at the labeled photographs on pages 8 and 9 with a partner. The students should help each other to clarify the purpose of the different items described in the captions.

- *How is this bike different from a regular bike?*

The students can now read pages 10 and 11 independently. When they have finished reading, they should be ready to explain the style and function of the clothing that a mountain biker wears.

- *Can you find one fact about the history of mountain biking?*

Explore the different ways the photographs have been used in the first part of the book.

- *Which photographs have been used to increase tension or to add to the theme of the story?*
- *How have photographs been used to give extra information?*

The students can now read the rest of the book independently.

- *As you read, note how the diagrams show Myra's progress in the race.*



Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

S Interpreting maps and cross sections

Myra's progress during the race is shown through the commentary in the text and the use of cross sections of the race terrain. Ask the students to find the cross sections and the map of the race course and discuss these.

- *How is the map on page thirty-one different from the cross section on page twenty-two?*
- *Why do you need both to have a good understanding of the course?*


Explain that the cross section translates the route into a straight line to show the rises and falls in the course. The map on page 31 gives a bird's-eye view but doesn't show the hills.

S Presenting information in different formats

The grid on page 17 is used to present a lot of information in a way that is easy to follow. Discuss how the different categories of information (day, week, duration of event, type of event) have been combined on a grid that provides an overview of Myra's training schedule.

Ask the students to use this grid as a model to create a similar grid showing a typical week of their life. Include activities at school as well as after school and on weekends.

S Recognizing and retelling events in sequence

 Ask the students to read chapter 4 again. Ask them to retell Myra's account of the race, writing down the main events of the chapter as opposed to the supporting detail. The students should be prepared to justify their selection of the main events.

- *Would the chapter still make sense if the main events were in a different order?*

The students can use the blackline master on page 82 to record the events in sequence.