

A Marathon Run

by Pat Quinn

Summary

The legend of Pheidippides' run from Marathon to Athens has led to a number of modern marathons. For serious runners, the training is very difficult and the competition intense. This text describes some of the famous marathons and introduces some of the fastest runners. It also gives instructions for organizing a fun run.

Features of the Text

- Report
- Procedural text
- Fact boxes
- Maps and keys
- Tables
- Bullet points

Purpose

A Marathon Run can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** using questions to focus reading;
- S** summarizing and synthesizing information;
- S** using the features of nonfiction texts to locate information.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Using questions to focus reading
- S** Summarizing and synthesizing information

Introducing the text

Ask the students what they know or remember from their previous reading about marathons. Explain to them that the aim of this lesson is to find specific information about marathons and marathon runners in the text. Write the following focus questions on chart paper:

1. How did the modern marathon start?
2. How long are marathons?
3. Where are marathons run today?
4. What kinds of courses are there?
5. How do people prepare for marathons?

Following Up

The students can:

- use the blackline master on page 45 to complete the chart comparing the marathon runners mentioned in the text
- complete the mara-fun activity on page 12 of the book
- write their responses to the focus questions
- plan a training schedule for a marathon, starting nine months before the race.

Ask the students to suggest ways in which they can keep track of the information they find as they are reading.

As you introduce and work through the text with the students, alert them to the specific features of this book that will help them to find the information they need.

Reading and discussing the text

Direct the students to the table of contents.

- *Where are we likely to find answers to the first question on the chart?*

Ask the students to read to the end of page 4.

- *What have you learned?*
- *Can you answer question two yet?*

The students can now read to the end of page 7.

Look at the maps on pages 6 and 7 and talk about the information they contain that can help to answer some of the questions.

- *Where do marathons take place?*
- *What can you tell me now about the courses that runners need to cover?*

Discuss the table on page 8.

- *How do we read this table? What do the numbers mean?*
- *Why are the times written in this way?*

Ask the students to explain parts of the table in their own words to make sure that they understand how to extract information from it. This could be done by asking individual students to respond to specific questions, such as:

- *What was the fastest women's time in the New York Marathon in 1998? What was the fastest women's time in 1996?*
- *Which marathon is fastest to run – New York or London?*
- *The text says that the times do not always get faster each year. Can you find a year when the time was slower than the previous year?*

Before resuming the reading, ask the students if they know the names of any marathon runners and talk about the ways people could prepare for a marathon.

Ask the students to read the rest of the book before discussing the last focus question.