



Reading Toolkit: Grade 7 Objective 2.A.4.c

Student Handout: Reading: Grade 7 Objective 2.A.4.c

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 4. Analyze important ideas and messages in informational texts

Objective c. State and support main ideas and messages

Assessment Limits:

In the text or a portion of the text

Selected Response (SR) Item

Question

Read this article titled "[The Fosbury Flop.](#)" Then answer the question below.

The author suggests that Fosbury is *best* remembered for —

- A. an outstanding performance
- B. inventing a new technique
- C. a long, successful career
- D. starting a new sport

Correct Answer

B. inventing a new technique

Question

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Handouts

The Fosbury Flop

by Rich Wallace

¹Dick Fosbury raced across the infield, planted his foot, and leaped into the air, straining with every muscle to propel himself over the high-jump bar. But as he soared into the air, his knee hit the bar, and it fell to the ground with a clang.

²The tall, lean high-school kid from Medford, Oregon, sat up in the pit and looked at the bar in frustration. There had to be a better way to do this.

³Fosbury had been trying to succeed with the straddle-and-roll style, in which a jumper rolled over the bar foot-first and face-down. But the highest jump he'd ever cleared was 5 feet, 4 inches. That wasn't good enough to place in most track-and-field meets.

"The roll is so complicated," Fosbury said years later. "I just never had the coordination for jumping that way."

He began to experiment during practice sessions, bending various ways as he jumped. He discovered that by turning his back to the bar as he leaped, he could flatten his body more and could thrust his legs higher into the air. The first time he tried the backward style in competition, he cleared 5 feet, 10 inches!

His coach had never seen such an odd style, and he tried to convince Fosbury to go back to the standard way of jumping. But the coach soon realized that the new style was working, so he decided to let Fosbury stay with it.

After high school, Fosbury entered Oregon State University, where Coach Berny Wagner also tried to get him to return to the traditional jumping style. He even tried to convince him to switch to a different event—the triple jump.

But Fosbury worked hard at his high jumping and began to lift weights to increase his strength. In his first meet during his sophomore year of college, he cleared 6 feet, 10 inches.

"I showed great coaching genius by realizing right then and there that suddenly I didn't need another triple jumper," Coach Wagner joked later.

Within a year, Fosbury's unique style of jumping had been dubbed "The Fosbury Flop," and his string of successes brought great excitement to the sport of track and field. He cleared 7 feet for the first time early in the 1968 season, then won the league championship and the National Collegiate Athletic Association title.

That summer he competed in the trials to select the United States team for the Summer Olympic Games. He soared over the bar at 7 feet, 3 inches to qualify for the team.

¹²Fosbury was a smashing success in the United States, but he would be facing much better competition at the Olympics in Mexico City. Fourteen entrants had cleared 7 feet or higher, and the pressure of the Olympic Games was an added factor.

But Fosbury easily made the qualifying jumps to advance to the next day's final round. Then, with 80,000 spectators gathered to watch the final, he cleared the opening height of 6 feet, 8 inches.

The long competition wore on, and Fosbury cleared each height as the bar rose higher. Soon only three jumpers remained.

Fosbury studied the bar at 7 feet, 3-3/8 inches. He concentrated as he never had before, raced across the field, and leaped over the bar on his first attempt. A jumper from the Soviet Union missed on all three of his tries, so just Fosbury and teammate Ed Carruthers remained to compete for the gold medal.

The bar was raised to 7 feet, 4-1/4 inches. It was higher than Fosbury had ever jumped, and it would be a new Olympic record. Both jumpers missed on their first two attempts. With the gold medal on the line, Fosbury got ready for his final try. He shut his eyes for a moment, rocked back and forth, then sprinted toward the bar.

"I just thought about floating over the bar," he said later. And with a great surge of strength, he did it. The Fosbury Flop was more than an oddity now. It had earned him an Olympic gold medal!

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