When you **analyze** something, you examine its parts to see how they work together. For example, you might analyze how the parts of a bicycle work to help a person move forward.

Reading involves analyzing, too. When you analyze a text, you sometimes look at what the text says **explicitly**, or directly. “The crowd clapped and cheered wildly when the home team won” is an example of explicit information because you know what happened and why. Other times, though, you must make an inference to figure out what the text is really saying. An **inference** is a reasonable guess based on textual evidence and what you already know.

**Find the slowest runner in the picture below. Is he sad about losing? How can you tell?**

Circle details in the picture that support an inference that the runner isn’t sad about losing. Then complete the chart below to describe what details support this inference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Evidence</th>
<th>Background Knowledge</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • The expression on the runner’s face is ____________
  ____________________________.
  • This runner says ____________
  ____________________________.
| A person who loves a sport also enjoys participating in it. | The runner is just happy to compete. Competing is more important to him than winning. |
Read the first three paragraphs of an article that showcases Michael Jordan.

The Flu Game  

by Maureen McBride

Game 5 of the 1997 basketball playoffs should have been the game that the Chicago Bulls lost. It should, in fact, have marked the Utah Jazz’s first NBA championship win. Michael Jordan, the Bulls’ star player, had spent the previous 24 hours bedridden and dehydrated with what doctors had diagnosed as the stomach flu. He had lost weight and had missed two key days of practice leading up to the game. It was a recipe for disaster.

But three hours before the start of Game 5, the best player in the history of basketball suited up and appeared on the court.

Though Jordan was visibly weak in the first quarter, he had scored 17 points by the second, putting the Bulls ahead at half time. However, while Jordan spent the third quarter overcome by nausea and fatigue, Utah managed to reclaim the lead.

(continued)

Explore how to answer these questions: “What is Michael Jordan’s attitude toward competition? What text evidence supports your idea?”

Michael Jordan’s attitude is not stated, so you must use evidence in the text to infer what he thinks.

Look for evidence of Jordan’s feelings about competition. One detail is shown in the chart below. Write another detail in column 1. Use this information to complete the inference in the last column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Evidence</th>
<th>Background Knowledge</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Jordan was diagnosed with the flu before Game 5. •</td>
<td>• Jordan’s team depended on him greatly. • Playing sports while sick requires determination.</td>
<td>Michael believes that competition __________________________.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What text evidence supports the inference that Michael Jordan is a fierce competitor? With a partner, find evidence in the article that supports your answer, and write it on the lines below.

__________________________________________________________________________________
Continue reading about Michael Jordan in “The Flu Game.” Use the Close Reading and the Hint to help you answer the question.

(continued from page 20)

“In the third quarter, I felt like I couldn’t catch my wind,” Jordan said. “I was just trying to get myself through it.”

In the fourth quarter, Jordan scored 18 more points. Then, with only 25 seconds left in the game, he scored a 3-point shot, and the Bulls beat the Jazz by only two points. At the end of the game, Jordan collapsed into the arms of his teammate Scottie Pippen.

“I almost played myself into passing out just to win a basketball game,” Jordan admitted later. “If we had lost, I would have been devastated.”

Hint

Look for the choice that shows Jordan’s talent, not his dedication or his luck.

Circle the correct answer.

Which sentence from the passage best supports the idea that Michael Jordan is a talented basketball player?

A  “In the third quarter, I felt like I couldn’t catch my wind,’ Jordan said. ‘I was just trying to get myself through it.’”

B  “In the fourth quarter, Jordan scored 18 more points.”

C  “Then, with only 25 seconds left in the game, he scored a 3-point shot, and the Bulls beat the Jazz by only two points.”

D  “I almost played myself into passing out just to win a basketball game,’ Jordan admitted later.”

Show Your Thinking

Michael Jordan is a dedicated basketball player. Find and write down a sentence from the passage that supports this statement. Then explain your answer.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

With a partner, make an inference about why Michael Jordan collapsed into Scottie Pippen’s arms. Support your inference with evidence from the text and background knowledge.