

Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

February 8, 2017

Article: Portrait of a leader

Tuesday, February 6, 2017 in the print replica of The Seattle Times: **SPORTS, C1**

Standard:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Objective:

Students will practice their reading skills and using space-related vocabulary building skills.

Pre-Reading:

1. Ask students to think of one skill that's involved in playing sports.
2. Write a few of their answers on the board (*web/graphic organizer*).
3. Have students, *Think-Write-Pair-Share*. Have them divide into groups of two and work together to come up with a list of 10 skills that are involved in playing sports. One student will be the scribe and the other, the speaker.
4. Groups will share their ideas; teacher can write answers on the board
5. Discuss how these same skills can transfer into how well students do in school, college and in the workplace?

Vocabulary:

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today's article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the "context," or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

ability

ceremony

immense

inspire

intimidating

leadership

nominees

precipice

recruiting

semifinal

sophomore

success

undefeated

Building Language Skills:

After students fill in the blanks in the passage on the following page, discuss the strategies they used to determine which word went where.

Use the vocabulary list as a word bank and fill in the blanks with the correct words in the following passage:

Article: Portrait of a leader

Sierra Shugarts remembers exactly what it was like to lose to Grand Valley State in the _____ game of the NCAA tournament during her _____ season at Western Washington in 2015.

“We’d never been there before, and they had, and they played like they had been there before and we hadn’t,” Shugarts said. “It was very _____. Grand Valley State is such a good team. This year, we had to really think, ‘We have the _____. We’re good enough. We deserve this.’”

“It was like we had to flip our mental switch.” That’s exactly what the Vikings managed to do in 2016.

Led by team captain Shugarts, now a junior, WWU beat Grand Valley State 3-2 in the Division II NCAA tournament championship game on Dec. 3 to win its first national title in program history and finished the season _____, with a 24-0-1 record. After the season, Shugarts became only the second defender to earn Player of the Year honors from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

Now, she’s one of five _____ for the MTRWestern Seattle Female Sports Star of the Year award. UW basketball player Kelsey Plum, UW volleyball player Courtney Schwan, UW golfer Julianne Alvarez and Breanna Stewart of the Seattle Storm round out the list of finalists, and the winner will be announced Wednesday evening, in a _____ at the Paramount Theater.

Shugart and Alvarez were the only two of the five nominees to win national championships last year for a Washington school, and the WWU junior credits her teammates for the Vikings’ _____.

“The whole team bought into our goal of winning a national championship,” Shugarts said. “The freshmen were a huge difference. I think if we could have had the freshmen last year, we would

have had two national championships. We had a really deep bench, and any one of our players could have played.”

But the Vikings also had good _____, said coach Travis Connell, who earmarked Shugarts for the captainship early on because he noticed how well she managed relationships and personalities on the team even as an underclassman.

“As soon as we started _____ her in high school, we knew she had those qualities,” Connell said. “One of the main things was that other players were drawn to her. They believed in her.”

Connell appointed Shugarts as captain last offseason, but he believes she would have led the team regardless of whether she wore the captain’s armband.

“The players were ready for her to be in that role regardless of how old she was,” Connell said. “It was going to happen. I give a lot of credit to Sierra. In order to win, you need good leadership, and she really stepped forward to take that on.”

Shugart had the presence of mind to mobilize the senior class to help her lead the team, Connell said, but also had the emotional maturity to figure out how to connect individually with each of her teammates.

“She’s a wonderful person and she takes her relationships seriously,” Connell said. “She understands how to treat other people and invests in her relationships, so there’s an _____ amount of trust between her and her teammates.”

Shugart also met Connell’s challenge to her at the start of the year, and raised her level of play in her junior season.

“This year, she really took a big step forward, recognizing big moments in big games and knowing she had to step up in the moment and make plays in those big games. That’s where her leadership grew — in her welcoming any opportunity on the field to make a statement and _____ her teammates,” Connell said.

You saw it in the little things, Connell said. For instance, against Bridgeport early in the season, with the Vikings up 2-0, an opposing attacker broke in behind Shugarts and raced down the field, forcing a one-on-one matchup. Refusing to concede, Shugarts tracked down the attacker and blocked her shot.

“It was a statement thing,” Connell said. “Us saying, ‘We’re not gonna give an inch.’ Moments like these are huge in the psyche of a team during the season.”

Shugarts’ toughness was evident in the big moments too, such as the Vikings’ game against the Colorado School of Mines in the Elite Eight of the NCAA tournament. WWU went down 1-0 early and earned a free kick. Shugarts coolly scored on a header, tying the game and galvanizing the Vikings into action. WWU eventually won 5-1.

Shugarts started in all 25 games for the Vikings and finished the season with four goals – surprising even herself because of how rarely defenders score in soccer.

After years of hovering at the _____, the Vikings finally have a national championship. Even Connell acknowledges they're in uncharted waters and it'll be interesting to see how his team deals with its success going into the 2017 season.

But with Shugarts back to captain the Vikings again, they're already off to a good start. All through last season, Connell said the Vikings kept track of the number of wins they'd need to clinch a national championship on a white board in their locker room.

The last number on the board before they left Bellingham to travel to Kansas City, Mo., for the Division II semifinals was "2." When the team got back to Bellingham as newly crowned NCAA Division II champions, a senior triumphantly erased the "2" on the Vikings' whiteboard and wrote a zero in its place.

Before the Vikings left for Christmas break, one of the freshmen had already replaced the "0" with a "25", Connell said. "Because that's the number of wins that we need for another national championship," Connell said.

Less than two months removed from their first national title, the Vikings are already looking forward to their spring season.

"I think the spring will be good for us," Shugarts said. "We'll play some Division I teams, and I think we're only gonna get better, especially with the freshmen a year better and the transfers that are coming in. We're excited about that."

Post-Reading Class Discussion:

- Did you learn anything new about sports, leadership or teamwork from reading this article?
- What do you think it would be like to be the captain of a college athletic team?
- What do you think it takes to be nominated for the MTRWestern Seattle Female Sports Star of the Year award?
- Would you want to be on Shugart's team? Why or why not?

As you ask questions of the class, call on student volunteers to summarize or recall what the previous speaker said.

Comprehension:

1. The Vikings also had good leadership, said coach Travis Connell, who earmarked Shugarts for the captainship early on because he noticed what?
2. "As soon as we started recruiting her in high school, we knew she had those qualities," Connell said. What qualities did he highlight in the article?
3. Shugart had the presence of mind to mobilize the senior class to help her lead the team, Connell said, but also had what special skill?
4. "She's a wonderful person and she takes her relationships seriously," Connell said. "She understands how to treat other people and invests in her relationships. How does this help her build relationships with her teammates?"
5. "This year, she really took a big step forward, recognizing big moments in big games and knowing she had to step up in the moment and make plays in those big games. What specifics did her coach give in how her leadership grew, from his perspective?"

Comprehension Question Answers:

1. He noticed how well she managed relationships and personalities on the team even as an underclassman.
2. "One of the main things was that other players were drawn to her. They believed in her."
3. The emotional maturity to figure out how to connect individually with each of her teammates.
4. There's an immense amount of trust between her and her teammates.
5. "In her welcoming any opportunity on the field to make a statement and inspire her teammates," Connell said.

Building Language Skills Answers:

Blanks, in the order of appearance:

semifinal

sophomore

intimidating

ability

undefeated

nominees

ceremony

success

leadership

immense

recruiting

inspire

precipice