

# Introduction to Teachers

Today's students receive information from an ever-increasing number of sources. To manage this overload of information, students must be able to distinguish between what is important and what is not—a key skill in reading nonfiction. They must understand what they read in traditional forms of nonfiction, such as textbooks and news articles, but they must also comprehend newer forms of nonfiction, such as advertisements on Web sites and e-mail on the Internet. Many students can benefit from reading more nonfiction, but finding good examples of nonfiction for instruction at different grade levels can be challenging.

## How to Use This Book

The purpose of this book is to provide interesting, well-written nonfiction selections for students to read. These selections can be used for practice and instruction in reading nonfiction, and they can be used to help prepare students for taking tests that include nonfiction passages.

This book provides 24 grade-appropriate nonfiction texts in a wide variety of genres, from informational articles, letters, and biographies to e-mail announcements and how-to guides. Each text (of one page or two pages) focuses on a high-interest topic and has:

- a prereading question to help students focus on what they read.
- a set of 2–6 comprehension questions that resemble the kinds of questions students will see on standardized tests.

The questions with these texts are designed to measure critical thinking and comprehension skills, such as summarizing information, drawing conclusions, and evaluating an author's purpose and point of view. These questions will help you assess students' comprehension of the material and will help students practice answering test questions. For different passages, questions include multiple-choice items, short-answer items, and written-response items that require longer answers. (You will find answers to these questions in the Answer Key beginning on page 46.)

## Extending Activities

For some of these richly detailed texts, you may want to have students go beyond answering only the questions that are provided. For example, for any given text you could have students write a summary of the selection in their own words or rewrite the passage from a different point of view. For some pairs of texts, you might have students compare and contrast the two selections. For other texts, you might want to create writing prompts and have students write full-length essays about what they have learned. Students will benefit from reading and analyzing these texts, discussing them in class or in small groups, and writing about them in a variety of ways.

**Text 1** Who is Brandi Chastain?

# A Soccer Superstar

The United States and China were tied 4–4 in the final game of the Women’s World Cup soccer match. More than 90,000 fans packed the Rose Bowl in California, where the game was being played. Another forty million people were watching on TV. All eyes were on Brandi Chastain, who was about to take her turn in the penalty kick shoot-out that would decide the winner. The ball flew into the upper right corner of the net. She had scored a goal! The U.S. team won 5–4!

Making that final goal to win the 1999 World Cup may well have been the highlight of Chastain’s career as a soccer player. But it was not her only triumph. She had been a soccer star in high school and college. She played on a winning World Cup team in 1991. At the 1996 Olympic games, when the U.S. women’s team won the gold medal, Chastain played every minute of every game. Soccer was at the center of her life.

Unfortunately, there were no women’s professional teams in the

United States for this talented athlete to join. In 1993, Chastain played for one season on a professional team in Japan. She was voted the team’s most valuable player. But when she returned home, she could not continue playing soccer as a professional.

Then at last, in May 2000, a United States professional league for women was formed. The Women’s United Soccer Association (WUSA) set up eight teams. Women from the 1999 World Cup team were assigned to different teams in the new league.

Brandi Chastain was assigned to play for San Francisco. Would she mind playing against her former teammates? Not likely! As usual, Brandi Chastain welcomed the chance to play against tough opponents—and win.

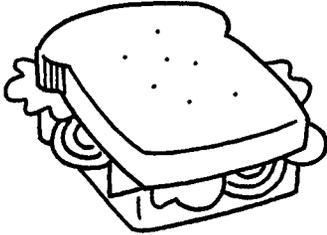


- 1. When Brandi Chastain made the most famous goal of her career, she was playing against —**
  - (A) China.
  - (B) her former teammates.
  - (C) Japan.
  - (D) San Francisco.
- 2. What can you tell about the 1999 U.S. World Cup team from this article?**
  - (F) Members of the team had been playing together for many years.
  - (G) Everyone expected the team to win.
  - (H) The players were not professionals.
  - (J) It was the first U.S. team to win the Women’s World Cup.

**Text 2** Why is a sandwich called a *sandwich*?

## Where Did We Get That Word?

The dancer put a cardigan sweater over her leotard. Then she sat down to eat a sandwich. *Cardigan*, *leotard*, *sandwich*—where did these words come from? Did you know that each of them was a person's name? Words that come from proper names are called *eponyms*, and there are many eponyms in English.



The sandwich, for example, was named for John Montagu, the Earl of Sandwich. He lived from 1718–1792. He loved to play cards and did not want to stop a game even to eat. By putting cold meat between two pieces of bread, he could eat while he played.

The cardigan sweater was named for an officer in the British army. In the 1800s, James Thomas Brudenell, the Earl of Cardigan, spent his own money to buy special knitted jackets for the men in his regiment. Knitted jackets with buttons soon came to be called *cardigans*.

Jules Leotard was a French circus performer. In 1859, at the age of twenty-one, Leotard performed the first mid-air somersault. He became known as the “daring young man on the flying trapeze.” Leotard invented a close-fitting one-piece suit to wear when he performed. Dancers and acrobats still call their close-fitting garments *leotards*.

Another person who gave her name to a style of clothing was Amelia Bloomer. Bloomer was the editor of a magazine called *The Lily*.

American women in her day were expected to wear heavy skirts that dragged on the floor. In 1851, a young woman named Elizabeth Smith Miller introduced a new kind of clothing that was much easier to move around in. She wore a dress that came only to the knees. Under it she wore baggy pants that fitted close at the ankles. Amelia Bloomer published a picture of the outfit in *The Lily*. She hoped women would adopt the new style. In news stories, reporters called the pants “bloomers.”

A hundred years later, people were still using the word *bloomers* for pants worn under a dress.



## Answer Key

### 1. A Soccer Superstar

1. A
2. H

### 2. Where Did We Get That Word?

1. B
2. H
3. It is about *eponyms*, or words that come from people's names.
4. He could eat while playing cards without stopping the game.
5. Bloomers are pants worn under a dress. They were first shown in a magazine edited by Amelia Bloomer, and reporters called the pants "bloomers."