

from *It's Not About the Bike*

Autobiography by Lance Armstrong
with Sally Jenkins

from *23 Days in July*

Nonfiction Account by John Wilcockson

VIDEO TRAILER



KEYWORD: HML7-814

What is a **WINNER**?

COMMON CORE

RI 1 Cite textual evidence to support inferences drawn from the text. **RI 2** Determine two or more central ideas in a text. **RI 6** Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text.

You might normally associate a winner with a contest, a game, or a sport. But can you also be a winner when you're not competing with other people? If so, how? In the selections you're about to read, you will find out how Lance Armstrong faced two very different challenges and came out a winner in both.

SKETCH IT Do you remember a time in your life when you felt like a winner? Maybe you won a spelling bee or achieved something that no one else ever had. Perhaps you faced a fear or a challenge. Create a sketch of the moment and include a title that describes what is happening. Share your sketch with the class.



● TEXT ANALYSIS: AUTHOR'S PURPOSE AND THEME

In literary works, the writer's goal is to convey a **theme**, or central idea about life or human nature. A reader examines the title, characters, language, and lessons learned. In an expository text, such as a magazine article, the **author's purpose** is to express thoughts or feelings, inform or explain, persuade, or entertain on a particular topic. To determine an author's purpose, you examine

• subject and tone • details and words • effect on the reader

As you read the excerpt from *It's Not About the Bike*, look for clues about the theme conveyed by Armstrong. As you read the excerpt from "23 Days in July," look for clues to help you determine the author's purpose.

● READING SKILL: MAKE INFERENCES

To understand what you read, it helps to **make inferences**, or make logical guesses based on new clues and what you already know. As you read, make equations to record your inferences about Lance Armstrong.

Clue + What I Know = Inference

▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

From the following words about Armstrong's victories, choose the word that best completes each sentence.

WORD	culminate	prestigious	stance
LIST	perception	recessed	terse

1. The athlete's comeback will ____ in a prized medal.
2. His ____, with his feet firmly planted, was one that showed determination.
3. She gave ____, one-word answers to some of his questions.
4. The winner received a ____ award befitting a hero.
5. Special features on the bicycle are ____ in order to aid the cyclist.
6. His nurse spoke with wisdom and ____.

Lance Armstrong

born 1971

Against All Odds

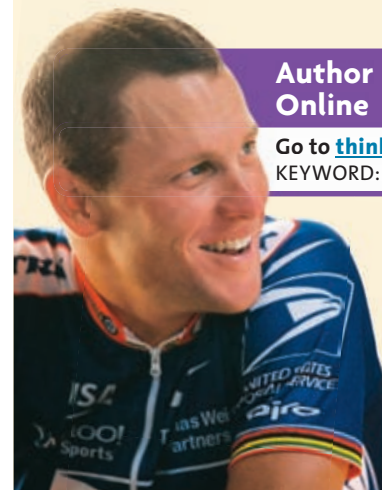
Lance Armstrong was a rising star in the world of professional cycling when his life was turned upside down. In 1996, he was diagnosed with cancer and given less than a 50 percent chance of survival. He underwent difficult chemotherapy treatments that made him very ill and did not guarantee success. However, Armstrong returned to professional bicycling and won his first Tour de France in 1999. He went on to win again in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004. John Wilcockson captured the moments of the history-making sixth Tour de France win of 2004 in *23 Days in July*.

Then in 2005, Armstrong did the unbelievable once again—he won a seventh Tour de France. After his 2005 win, he announced that he would devote his time and energy to a different kind of challenge: cancer research.

BACKGROUND TO THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The Tour de France

The Tour de France is a 3-week bicycling race that covers about 2,500 miles in France and other European countries.



Author
Online



Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML7-815



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

It's **NOT** About the Bike

Lance Armstrong

After his cancer diagnosis, Lance Armstrong launched a relentless attack against his disease with the help of the doctors and nurses at Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis. The photo on the right shows Armstrong after chemotherapy treatment.

There are angels on this earth and they come in subtle forms, and I decided LaTrice Haney was one of them. Outwardly, she looked like just another efficient, clipboard-and-syringe-wielding¹ nurse in a starched outfit. She worked extremely long days and nights, and on her off hours she went home to her husband, Randy, a truck driver, and their two children, Taylor, aged seven, and Morgan, four. But if she was tired, she never seemed it. She struck me as a woman utterly lacking in ordinary resentments, sure of her responsibilities and blessings and unwavering in her administering of care, and if that wasn't angelic
10 behavior, I didn't know what was.

Often I'd be alone in the late afternoons and evenings except for LaTrice, and if I had the strength, we'd talk seriously. With most people I was shy and **terse**, but I found myself talking to LaTrice, maybe because she was so gentle-spoken and expressive herself. LaTrice was only in her late 20s, a pretty young woman with a coffee-and-cream complexion, but she had self-possession and **perception** beyond her years. While other people our age were out nightclubbing, she was already the head nurse for the oncology research unit.² I wondered why she did it. "My satisfaction is to make it a little easier for people," she said.

20 She asked me about cycling, and I found myself telling her about the bike with a sense of pleasure I hadn't realized I possessed. "How did you start riding?" she asked me. I told her about my first bikes, and the early sense of liberation, and that cycling was all I had done since I was 16. I talked about my various teammates over the years, about their humor and selflessness, and I talked about my mother, and what she had meant to me. **A**

I told her what cycling had given me, the tours of Europe and the extraordinary education, and the wealth. I showed her a picture of

terse (tûrs) *adj.* speaking little; communicating in few words

perception (për-sěp'shən) *n.* insight; ability to understand people and situations

A AUTHOR'S PURPOSE AND THEME

Reread lines 1–25 and take note of the title. Based on this information, what do you think might be the theme of this excerpt?

1. **syringe-wielding** (sə-rînj' wêl'dîng): holding and using an instrument for giving patients injections.

2. **oncology** (ŏn-kŏl'ə-jē) **research unit**: in a hospital or clinic, the division or section dedicated to the study of cancer.



my house, with pride, and invited her to come visit, and I showed her snapshots of my cycling career. She leafed through images of me racing across the backdrops of France, Italy, and Spain, and she'd point to a picture and ask, "Where are you here?" **B**

I confided that I was worried about my sponsor, Cofidis,³ and explained the difficulty I was having with them. I told her I felt pressured. "I need to stay in shape, I need to stay in shape," I said over and over again.

"Lance, listen to your body," she said gently. "I know your mind wants to run away. I know it's saying to you, 'Hey, let's go ride.' But listen to your body. Let it rest."

I described my bike, the elegant high performance of the ultralight tubing and aerodynamic wheels. I told her how much each piece cost, and weighed, and what its purpose was. I explained how a bike could be broken down so I could practically carry it in my pocket, and that I knew every part and bit of it so intimately that I could adjust it in a matter of moments.

I explained that a bike has to fit your body, and that at times I felt melded to it. The lighter the frame, the more responsive it is, and my racing bike weighed just 18 pounds. Wheels exert centrifugal force⁴ on the bike itself, I told her. The more centrifugal force, the more momentum. It was the essential building block of speed. "There are 32 spokes in a wheel," I said. Quick-release levers allow you to pop the wheel out and change it quickly, and my crew could fix a flat tire in less than 10 seconds.

"Don't you get tired of leaning over like that?" she asked.

Yes, I said, until my back ached like it was broken, but that was the price of speed. The handlebars are only as wide as the rider's shoulders, I explained, and they curve downward in half-moons so you can assume an aerodynamic **stance** on the bike.

"Why do you ride on those little seats?" she asked.

The seat is narrow, contoured to the anatomy, and the reason is that when you are on it for six hours at a time, you don't want anything to chafe your legs. Better a hard seat than the torture of saddle sores. Even the clothes have a purpose. They are flimsy for a reason: to mold to the body because you have to wear them in weather that ranges from hot to hail. Basically, they're a second skin. The shorts have a chamois padded⁵ seat, and the stitches are **recessed** to avoid rash. **C**

When I had nothing left to tell LaTrice about the bike, I told her about the wind. I described how it felt in my face and in my hair. I told her about being in the open air, with the views of soaring Alps, and the

B MAKE INFERENCES

Why might LaTrice ask Lance specific questions about his bicycling career?

Language Coach

Word Definitions The word *aerodynamic* means "designed with rounded edges so as to reduce wind drag." Why would such wheels appeal to a professional bicyclist?

stance (stāns) *n.* posture; position

recessed (rē'sĕst') *adj.* set-in or set back **recess** *v.*

C MAKE INFERENCES

Why is Lance able to talk so enthusiastically about his bike even though he is seriously ill?

3. **Cofidis**: the sponsor of the French cycling team that Armstrong then rode for.

4. **centrifugal** (sĕn-trīf'yə-gəl) **force**: the force that seems to cause a revolving object to move away from the point it revolves around.

5. **chamois** (shām'ē) **padded**: padded with soft leather made from the skin of goats, sheep, or deer.

glimmer of valley lakes in the distance. Sometimes the wind blew as if it were my personal friend, sometimes as if it were my bitter enemy, sometimes as if it were the hand of God pushing me along. I described the full sail of a mountain descent, gliding on two wheels only an inch wide. **D**

70 “You’re just out there, free,” I said.

“You love it,” she said.

“Yeah?” I said.

“Oh, I see it in your eyes,” she said.

I understood that LaTrice was an angel one evening late in my last cycle of chemo.⁶ I lay on my side, dozing on and off, watching the steady, clear drip-drip of the chemo as it slid into my veins. LaTrice sat with me, keeping me company, even though I was barely able to talk.

“What do you think, LaTrice?” I asked, whispering. “Am I going to pull through this?”

80 “Yeah,” she said. “Yeah, you are.”

“I hope you’re right,” I said, and closed my eyes again.

LaTrice leaned over to me.

“Lance,” she said softly, “I hope someday to be just a figment of your imagination.⁷ I’m not here to be in your life for the rest of your life. After you leave here, I hope I never see you ever again. When you’re cured, hey, let me see you in the papers, on TV, but not back here. I hope to help you at the time you need me, and then I hope I’ll be gone. You’ll say, ‘Who was that nurse back in Indiana? Did I dream her?’” **E**

It is one of the single loveliest things anyone has ever said to me.

90 And I will always remember every blessed word. 

D MAKE INFERENCES

Reread lines 63–69. What can you infer about why Lance rides his bike?

E AUTHOR’S PURPOSE AND THEME

Reread lines 83–88. What does this quote suggest about the theme?

6. **chemo** (kē’mō): short for *chemotherapy*.

7. **figment of your imagination**: something not real; a fantasized or made-up image.



Lance Armstrong and LaTrice Haney

23 DAYS IN JULY

JOHN WILCOCKSON

Although Armstrong went on to win a seventh Tour de France in 2005, the 2004 race was especially meaningful since no other cyclist had ever won a sixth Tour.

Paris is looking magnificent. Her golden domes and eagles and gilded gates are all glowing in the late-afternoon sunshine. The dark-green plane trees along the Champs-Élysées have been newly trimmed. Rainbows shimmer in the spray from the crystal fountains of the Place de la Concorde.¹ And across the Seine River, the thousand-foot-high Eiffel Tower stands starkly regal against an opaque blue sky.

Another Tour de France has just ended, this one **culminating** in a historical sixth consecutive victory for a long-jawed young man from the lone star state of Texas. He stands now on the top step of the podium, at the finish line on the Champs-Élysées. Dressed in a golden tunic, Lance Armstrong holds a yellow LiveStrong² cap over his heart as a full-blooded rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner” rings out, resounding proudly over the russet-brown cobblestones of these Elysian Fields. . . .³

At the foot of the yellow steps of the canopied, most **prestigious** viewing stand, Armstrong’s coach Chris Carmichael reminds me: “I told you back in March, it wasn’t even going to be close. You gotta know the intensity of this guy. Nobody has got his intensity. Nobody. It’s just phenomenal.” **F**

Analyze Visuals ▶

Look back at the picture of Lance Armstrong on page 817. What comes to mind as you **contrast** the two pictures?

culminate
(kŭl'mə-nāt') v. to reach the highest point or degree

prestigious (prĕ-stĕ'jəs)
adj. having a high reputation

F AUTHOR'S PURPOSE AND THEME

Consider what Chris Carmichael says about Armstrong. What might be the writer’s purpose in including the quote?

- Champs-Élysées** (shän-zā-lē-zā') . . . **Place de la Concorde** (pläs' də lä kôn-kôrd'): a famous boulevard and a large plaza in Paris.
- LiveStrong**: livestrong.org is the official Web site for the Lance Armstrong Foundation.
- Elysian** (ī-līzh'ən) **Fields**: the English translation of *Champs-Élysées*. In Greek mythology, the Elysian Fields were where good people went after death.





Armstrong said on the eve of this day, “Winning in ’99 was a complete
20 shock and surprise for me. Not that I’ve gotten used to winning the Tour
de France, but I do know what it means and I know what it feels like to
ride into the Champs-Élysées. . . . This one is very, very special for me.
They’re all special, but this one is something that in ’99 I never believed
possible. I never thought I’d win a second one, or a third, or however
many. This one is incredibly special. I’m humbled by it. A lot of people
just one month ago thought it wouldn’t be possible for me to do it. We
tried to stay calm, the team tried to stay calm . . . and we were confident
that we had a good chance.” **G**

I think back to December, and remember something Armstrong told
30 me in Austin: “I’m doing three or four hours of exercise every day right
now. Yesterday I was in DC, so I got up early—I’d just come back from
Europe and had jetlag⁴—and I went down to the gym for an hour and
a half . . . yes, lifting weights. It was pouring with freezing rain outside,
so I went back to the room, and rode my bike for an hour on the rollers.
It’s not easy to ride rollers. I hate that.”

But he doesn’t hate this: homage from a half-million people lining
the most glorious boulevard in the world. When he and his U.S. Postal
team are introduced by race announcer Daniel Mangeas, as the last team
to start their lap of honor around the Champs-Élysées, the modern
40 “anthem” of the British rock group Queen thumps into the balmy Paris air:

**G AUTHOR’S
PURPOSE AND
THEME**

Reread lines 19–28.
What effect is the writer
creating by including
this quote?

4. **jet lag**: tiredness and other effects that may be caused by a long flight through several time zones.




Armstrong, in yellow, takes a victory lap with his teammates along the Champs-Élysées in Paris.

“We are the champions, my friend. . . . We are the champions. We are the champions. We are the champions . . . of the world.”

Girlfriends perch on boyfriends’ shoulders to get a better view. Banners unfurl, one saying, “The eyes of Texas are upon you.” Thousands of fans from all over the United States line the barriers, most dressed in yellow. Two guys from Texas in the crowd say, “We did it. And next year we’ll come again!” . . . **H**

Now they’re playing another song over the loudspeakers. Its words float down the boulevard backed by the thumping guitar chords of the champion’s gal: “All I want to *do* . . . is have some fun . . .” And Lance *is* having fun. The celebrations will continue all night, maybe for the rest of his life. A life that almost ended in 1996. Six Tour de France wins have come along since then, since his chemo nurse LaTrice gave him that silver cross.

“I really love this event,” Armstrong says. “I think it’s an epic sport. It’s something I will sit around the TV and watch in ten years, and in twenty years.” He will always be a fan of the Tour, but right now he’s the champion. *Le patron*.⁵

It’s after 7 p.m. and the crowds are starting to leave. One of the last to go is a friendly, middle-aged American. He rolls up his Texas flag, ⁶⁰ grabs his wife’s hand, and, before he walks down the stone steps into the Metro,⁶ proclaims to the world, “He’s the man!” 

H MAKE INFERENCES

Why are the fans dressed in yellow?

5. *le patron* (lə pä-trôn) French: the boss.

6. **Metro**: the Paris subway.

Comprehension

- Recall** In the excerpt from *It's Not About the Bike*, why is Armstrong in the hospital?
- Clarify** Why does Armstrong call his head nurse, LaTrice, an “angel”?
- Clarify** Reread lines 22–25 in the excerpt from “23 Days in July.” Armstrong says winning the 2004 Tour de France was “incredibly special” to him. Why was it so special?

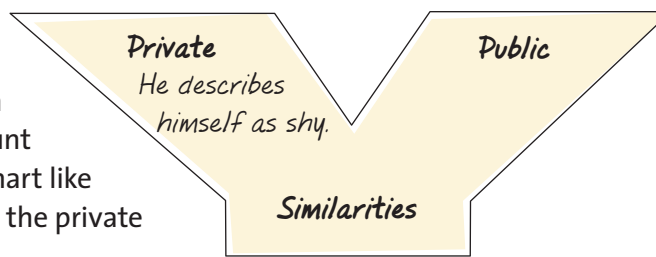
COMMON CORE

RI 1 Cite textual evidence to support inferences drawn from the text. **RI 2** Determine two or more central ideas in a text. **RI 6** Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text. **RI 9** Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information.

Text Analysis

- Make Inferences** Review the inference equations that you made while reading. Which, if any, of your inferences have changed? Explain your reasons for either changing an inference or keeping an original inference.

- Compare and Contrast** The autobiography *It's Not About the Bike* shows the private side of Lance Armstrong. On the other hand, John Wilcockson's account portrays Armstrong in public. Use a Y chart like the one shown to compare and contrast the private and public man.



- Examine Author's Purpose and Theme** Explain the difference between the theme of *It's Not About the Bike* and the author's purpose in “23 Days in July.” Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- Draw Conclusions** In 1996, Armstrong beat cancer. In 2004, he became a six-time winner of the Tour de France. Considering what you learned from the selections that you just read, what qualities helped Armstrong win such big victories?

Extension and Challenge

- Inquiry and Research** Research the Tour de France and create a tourist's guide to the race. Provide the reader with some historical information, explain the rules of the race, and include a map of the upcoming race.



What is a WINNER?

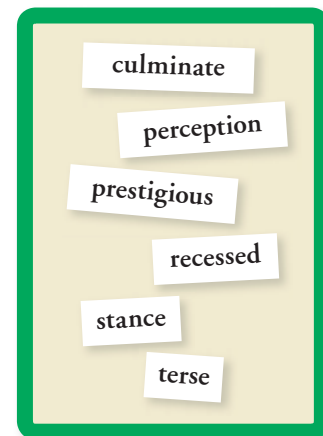
Take another look at the winner sketch you created for the activity on page 814. Take a look at the victory photograph of Lance Armstrong on page 821. Think about the details you've learned about Armstrong's struggles. What does your sketch have in common with the photograph?

Vocabulary in Context

▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

For each item, choose the word that differs most in meaning from the other words. Refer to a dictionary if you need help.

1. chatty, talkative, terse, gossipy
2. culminate, top, begin, crown
3. awkward, hidden, recessed, inset
4. pose, posture, worry, stance
5. intuition, ignorance, understanding, perception
6. prestigious, notable, honorable, unworthy



ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN WRITING

• demonstrate • goal • impact • link • undertake

Lance Armstrong as portrayed in the first selection is pursuing a very different **goal** from the Lance Armstrong of the second selection. Write a brief description of these goals. Try to use one or more of the Academic Vocabulary words in your description.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: ANGLO-SAXON AFFIXES

Many words we commonly use come from Anglo-Saxon (Old English). Some of these Anglo-Saxon words are used today as **affixes**—word parts that can be attached to the beginning (**prefix**) or end (**suffix**) of base words to create new words. The chart shows Anglo-Saxon prefixes and suffixes and their meanings. Understanding the meaning of the affixes can help you determine the meanings of unfamiliar words that contain these word parts.

PRACTICE Add either an Anglo-Saxon prefix or suffix from the chart to the base word in each sentence. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

1. She thought the project would take longer than it did, so she accidentally ____ estimated the time it would take to complete it.
2. We're planning to make welcoming speeches at the neighbor ____ block party next week.
3. A biography often includes details about a person's child ____.
4. Wear extra layers for the trip by putting a sweatshirt over your ____ shirt.
5. A diary entry can express a subject's inner ____ feelings.

COMMON CORE

L 4b Use grade-appropriate affixes as clues to the meaning of a word.

Prefix	Meaning
<i>over-</i>	above; too much
<i>under-</i>	below; less than
Suffix	Meaning
<i>-most</i>	most, nearest to
<i>-hood</i>	state, quality, or group

Interactive Vocabulary **THINK** central
Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML7-825