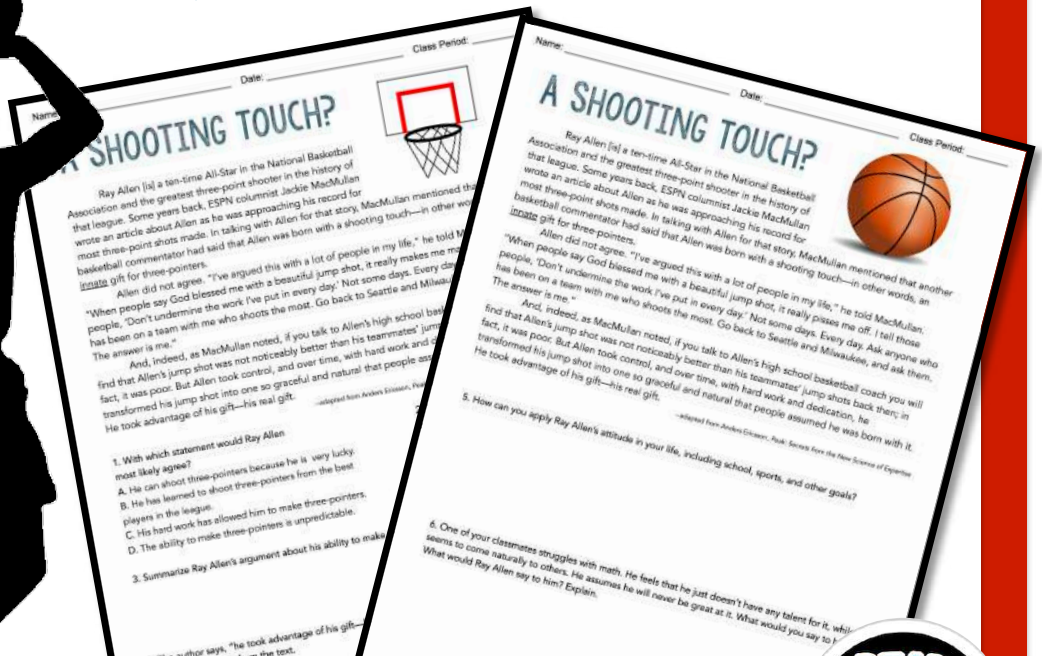


Read Relevant Presents:

GROWTH MINDSET

reading comprehension



BASKETBALL THEME

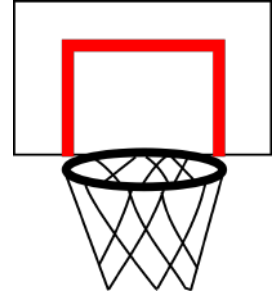


This inspiring growth mindset passage is approximately 6th grade level, but can be used with a range of students. Great for several reading comprehension skills: vocabulary, summarizing, text-to-self connections, and making inferences.

This two-page, printable resource is no-prep and high-interest.

I hope you and your students enjoy it!

A SHOOTING TOUCH?



Directions: read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Ray Allen [is] a ten-time All-Star in the National Basketball Association and the greatest three-point shooter in the history of that league. Some years back, ESPN columnist Jackie MacMullan wrote an article about Allen as he was approaching his record for most three-point shots made. In talking with Allen for that story, MacMullan mentioned that another basketball commentator had said that Allen was born with a shooting touch—in other words, an innate gift for three-pointers.

Allen did not agree. “I’ve argued this with a lot of people in my life,” he told MacMullan. “When people say God blessed me with a beautiful jump shot, it really makes me mad. I tell those people, ‘Don’t undermine the work I’ve put in every day.’ Not some days. Every day. Ask anyone who has been on a team with me who shoots the most. Go back to Seattle and Milwaukee, and ask them. The answer is me.”

And, indeed, as MacMullan noted, if you talk to Allen’s high school basketball coach you will find that Allen’s jump shot was not noticeably better than his teammates’ jump shots back then; in fact, it was poor. But Allen took control, and over time, with hard work and dedication, he transformed his jump shot into one so graceful and natural that people assumed he was born with it. He took advantage of his gift—his real gift.

--adapted from Anders Ericsson, *Peak: Secrets from the New Science of Expertise*

1. With which statement would Ray Allen most likely agree?

- A. He can shoot three-pointers because he is very lucky.
- B. He has learned to shoot three-pointers from the best players in the league.
- C. His hard work has allowed him to make three-pointers.
- D. The ability to make three-pointers is unpredictable.

2. What does innate mean, as used in this passage?

- A. unusual
- B. natural
- C. limited
- D. extreme

3. Summarize Ray Allen’s argument about his ability to make three-pointers in your own words.

4. The author says, “he took advantage of his gift—his real gift.”
What does he mean by “his real gift?” Explain using details from the text.



5. How can you apply Ray Allen’s attitude in your life, including school, sports, and other goals?

6. One of your classmates struggles with math. He feels that he just doesn’t have any talent for it, while it seems to come naturally to others. He assumes he will never be great at it. What would you say to him? What would Ray Allen say to him? Explain.

ANSWER KEY

1. C

2. B

3. Answers will vary; Ray Allen says that he was not born with the natural talent for making three pointers—in fact, he wasn't very good at it in high school—but he worked hard everyday and improved.

4. His “real gift” means his perseverance and his ability to put in the work required to become great.

5. Answers will vary

6. Answers will vary; Ray Allen would probably say that you don't have to be born with a natural talent for something to become good at it. If you work hard like he did, you can improve at anything.

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About the Author



This is my sixth year teaching language arts. I've taught general and special education, ranging from grades 6-12.

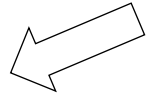
I have a Masters degree in Reading from Mercer University and a Bachelor's degree in 7-12 Secondary English Language Arts Education from Ohio University.

One of my favorite educational experiences was completing my student teaching in South Africa in 2012.

I love YA literature and enjoy creating resources for teachers to bring culturally-response, high-interest lessons into the classroom.

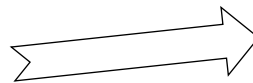
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