

Focus Question:

What makes March Madness so popular in the United States?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

Each spring fans turn their attention to the frenzy and excitement of one of the most popular sporting events in the United States. *March Madness* is a detailed look at the ins and outs of this college-level basketball championship tournament. The book can also be used to teach students how to discern the author's point of view and to effectively summarize.

The book and lesson are also available for levels T and W.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Determine the author's point of view
- ☐ Describe information provided by the table of contents
- ☐ Recognize and use exclamation marks
- ☐ Place words in alphabetical order

Materials

- ☐ Book: *March Madness* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Author's point of view, exclamation marks, alphabetical order worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *bracket* (n.), *committee* (n.), *qualify* (v.), *single-elimination tournament* (n.), *underdogs* (n.), *upset* (n.)

Enrichment: *miracle* (n.), *predict* (v.), *professional* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *difficult* (adj.), *final* (adj.), *goal* (n.), *include* (v.), *predict* (v.), *show* (v.), *through* (prep.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

Write the word *tournament* on the board and read it aloud to students. Explain that a *tournament* is a series of games or contests in which teams or individuals compete again each other. Have students work in small groups to discuss examples of tournaments, such as chess tournaments and soccer tournaments. Invite each group to share its discussion with the class and list the different types of tournaments on the board. Write the phrase *single-elimination tournament* on the board and have students discuss its meaning in small groups. Explain that, in a *single-elimination tournament*, if a team loses one game or one round it can no longer continue on. Provide each student with a sheet of lined paper. Invite students to imagine that they are participating in a single-elimination tournament of their choosing. Have them write about the characteristics they would need to embody to be successful, such as being passionate, patient, hardworking, determined, and so on. Have students share their writing in small groups and then with the class.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *March Madness*. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

Explain to students that engaged readers *summarize*, or create a brief overview, as they read. Explain to students that when readers summarize what they read it helps them identify the sequence of events in a book. Point out that a summary often answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Create a chart on the board with the headings *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*. Read aloud a summary from the back of a familiar book. Ask students what information is included in the summary and what

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

information is omitted. Remind students that a summary includes only the most important details and can recount the book in its entirety or an individual section of the book.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Author's point of view

- Explain to students that when an author writes about a topic he or she often expresses his or her attitude and opinion about the subject. Point out that this is called the *author's point of view*. Discuss that the author's point of view is often expressed through his or her purpose for writing: to inform, to persuade, or to entertain the reader. Point out that, although an author's purpose when writing a nonfiction book is usually to inform, we can often infer how the author feels about the topic from the details included in the book.
- Explain to students that as they read the book they will be looking for details and clues that point to the author's point of view.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about March Madness. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *What is March Madness?* (level 1) page 4
- *Why is March Madness so important to the players?* (level 2) pages 5 and 6
- *How do teams qualify to play in the March Madness*

tournament? (level 1) page 7

- *What is a bracket, and how do brackets make March Madness popular?* (level 2) pages 9 and 10
- *Who is Breanna Steward, and why is she well-known?* (level 1) page 12
- *What aspects of the March Madness tournament make it so exciting for fans?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *How does the author feel about March Madness? How do you know?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Table of contents

Explain that the *table of contents* is a list of the sections in a book. Discuss how it can be used to find information quickly and is located at the front of the book. Have students turn to page 3 of the book. Ask students what they can expect to read about in this book. Invite students to work with a partner to predict what information each section might contain. Ask students: *How does the table of contents help you create a summary of the book? In which section might you learn about historical March Madness games?* Continue to have students derive information from the table of contents.

Skill Review

- Review how to summarize with students. Have them work with a partner to reread the section "Now or Never." Direct them back to the chart on the board and review that a summary often includes *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*. Invite students to share details with the rest of the class and record this information on the board. Have volunteers offer an oral summary of the section.
- Review with students that an author of a nonfiction book often expresses his or her point of view about a topic. Have students turn to page 6 and reread the page.
- Model identifying the author's point of view. **Think-aloud:** *I know that an author includes details in his or her writing that reflect his or her beliefs or feelings about the topic. As I read, I look for details that the author includes to make a point about the topic. For example, on page 6, the author states that college basketball players play for the love of the game and are highly emotional during the March Madness tournament. These details show that the author respects college basketball players and views them as passionate and hardworking athletes.*
- Have students work with a partner to reread different sections of the book and look for examples of the author's point of view about March Madness. Invite partners to share their findings with the class.
- Model how to complete the *author's-point-of-view worksheet*. Remind them to find specific clues in the book that support the author's point of view.

After Reading

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Author's point of view**

Review the author's-point-of-view worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups. Invite volunteers to discuss their findings as a class.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary, but sample responses may include the following: *March Madness is popular in the United States because it is an exciting tournament due to its single-elimination rules. It is also popular because people can fill out brackets about which teams they think will win and they are often competing with other people, such as friends or co-workers.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Exclamation marks**

- Ask students to turn to page 10 and locate the text box labeled "Bracket Bragging." Read the following sentence aloud: *President Obama wrote her a letter back with his bracket that read, "Next time, I'll check with you first!"* Point out the exclamation mark. Explain or review that an exclamation mark, which can also be called an exclamation point, is a punctuation mark used to show strong feelings or excitement.
- Point out to students that the author does not use exclamation marks at the end of every sentence, even though there is a lot of excitement in the book. Explain that the overuse of exclamation marks is considered poor writing because it does not accurately convey the feelings of the author and can distract the reader.
- Ask students to find other examples of exclamation marks in the text. Discuss why the exclamation mark is appropriate in each sentence.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students to write a sentence that ends with an exclamation mark on

a separate piece of paper. Have them read their sentence aloud and explain why the sentence should end with an exclamation mark.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **exclamation marks worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Alphabetical order**

- Review or explain the process of putting a list of words into alphabetical order. Remind students that if the first letter of two words is the same they must compare the next two letters instead.
- Write the words *March* and *basketball* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*basketball*). Write the words *March* and *madness* on the board. Point out that these words begin with the same two letters. Explain that when words start with the same two letters we must look to the third letter to determine the correct alphabetical order. Have a volunteer explain the correct order of the words and how he or she knows.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words on the board: *bracket, basket, ball, bragging, Breanna*. Have students work independently to write the words in alphabetical order. Invite them to share their responses in small groups and then discuss as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **alphabetical order worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.