

« They say that the mental aspects of sports is just as important as the physical part. »

I started swimming when I was seven. [...] “I’m cold”, I remember saying. And, “I have to go to the bathroom.” And, “Can’t I just sit here and watch the other kid? I’ll stay here by the side.” Mostly I remember I didn’t like putting my face under the water. [...]

- 5 It would be a couple of years yet until I would be diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or ADHD. All everyone knew, in particular my mom, my sisters, my coaches, was that I had all this energy and that I could bleed off a lot of it by playing sports: baseball, soccer, lacrosse, swimming, you name it.

- 10 What I discovered soon after starting to swim was that the pool was a safe haven. I certainly couldn’t have put that into words then but can look back and see it now. Two walls at either end. Last line on either sides. A black stripe on the bottom for direction. I could go fast in the pool, it turned out, in part because being in the pool slowed down my mind.

- 15 In the water I felt, for the first time, in control. Swimmers like to say they can “feel” the water. Even early on, I felt it. I didn’t have to fight the water. Instead, I could feel how I moved in it. How to be balanced. What might make me go faster or slower.

It would be ridiculous to say that I was a world-class talent from the very start. If it wasn’t for the fact that Hilary and Whitney were swimming, I probably wouldn’t have started swimming. [...]

When I was younger, it seemed like almost anything could set me off into an emotional jag or launch me into a full-on tantrum, throwing my goggles and generally carrying on.

- 20 All this agitation was probably just my way of seeking attention. Mostly, I wanted to fit in, especially with the older kids. I just wanted to be acknowledged.

And yet amid all this drama, I already had a dream: I wanted to win an Olympic gold medal.

No Limits by Michael Phelps with Alan Abrahamson, 2009.

QUESTIONS

1. What kind of document is it? (0,5)

2. Who do the pronouns refer to ? (1pt)

- a. « they » l.1
b. « I » l.3

3. VOCABULARY Find in the text the translations of the following words (3,5):

- a. sous :
b. havre, refuge :
c. Au lieu de :
d. lunettes de piscine :
e. être reconnu, considéré :
f. colère :
g. s'intégrer :

4. TRUE OR FALSE. Justify by quoting the text. (3)

- a. Michael Phelps is a physically disabled athlete.
b. By being in the water, he felt more serene.

- c. He became a talented athlete as soon as he started swimming.

5. Why did he start swimming ? (two answers in your own words) (2pts)

6. In your own words, explain what illness Michael Phelps suffers from. Why do you think swimming helps him? (3)

7. Divide the text into 3 parts and choose the best title for each part: Becoming a champion – Difficult beginnings – Determined to succeed in spite of all – Fair play – Discovering the field – The dark side of sport (3)

Part 1: from line ... to line...:

Part 2: from line ... to line...:

Part 3: from line ... to line...:

8. What was the dream of Michael Phelps ? (in your own words) (2pts)

9. According to what happened to Michael Phelps, is sports just a game ? (2pts)