

# MODERN ROLE MODELS AND SUPERSTARS OF PRO FOOTBALL

## Teacher's Manual



Covering all books in the Mason Crest series:  
MODERN ROLE MODELS  
SUPERSTARS OF PRO FOOTBALL

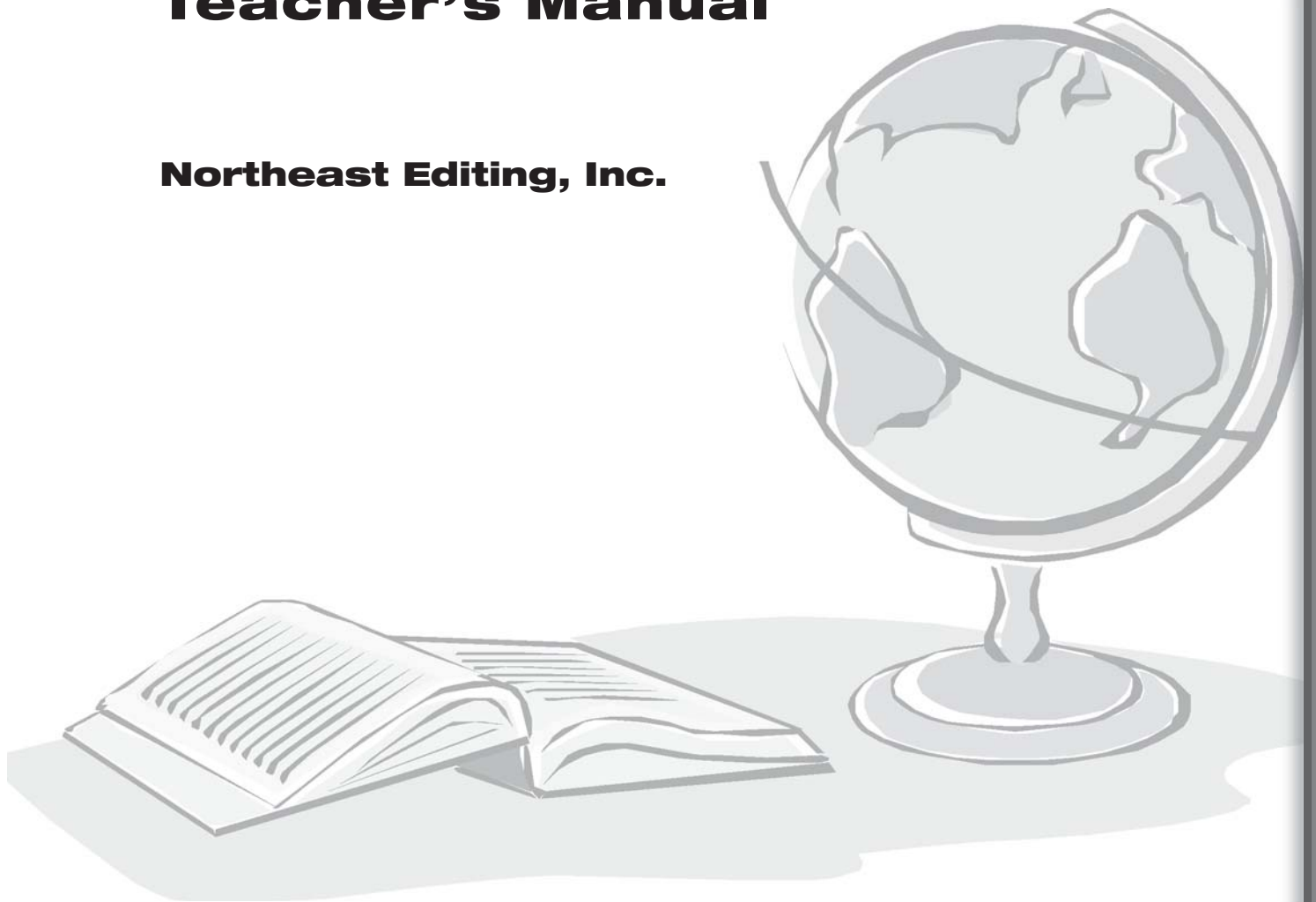
**Northeast Editing, Inc.**



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**Teacher's Manual**

**Northeast Editing, Inc.**



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# INTRODUCTION

To assist adolescent readers in developing vital reading skills, Mason Crest has designed these two series of modern biographies. One focuses on different modern role models—actors, musicians, and athletes—and the other highlights outstanding professional football players. These biographies are meant to encourage adolescent readers who struggle to interact with traditional nonfiction texts. The style and subject matter of these books creates a familiar, nontraditional reading environment for students.

According to research by the International Reading Association, if you want to motivate teens to read:

- Give them appealing selections of reading material and let them choose the materials that speak to them the most.
- Understand that though adolescent readers may choose reading materials outside the realm of classic literature, this does not mean that they can't learn anything valuable from what they are reading. Students who are not drawn to classic literature can develop basic reading skills by analyzing other types of texts. These students may also develop an interest in reading that might lead them to explore the classics in the future.
- Support their learning by allowing students to develop their own interests, even if these interests appear limited. Once students become more proficient and competent readers, they will be ready to branch out into new areas.

The biographies in these series are designed to help you achieve these goals. They also contain supplemental information to reinforce understanding of social, cultural, and historical subjects that tie in to the texts to broaden students' understanding and expand on their interests. Students who wish to further explore a certain topic can use the lists of related books and Web sites to find more information. The lists of vocabulary words in each book contain definitions of subject-related terms to further develop student comprehension.

Chances are that students will actually enjoy reading these books. Some may even develop recreational reading habits that they didn't have in the past. Students who already exhibit a love of reading will also benefit from these texts. The more adolescents read, the more they develop not only as students, but also as well-rounded people and global citizens. These books offer opportunities for critical thinking and overall comprehension of predominant issues in our world today. Helping students improve their reading skills, enhancing their comprehension of global issues, and encouraging critical thinking arms students with the tools they need to succeed in the world today.

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This teacher's guide offers brief chapter-by-chapter summaries of each book, highlighting the major events and information found within the text, allowing you to stay on top of your students' reading content.

This manual also includes specific activities and comprehension questions geared toward pushing students into the realm of critical thinking. Each activity is accompanied by an icon that shows the main focus of the activity. Activity questions offer students the opportunity to stretch their minds by requiring them to



Work independently



Work with others through group activities



Learn new vocabulary and use it in the classroom



Become more proficient at learning and using the English language (for ELL students)



Practice writing in response to a question or a reading



Conduct research on a variety of topics



Exhibit a variety of reading comprehension skills, including recalling details, analyzing tone, comparing and contrasting, understanding figurative language, predicting, and determining author's purpose



Make connections between what they read and what they've experienced in their own lives, as well as make connections between their lives and the lives of others



Form their own opinions about a variety of issues



Understand and use graphic organizers



Develop verbal skills through public speaking



Participate in class discussions

“” Examine quotes to determine meaning or relevance



Examine photographs to determine relevance

Teachers should use these activities and exercises in conjunction with the texts to help their students develop the skills they need to confidently and competently understand the printed word.

### **FOR MORE CLASSROOM SUPPORT**

Go to [www.masoncrest.com](http://www.masoncrest.com) and click on each series for downloadable lesson plans. You'll also be able to click on the correlations to state standards for each book.

## MODERN ROLE MODELS

For the most part, adolescents are curious about the lives of celebrities. They read about stars in magazines and watch television programs highlighting the achievements and blunders of actors, athletes, and musicians. Though not all celebrity actions portray positive messages, some of these stars have overcome great odds to accomplish what once seemed impossible. Others have donated their own time and resources to helping others in need and to educating youth about world issues. The generosity and drive of these celebrities make them excellent role models for young people today. This series provides students with:

- books that will engage students with interesting stories and will expand on understanding of issues prevalent in students' lives today.
- stories that inspire students to make a difference or follow a dream.
- activities that are fun for students and teachers alike to enrich the classroom experience as a whole.

This series shows students how hard work and compassion can really pay off. It demonstrates the formulas that have led to celebrity successes and encourages students to think critically about the world around them. Reluctant readers will gain confidence, tackling basic reading skills through the enjoyment of nontraditional classroom texts. Students will build reading and thinking skills through exercises designed to excite and enrich adolescent readers.

# ADAM SANDLER

by Michael V. Uschan

## CHAPTER 1: A GUY'S GUY

Comedian Adam Sandler is famous for his acting, singing, producing, and writing. Some of his most popular movies are *Happy Gilmore*, *Billy Madison*, and *Reign On Me*. While most people know Adam for his comedic portrayals and crazy stunts, his recent works have focused on more serious themes. Whether he is playing an '80s wedding singer or a grieving husband, the famous actor has a talent for entertaining audiences.

## CHAPTER 2: GROWING UP HAPPY

Growing up in New York, Adam began performing at a young age by amusing his family and friends with songs and jokes. As the class clown, he often got into trouble in school. He attended New York University and, with the encouragement of his brother, performed stand-up comedy in the evenings. A casting agent discovered him, and he soon had guest roles on television shows like the 1980s sitcom "The Cosby Show."

## CHAPTER 3: THE MULTITALENTED ADAM SANDLER

Moving to Los Angeles improved Adam's chances of becoming famous. In 1990, he was hired as a writer for *Saturday Night Live*, a very popular comedy show. After Adam appeared in several skits, his recurring characters became extremely popular. Actor David Spade said, "You just can't help wanting to watch him." His *SNL* experience paved the way for other jobs, such as recording several comedic albums and acting in movies.

## CHAPTER 4: MOVIE MOGUL

Adam eventually left *SNL* to write, produce, and star in movies. *Billy Madison* was the first movie that featured Adam in a starring role. Though critics panned his movies, Adam became a fan favorite. Adam started Happy Madison Productions to continue making movies his fans enjoyed. As Adam's stardom continued to rise, he experienced big changes in his personal life. Adam fell in love with and married model Jackie Titone in 2003. His wife was such a major influence that Adam included her in several of his movies.

## CHAPTER 5: ADAM SANDLER, SUPERSTAR

The comedian took on the serious role of fatherhood in 2006 when daughter Sadie was born. The films Adam released at the time of his daughter's birth were more complex than his usual comedies. He starred in *Spanglish* and *Click*—movies that explored the actor's serious side. Even though Adam's performance style has changed over the years, he still knows how to entertain audiences.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Break students into groups of four or five. Ask students to familiarize themselves with the vocabulary words in the glossary on page 60. Once they have read them over several times, have them write a skit that uses as many of the vocabulary words as possible. Remind students that they should use each term properly and that their skit must be logical. (In other words, they should not use a vocabulary word in a line of dialogue just for the sake of using it. The word must make sense within the context of the skit.) When students have finished, they will act out the skit for the rest of the class. Go over the different ways that students used the vocabulary words within the skits.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble understanding compound words. Explain that sometimes two words can be put together to create an entirely new word. For example, the word *showcase* combines the words *show* and *case*. The meaning of this new word is “to exhibit an attractive or favorable aspect.” Point out other compound words in the book like *newspaper* (p. 12), *nightclub* (p. 14), and *oceanfront* (p. 37). Encourage students to split the words apart if they are having trouble. Examining the two words separately will help students understand the meaning of the compound word.



### INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Ask students to work individually. Have students think about another comedian they enjoy. If students don't have any ideas, list a few popular comedians such as Will Ferrell, Mike Myers, and Tina Fey. Have students create a graphic organizer that compares another comedian to Adam Sandler. Remind students that they must show how the two comedians are alike and how they are different. Ask volunteers to share their graphic organizers with the rest of the class.



### EXAMINING QUOTES

Working in pairs, ask students to select one of the many quotes from the text. Ask: *Why do you think the author included this quote in the book? What does the quote tell you about Adam Sandler? How does the quote support the author's description of Adam Sandler?* The students should respond to these questions with well-written paragraphs. Remind them to include supporting details from the text. Ask volunteers to present their answers to the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a response to this question: *Based on what you've read, do you think Adam Sandler would be happy if he were no longer a movie star? Use details from the book to support your answer.* Remind students that they are drawing a conclusion about Adam Sandler based on what they have read in the book. To do this successfully, they should point out instances in the text where the author infers that Adam would or would not be happy if he were no longer making movies. Have students share their responses with the rest of the class.

# ALEX RODRIGUEZ

by Travis Clark

## CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO THE 500 CLUB!

Though he called himself a “goofball running around the bases,” Yankees third baseman and three-time MVP Alex “A-Rod” Rodriguez was not clowning around when he hit his 500<sup>th</sup> home run in 2007. At 32, Alex became the youngest person to reach this astounding goal. His team rewarded his efforts with the biggest contract in the history of Major League Baseball.

## CHAPTER 2: A STAR IN THE MAKING

Alex was born in New York City but remained in the United States for only 4 years before his family returned to the Dominican Republic. The Rodriguez family eventually moved back to the United States because its economy was stronger. After Alex’s father left the family, his mother, Lourdes, worked two jobs to support her children. Lourdes enrolled Alex in a Boys and Girls Club, where his talent for baseball was first recognized. The athlete quickly became a top amateur baseball prospect. Though he planned to attend University of Miami, Alex signed a contract with the Seattle Mariners the day before classes started.

## CHAPTER 3: HITTING THE BIGS

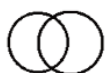
Quickly climbing the ranks, Alex played for the Appleton Foxes and the Jacksonville Suns—the Mariners’ minor league affiliate teams—before finally joining the Mariners. In 2000, however, Alex signed a contract with the Texas Rangers, enraging Mariners’ fans. In 2002, Alex married Cynthia Scurtis, and the couple started the AROD Family Foundation to benefit needy families. Alex shined on the field, but the Rangers struggled. With 7 years left on his contract, Alex considered asking for a trade.

## CHAPTER 4: WELCOME TO THE BIG APPLE

Few teams could afford the price of Alex’s talent, but the player eventually worked out a deal with the New York Yankees. After a good first season with the Yankees, Alex looked forward to an even better postseason, only to be disappointed. The birth of daughter, Natasha Alexander, however, helped lift the player’s spirits. In 2005, Alex became the youngest player ever to hit 400 homeruns. The Yankees bulked up in 2006 with the addition of former Boston Red Sox center fielder Johnny Damon, but A-Rod struggled. The Yankees considered a trade, but Alex wanted to stay and prove himself.

## CHAPTER 5: REDEFINING THE RECORD BOOKS

A-Rod’s 2007 season began with personal and professional success when his children’s book, *Out of the Ball Park*, was published. Alex won the hearts of Yankees fans with a memorable season in which he hit his 500<sup>th</sup> home run. He was named American League MVP for the third time. Finally in the World Series, A-Rod buckled. Without a win, rumors of a departure quickly spread. Alex ended the speculation by signing a 10-year contract with the Yankees.



### GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Have students work in pairs. Ask students to use the statistics on page 58 to create a graphic organizer. The students may create any kind of organizer they wish as long as they include Alex Rodriguez's career statistics. Students might choose to create a graph that shows how Alex's batting average has changed over the years. They might decide to create a timeline showing important milestones in Alex's career. Encourage students to present their graphic organizers to the rest of the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students break into groups of three or four. Assign each group three or four of the vocabulary words from the glossary on page 60. After reading the definitions on this page, ask the groups to draw pictures that represent the meaning of each vocabulary word. Less artistic students may feel more comfortable drawing charts or maps. Encourage groups to share their drawings with the class.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Help English language learners understand the present tense by having them summarize the final chapter of the book. Ask: *Which team does Alex Rodriguez currently play for? What position does he play? What color uniform does he wear?* These questions will give students a place to start. Remind students that in many instances throughout the book, the author uses the past tense to describe events that have already taken place. Help students who are struggling by reminding them of the present tense of certain verbs.



### EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Ask students to work with a partner. Each pair should select one photograph from the book. After they have chosen a picture, have the pair answer the question: *How does the picture support the author's purpose in writing this book?* (Sample response: The picture of Alex Rodriguez helping students at a Boys and Girls' Club supports the author's purpose by showing that Alex is dedicated to charity work. The author explains that Alex feels a strong connection to the Boys and Girls' Club because of how the organization helped him as a child. This photograph shows that he is serious about giving back to his community.) Ask volunteers to share their pictures and responses with the class.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, ask students to use Internet or library resources to conduct research on one of these topics: the Boys and Girls Club, baseball in the Dominican Republic, or minor league baseball. Have the students write a response to the following questions: *How did [the Boys and Girls Club, baseball in the Dominican Republic, or minor league baseball] help shape Alex Rodriguez into the player he is today? What did he learn from the experience? Explain your answer using details from the book.* Ask partners to share their responses with the class.

# AMERICAN IDOL JUDGES

 by Jim Whiting

## CHAPTER 1: AMERICA LOVES AMERICAN IDOL

Over 33 million viewers watched as host Ryan Seacrest and judges Randy Jackson, Paula Abdul, and Simon Cowell eliminated contestants during the seventh season of *American Idol*. Simon's bluntness, Paula's optimism, and Randy's productive feedback add to the show's continuing appeal.

## CHAPTER 2: FROM REJECTION TO ACCEPTANCE

*Pop Idol*, created by Simon Cowell and record manager Simon Fuller, was a hit show in Britain, but American media executives at networks like UPN and ABC rejected the show. Rupert Murdoch, owner of the Fox Network, bought the show because his daughter loved the British version. With that one decision, he made television history.

## CHAPTER 3: SIMON COWELL

As a young man, Simon Cowell worked in the mailroom at EMI records. After leaving the company several times, Simon formed his own music publishing company with a former boss. Though some scoffed at his ideas, Simon persevered. His combination of television and pop music helped sell millions of records. As an employee of Arista Records, he sold music for shows like *Power Rangers* and *Teletubbies*. At this point, he also began developing *Pop Idol*, the springboard for *American Idol*.

## CHAPTER 4: PAULA ABDUL

Fueled by her passion for performing, Paula became a successful choreographer and cheerleader. During college, Paula worked as a dancer and choreographer for the Los Angeles Lakers dance team. Virgin Records eventually signed the entertainer to a recording contract, and Paula became a pop star. After two failed marriages, a battle with bulimia, and a dance injury, Paula drifted away from the limelight. Paula's comeback began when she accepted the opportunity to judge contestants on *American Idol*.

## CHAPTER 5: RANDY JACKSON

Randy Jackson's ability to play multiple instruments earned him the nickname "The Emperor." He made a name for himself playing with Billy Cobham and John Fred and got his big break when he replaced a band member from the rock band Journey. Randy quickly climbed the ranks at Columbia Records and became the Senior Vice President of A&R, after which he joined the panel of judges on *American Idol*.

## CHAPTER 6: BECOMING MUST-SEE TV

*Rolling Stone* called *American Idol* the "most powerful show in TV history," but the birth of this megahit was not without turmoil. Despite the show's ups and downs, *American Idol* has successfully furthered the careers of its contestants and judges. *American Idol* has become the highest rated primetime show, and Fox's leap of faith continues to pay off.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into groups of four or five. Have each group come up with a polling topic related to the book. Provide students with an example of a polling question: *Which American Idol winner is your favorite?* Students asking this question would then list the names of the winners (Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood, etc.) and ask the other students to choose one. Each group will present their question to the class. Students should raise their hands to indicate their choices. The groups will count the votes and use the information from the poll to create a pie chart, which they will present at the end of class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Break students into groups of four or five. Assign each group one of the vocabulary words from the glossary on page 59 of the book. Ask the groups to come up with several synonyms and antonyms for their assigned word. Remind students that synonyms have similar meanings while antonyms have opposite meanings. If students are unfamiliar with a word, instruct them to consult the definition listed in the glossary. Encourage students to share their answers with the class. Then review the remaining vocabulary words as a class.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble recognizing the difference between facts and opinions. Remind students that an *opinion* is a belief or judgment that cannot be proven, whereas a *fact* is a statement of verified information. Encourage students to look for fact and opinion signal words while they're reading. You can usually recognize a fact by the inclusion of numbers, statistics, and words like *proven* or *verified*. Statements of opinions usually contain words like *good/bad*, *always*, *never*, *everybody*, and *nobody*. Ask students to look through the first chapter of the book and list three facts and three opinions. Go over these answers with the class to help reinforce students' understanding of facts and opinions.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a response to this question: *Why do you think American Idol has been successful? Use details from the book to support your answer.* (Students may indicate that *American Idol* has been successful because it allows viewers at home to participate. Students may also point out that viewers feel like they are an important part of the show because they decide who stays and who goes each week.)



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, have students conduct research on the Internet or use library resources to research one of these topics: vaudeville, talent shows, or reality television. Have them write a response to this question: *How did [vaudeville, talent shows, or reality television] contribute to the creation of American Idol?* Have partners share their responses with the class.

# ANGELINA JOLIE

by Lydia Bjornlund

## CHAPTER 1: AMBASSADOR TO THE WORLD

Though Angelina Jolie first gained attention for her acting abilities, her charity work has turned attention toward the plight of refugees around the world. As a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations, Angelina has visited refugees of war and disaster in over 20 countries. Angelina also donates millions of dollars to operations assisting people in crisis. Her work helps raise public awareness of refugees' struggles and promotes long-term solutions to the situations that cause displacement.

## CHAPTER 2: WILD CHILD

From an early age, Angelina showed a flair for dramatic entertainment. Born in Los Angeles to entertainer parents, Angelina's future seemed destined for film. During her teens, Angelina fell into a deep depression. Focusing on education and acting helped Angelina recover, though she remained interestingly unconventional. She married Johnny Lee Miller, her costar in the film *Hackers*. As Hollywood began to notice her talent, it also struggled to make sense of her often bizarre behavior.

## CHAPTER 3: ANGELINA, INTERRUPTED

Though Angelina sank back into a dangerous depression while playing a drug-addicted supermodel in *Gia*, the role also earned her several awards, including a Golden Globe. In 2000, Angelina won an Academy Award for her role in *Girl, Interrupted*. Her outrageous behavior, including a second marriage to actor Billy Bob Thornton, sparked public scorn, but her talent continued to earn her roles in box-office blockbusters.

## CHAPTER 4: GOING GLOBAL

During the filming of *Tomb Raider* in Cambodia, Angelina witnessed the horrifying situations of the country's war-torn people. After visiting refugee camps, Angelina told the world about the plight of displaced people. In 2002, she adopted a Cambodian orphan, Maddox. Though her marriage ended, Angelina embraced motherhood, maintained her charitable efforts, and continued to land large roles. She found love in a costar once again while filming *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* with actor Brad Pitt. In 2005, they traveled to Ethiopia to adopt Angelina's second child.

## CHAPTER 5: A LIFE WORTH LIVING

Angelina and Brad expanded their family in 2006 when Angelina gave birth to a daughter, Shiloh Nouvel. Later that year, they formed the Jolie-Pitt Foundation and donated millions to charity. In 2007, Brad became the legal father of Angelina's two children and the couple adopted a young Vietnamese orphan. Angelina also directed the documentary *A Place in Time*. The following year, amid movie-making and activism, Angelina and Brad became the parents of twins. Though busy with her successful career and large family, Angelina still finds time to speak out for various causes around the world.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into groups of four or five. Assign each group a Cross-Currents section from the back of the book. Ask each group to write a paragraph summarizing the information in their section. Encourage artistic students to draw a picture to accompany the summary. Have groups present their summaries to the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Help students understand unfamiliar vocabulary words in the book by introducing the idea of context clues. Say: Context clues *are details in a text that help readers understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word*. Demonstrate how context clues can help by pointing out the vocabulary word *sequel* on page 30. Ask students what words help them understand that a sequel is the continuation of a story. Draw students' attention to words like *revisited* and *original*. These words help reinforce the meaning of *sequel*. Go through the other vocabulary words with students and ask them to point out the context clues in the sentences surrounding the vocabulary words.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Show English language learners that they can locate information more easily by studying headings and subheadings. Explain that authors sometimes group information together under certain titles. Information is broken down by chapter title, headings, and subheadings. This gives readers a good idea of what each section of the book is about. Have students turn to chapter 4. Ask: *Under which section would you most likely find information about Angelina Jolie's relationship with Brad Pitt?* Go through the first three chapters of the book in the same manner, asking students to identify the headings under which specific information would most likely be located. This exercise will help students understand how to use headings while reading.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a response to this question: *Do you think that celebrity involvement in a charity helps promote the organization's message? Use details from the book to support your answer.* (Sample response: I think that celebrity involvement in charities does help promote an organization's message. Celebrities like Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt, and George Clooney are extremely recognizable. Photographers follow them everywhere because people are interested in every move they make. They can use their status to help inform people of important issues around the world.)



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Angelina Jolie is just one of many celebrities who donate their time and money to charity. Working in pairs, have students use the Internet or library resources to research another celebrity who is involved with charity work. Have them write responses to these questions: *What charity is [celebrity] involved with? How did [celebrity] become involved with this charity? How has [celebrity] helped to further this charity's cause?* Partners should compose a well-written paragraph in response to these questions. Have pairs present their paragraphs to the class.

# **BONO** by Stuart A. Kallen

## **CHAPTER 1: THE LIBERTY MEDAL**

Bono is best known for being the lead singer of rock band U2. While his music has inspired many, he also advocates helping the poor and raises awareness for AIDS research. Bono speaks to political leaders around the world about issues that concern many people. His constant campaigning has earned him awards and the admiration of millions.

## **CHAPTER 2: BECOMING BONO**

Bono, born Paul David Hewson, grew up in Ireland. He was involved in the arts and music at school. After his mother's death, Paul rebelled against his brother and father. In 1976, punk music became popular, and the new sound interested Paul. He adopted the name Bono, which is Latin for "good voice." He answered an ad for a band that needed a singer. Dave Evans, Larry Mullen, Jr., and Adam Clayton liked Bono's stage presence and made him lead singer of the band that would become U2. In 1978, the band won free studio time in a contest. The resulting demo attracted the attention of record producers.

## **CHAPTER 3: A BAND WITH A CONSCIENCE**

U2 released their first album, *Boy*, in 1980. Bono's career was growing, and his personal life also changed. He married his high school sweetheart, Ali Stewart. For U2's third album, Bono wrote about the political battles in Ireland. "Sunday Bloody Sunday" was one of the first songs that addressed Bono's commitment to peace. On their next two albums, U2 altered their sound and returned to their poetic lyrics. Starting in 1986 with the Live Aid concert, the band performed at many benefit concerts to help raise money and awareness for various causes.

## **CHAPTER 4: POP AND POLITICS**

The band's next album, *Achtung Baby*, and 1992 tour were incredibly successful. Bono continued his charity work by helping children in Bosnia and by working to eliminate poverty in Africa. Traveling to the latter country with his wife inspired him to work with Drop the Debt, a campaign to lower Africa's debt to the United States. As a result, American politicians released the impoverished country from its financial debt. In 2002, U2 released their album *All That You Can't Leave Behind*, which won the group three Grammy Awards.

## **CHAPTER 5: THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN MUSIC**

In 2002, Bono, with Bill and Melinda Gates, created a charity organization called DATA to help with African relief. Bono met with American politicians to persuade them to aid in the efforts. Bono was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003 and 2006, and even though he didn't win, he has been awarded several other honors for his work. U2 was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2005. Bono continues to make music and promote important causes.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into groups of four or five. Ask each group to create a graphic organizer that highlights the important parts of chapter 2, “Becoming Bono.” Groups may use a web, flow chart, pyramid, or any other organizer that fits the information presented in this section. Encourage students to be creative with how they present the main ideas of chapter 2. Have groups present their charts to the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Help students understand unfamiliar vocabulary words in the book by encouraging them to break words into smaller parts. Point out the word *synthesizer*. The prefix *syn-* means with or together. In the case of this word, a person and an electronic instrument come together to produce a variety of musical notes. Break down the rest of the words with students. Ask them if they recognize any prefixes and suffixes from other words they already know.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Help English language learners by explaining that some words have multiple meanings. For example, the word *popular* means “of or relating to the general public.” The word can also mean “commonly liked or approved.” Point out other multiple-meaning words in the book. Have students use the dictionary to discover the different meanings of each word.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, have students use the Internet or library resources to research the period in Irish history known as The Troubles. Have them write responses to these questions: *What was the period known as The Troubles? How did The Troubles start? What effect did The Troubles have on life in Ireland?* Partners should compose a well-written paragraph in response to these questions. Have pairs present their paragraphs to the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a response to this question: *How did Bono’s personal life influence his musical career? Do you think that musicians should write songs about personal experiences? Why or why not? Use details from the book to support your answer.* (Sample response: Bono has written several songs that deal with personal issues. One song he wrote described the pain he felt when his mother died unexpectedly of a brain aneurism. I think that it is important for musicians to use personal experiences in their music. Musicians often find the process of song writing very cathartic. It also helps them connect with the audience. Everyone has experienced the loss of a loved one, so it would be easy for someone to relate to a song like “I Will Follow.”)

# CHRIS ROCK by David Robson

## CHAPTER 1: THE BIG TIME

Comedian Chris Rock is known for his ability to deliver brutal honesty on controversial topics. Chris hosted the 2005 Academy Awards, and made waves by poking fun at actors instead of hailing their talent. Though the public enjoyed Chris' routine, the actors didn't appreciate the comedian's jibes. Chris knows the pressure of being a superstar, but his hard work has paid off. Chris earned two Emmy Awards for his show *Everybody Hates Chris*. In 2005, Chris took his comedy act, *No Apologies*, overseas.

## CHAPTER 2: THE BROOKLYN BOY GETS HIS SHOT

Chris, the eldest of seven children, spent most of his life in Brooklyn, New York. Chris quickly learned to use comedy to overcome the racism he experienced as a minority in a primarily white school. He frequented comedy clubs, including legendary hot spot Catch a Rising Star, where Eddie Murphy discovered him. Though his career was on the move, he struggled for many years. He got his big break with a role in *Beverly Hills Cop II*. Still disappointed with his success level, Chris knew he had to move onward and upward if he was going to make it in show business.

## CHAPTER 3: THE BAD WITH THE GOOD

Throughout history, comedians have used their acts to comment on social injustice. Chris followed this tradition by harnessing his sharp wit to tackle issues of racism and social divide in his 1996 comedy tour, *Bring the Pain*. At this time, Chris was enjoying both professional and personal success. Also in 1996, he met and married businesswoman Malaak Compston. Chris's success continued with the box-office hit *Lethal Weapon 4*, voice work in *Doctor Dolittle*, and the HBO special *Bigger and Blacker*.

## CHAPTER 4: TAKING CONTROL

Chris's movies garnered mixed reviews, some more harsh than others. One critic called Chris a "shameless promoter of black cultural stereotypes." The comedian fought back by arguing that young black actors are often typecast. He trudged on, deciding to direct the movie *Head of State*. Though the movie was only a mediocre hit, Chris enjoyed his first experience being in charge behind the camera. Chris's family was also expanding. He and Malaak welcomed daughter Lola Simone in 2002. Two years later, daughter Zahra Savannah joined the family.

## CHAPTER 5: COMEDY LEGEND IN THE MAKING

Chris's next big success was the television show *Everybody Hates Chris*. The award-winning show is a parody of his childhood. With a wide variety of projects, Chris continues to gain fans around the world. Chris also donates his time to several charitable organizations and has lent his support to his wife's organization, styleWORKS. The program helps move women from government-funded welfare to the workforce. Whatever project Chris decides to tackle next, one thing remains certain: Chris Rock is a comedy legend in the making.



### READING COMPREHENSION—FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Have students work in groups of four or five. Ask them to locate examples of figurative language within the text. Remind students of the definitions of terms like *simile* and *metaphor*. If students struggle, point out an example from the book (e.g., p. 25; “Such work could take months of shaping and honing like a sculptor before he was satisfied.”). After students have found several examples of figurative language, ask them to discuss why the author included the phrases in the text. Students should focus on figuring out how the use of figurative language enhances the book. Have volunteers share their ideas with the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Break students into groups of three or four. Tell students to become familiar with the vocabulary words in the glossary. Ask students to come up with an idea for a vocabulary game. This might involve matching the correct word with its definition or completing a sentence with the correct vocabulary word. Artistic students might want to draw pictures that describe a vocabulary word’s meaning and leave a blank space where the correct word can be written. Students should work together to produce a sample of their game that can be presented to the class.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Help English language learners understand the author’s use of tone by turning their attention to the first section of chapter 4. Remind students that *tone* describes the author’s attitude toward the subject and the audience. Ask students to compare the author’s tone to the tone used by Justin Driver in the quote on pages 27 and 28. Students should look for words that stand out. These words can help them describe the type of tone each author is using. In Driver’s quote, words like *stark* and *unfortunate* show readers that his tone is something between disappointed and annoyed. Have students point out other words that help reveal the author’s tone.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, ask students to use Internet or library resources to conduct research on one of these people: *Eddie Murphy*, *Richard Prior*, or *Chris Tucker*. Ask students to create a compare/contrast chart that shows the similarities and differences between Chris Rock and one of these comedians. Encourage volunteers to share their charts with the class.



### READING COMPREHENSION—PREDICTION

Have students work individually. Based on what they have read about Chris Rock, ask students to answer the following questions: *What do you think Chris Rock will work on next?* Remind them that Chris has been an actor, director, writer, and comedian. He has many doors open to him. Ask them to write a short paragraph that predicts Chris’s next career move. Students should support their answers with details from the book.

# CRISS ANGEL

by Gail B. Stewart

## CHAPTER 1: HOW DID HE DO THAT?

Criss Angel has been shocking, terrifying, and amazing audiences for years. This illusionist doesn't perform normal tricks, however. His television show, *Mindfreak*, allows him to display such acts as floating in midair, swallowing sharp objects, and impaling himself on a fence. These acts helped Criss become one of the most watched and admired magicians on television.

## CHAPTER 2: EARLY TRICKS

Born Christopher Nicholas Sarantakos, Criss became interested in magic at 7. His aunt taught him a card trick, and this lesson encouraged Criss to study magic. He began performing at birthday parties and in restaurants so that he could afford new props. After high school, Criss added music and a Goth look to his act. His big break came in the 1990s with a television special and performances at a Halloween event at Madison Square Garden. After his father died in 1998, Criss dedicated himself to becoming a famous magician.

## CHAPTER 3: MINDFREAK

With the money he made from his breakthrough performances and a mortgage he took on his mother's house, Criss directed, produced, and starred in an off-Broadway show called *Mindfreak*. He expected the show to last for 3 months, but it ran for over a year. *Mindfreak* led Criss to record several television performances that displayed his illusions and tested his endurance.

## CHAPTER 4: A NEW START

After appearing on an ABC network Halloween special, Criss received many television offers. His career was taking off, and he needed someone to help manage his business. As an amateur magician and president of a talent agency, Dave Baram shared the illusionist's dream and helped Criss create a new image. His new look appealed to an adult audience, and the A&E network offered Criss his own series. His material ranged from piercing his skin and hanging on hooks to making elephants disappear to performing death-defying stunts.

## CHAPTER 5: BLURRING THE LINE

As his popularity grew, Criss welcomed the challenges that went with it. Skeptics doubted his ability with magic, but Criss allowed audiences to film him from any angle. He also allowed audience members to question how he performed his act. In 2007, he signed a contract with Cirque du Soleil to perform 4,600 shows over ten years. Along with winning numerous awards, Criss will soon design and star in a movie about fighting crime with magic. Criss works with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and donates his time to teaching magic tricks to children.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Criss Angel has had several inspirations in his life. His father inspired him to face his fears and to give back by volunteering his time to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Magician Harry Houdini inspired Criss's many illusions and escape tricks. Break students into small groups and tell them to discuss what or who inspires each of them.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Tell students that *synonyms* (words that have the same meaning) and *antonyms* (words that have opposite meanings) can help them figure out the definitions of unfamiliar words. Instruct students to write down one synonym or one antonym for each of the following vocabulary words: *allocate*, *choreography*, *embedded*, *illusion*, *levitating*, *shackled*, *venture*. (Students may use the glossary on page 59, a dictionary, or context clues to check word meanings.) Record some students' answers on the chalkboard. Then make sure students understand the remaining vocabulary words used in the book: *adrenaline*, *candlepower*, *filtration*, *hologram*, *off-Broadway*, *pyrotechnics*, *suspension*, and *tarantula*.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble understanding the figurative language and idioms used throughout the book. Tell students that a *metaphor* is a comparison that says that one thing *is* something else. Write this sentence from the book on the board: "He was on the verge of making the leap from being a fairly well-known entertainer to a white-hot star." Ask: *How can a person be a white-hot star?* (Students may say that he was on his way to becoming a very famous celebrity, or that he was on his way to greatness.) Help students understand the meaning of these idioms in the book: *the buzz about Criss Angel* (p. 6; people talking about Criss Angel), *sparked a lively interest* (p. 10; caught the attention of), *flash in the pan* (p. 35; someone that people will soon forget), and *kept him sharp* (p. 38; made him keep his focus or hone his skill).



### READING COMPREHENSION—AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Authors write for a variety of reasons: to inform, to entertain, to persuade, and to teach. Discuss with students different types of writing, providing examples of each. Then ask students to skim the book again and determine the author's purpose for writing about Criss Angel.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Criss Angel's brand of magic is different from many other mainstream magicians. At first, he faced rejection for being different, but now audiences love him for his unique skills and characteristics. Have students write an essay in which they describe a unique characteristic or a skill that sets them apart from the crowd. Students may share their essays with the class and demonstrate their unique characteristic or skill for their peers.

## **DANICA PATRICK** by Kristine Brennan

### **CHAPTER 1: A SUPERSTAR ON WHEELS**

Twenty-three-year-old Danica Patrick shocked the nation when she finished fourth in the 2005 Indy 500 after leading for 19 laps of the renowned race. Unfortunately, Danica and her crew ran into a tough situation when another driver clipped the left front wing of her car. After the race, Danica signed the broken part and auctioned it off for charity. Danica also became the first Indy Racing League (IRL) driver to be featured on the front cover of *Sports Illustrated* in over 20 years.

### **CHAPTER 2: BORN TO DRIVE**

Danica began her career by racing go-karts. She won several national go-karting races and quit cheerleading in tenth grade to focus on racing. Later, she made the tough decision to travel to England to participate in open-wheel development races. She faced an unsupportive crew and loneliness in England. She almost lost her sponsorship after partying too much on Christmas vacation. The now dispirited Formula Ford Series graduate prayed for a supportive crew.

### **CHAPTER 3: MAKING THE BIG LEAGUES**

Danica caught the attention of racing legend Bobby Rahal, and he decided to give her a chance. The world started noticing her after she raced in the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race. Danica was the first woman ever to place in the top three in a Toyota Atlantic event. After placing consistently in the next few races, she was promoted to the IndyCar Championship Series and drove the No. 16 car. The media's fervor for more Danica was almost as strong as Danica's desire to race, causing quite a stir with the competition.

### **CHAPTER 4: MOVING ON, MOVING UP**

Danica married Paul Hospenthal in 2005, but he wasn't the only one entranced by her. She was named IRL's Most Popular Driver for 2005, 2006, and 2007. NASCAR driver Rusty Wallace asked her to drive on his team during the punishing Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona race. Rumors spread that Danica planned to leave Indy racing for NASCAR, but the only switch she made was to a different Indy team, Andretti Green Racing, in 2007. After a streak of 8<sup>th</sup>-place finishes, Danica ended the IRL's 2007 season in 7<sup>th</sup> place.

### **CHAPTER 5: A LIFE ON TRACK**

Danica doesn't take anything for granted and gives back as much as she can. She wrote her autobiography in 2006 and began endorsing various products and companies. While her racing competitors continue to attribute her popularity and success to her beauty instead of her ability; she proved them wrong during the 2008 Firestone IndyCar 300 when she became the first woman to win an IndyCar race.



## PUBLIC SPEAKING

Chapter 2 of *Danica Patrick* is titled “Born to Drive.” Danica knew from a young age that she wanted to be a professional race car driver, and she has pursued that goal for her entire life. On the chalkboard, write the phrase, “I was born to. . .” Give students time to think about a future goal (winning an award, having a certain career, etc.). Then have each student stand and deliver a short speech beginning with the phrase, “I was born to. . .” Students’ speeches should explain the goals they hope to achieve and the methods they are using or will use to achieve those goals.

## ABC

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may be nervous about speaking in front of the class, especially if they are in the early stages of developing their English skills. Give these students extra assistance in preparing their speeches. Help them choose the right words and organize their speeches in a clear and concise manner. Allow them to practice reading with a partner before they read in front of the entire class.



## LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

This book introduces a lot of jargon related to racing. Remind students that jargon refers to words or phrases that are specific to a certain activity or field of study. Have students identify the racing jargon in the book: *developmental races* (p. 6), *Indy Racing League* (IRL; p. 6), *pits* (p. 6), *suspension* (p. 11), *open-wheel* (p. 12), *chassis* (p. 14), *test-drive* (p. 15), *pole position* (p. 18), *endorsement* (p. 41). Then have students review the remaining vocabulary words in the book: *General Educational Development* (GED; p. 2); *morale* (p. 29).



## WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a short essay in response to the following quote: “I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I had to listen to my gut and just go for it.” Ask: *What does this quote reveal about Danica Patrick?* Remind students that a person’s words and actions reveal a lot about his or her personality and beliefs. Tell students to use what they learned about Danica in the book and their own interpretation of the quote to draw conclusions about Danica’s personality and beliefs.



## CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Danica Patrick has gained attention as a woman competing in a male-dominated sport. Have students work with a partner to use Internet or library resources to conduct research on a female athlete who has dazzled the world with her athletic abilities. The woman may be the first to take part in a male-dominated sport (e.g., “Babe” Didrikson Zaharias was the first woman to compete in a male Professional Golfers’ Association, or PGA, event) or the first to achieve another amazing feat (e.g., Wilma Rudolph was the first American woman to win three gold medals in a single Olympics). Have partners present their research to the class.

## **DAVID BECKHAM** by Jim Whiting

### **CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO LOS ANGELES**

Sports fans and celebrities alike eagerly anticipated David Beckham's arrival in the United States. The world-renowned soccer star was expected to change the way Americans viewed the sport. "I'm not silly enough to think I'm going to change the whole culture . . . but I do have a belief that soccer can go to a different level, and I'd love to be a part of that," he said.

### **CHAPTER 2: KID WITH THE GOLDEN KICK**

David's love for soccer began at a young age. As a child, he dreamed of playing for Manchester United, one of the most popular soccer clubs in England. The soccer star played so well that his father allowed him to practice with his club team. At 11, David became the youngest winner of the TSB Bobby Charlton Soccer Skills competition. As part of his prize, he attended a special camp, met important soccer players, and traveled to Spain. He signed a schoolboy contract with Manchester United when he was thirteen.

### **CHAPTER 3: LOVE, FAME, AND INFAMY**

In 1996, David kicked a goal that drew attention and helped him create a name for himself. He met and fell in love with Victoria Adams from the Spice Girls shortly after achieving his newfound fame. David was kicked out of a game in 1998 for fouling a player and was boycotted by English fans. The soccer star redeemed himself by leading the team to several victories. In 1999, Victoria gave birth to the couple's first son, Brooklyn, and the couple was married in Ireland. They welcomed a second son, Romeo, in 2002.

### **CHAPTER 4: HOLA, SEÑOR BECKHAM**

After a dispute with the Manchester United team manager, David was offered to other soccer teams. He signed a 4-year contract with Real Madrid. The soccer player also worked off the field. He was chosen to be an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. UNICEF appointed him as a Goodwill Ambassador to work with victims of the tsunami in Indonesia. In 2005, he traveled to Singapore with the prime minister to help win the bid for the 2012 Olympics. David also opened soccer academies in London and Los Angeles.

### **CHAPTER 5: COMING TO AMERICA**

When his contract expired, David chose to move to the United States and play with the Los Angeles Galaxy. His arrival was heavily anticipated, but it was delayed by an injury. While the Galaxy finished poorly during David's first season, game attendance and soccer memorabilia sales increased significantly. David continued working for charitable causes by giving medicine to sick children in Africa and raising money to fight malaria.



### CLASS DISCUSSION

David Beckham performs a lot of charity work. He has even served as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. Ask: *Aside from his charitable contributions, what else makes David Beckham a good role model?* (Students may point out any or all of the following: he shows great interest in his family; he has helped to call attention to diseases and disorders such as epilepsy and obsessive-compulsive disorder; and he worked hard from an early age to achieve his dream of playing soccer. Students may also indicate other responses.)



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students work with a partner and use context clues to determine the meanings of the boldfaced terms throughout the book. After students have guessed the meanings of the words, allow them to check the glossary on page 59. Students should know and understand the following words: *alleged, cap, debilitating, debut, disdain, effigies, euphoria, exhibition match, feminine, glitterati, hatchet man, malaria, manicure, own goal, paparazzi, scrimmaging, stoppage time, tsunami, and viscerally.*

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may struggle with some of the multiple-meaning words throughout the text. Help students use context clues to figure out the correct meanings of the following words: *fan* (p. 6; a supporter of a specific sports team), *draw* (p. 9; to bring in a crowd), *drills* (p. 12; practices), *train* (p. 13; practice), *club* (p. 14; a group of people who meet regularly to take part in an activity), *scouts* (p. 15; people who search for new sports talent), *tie* (p. 20; a match in which both teams score the same number of points), *fortune* (p. 41; luck), and *hamper* (p. 41; to impede or get in the way).



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

One organization for which David Beckham performs charity work is Malaria No More. The organization provides mosquito nets—nets that hang over people's beds to prevent mosquitoes from biting them while they sleep—to stop the spread of malaria. Instruct students to use Internet or library resources to learn more about malaria, its causes, its symptoms, its treatment, the areas where it is most prevalent, the organizations that work to stop it, and so on. You may divide students into small groups and have each group research a different aspect of the disease. Then choose one student from each group to present the research findings to the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

As a young boy, David Beckham dreamed of playing for the world-renowned English soccer team Manchester United. As an adolescent and as an adult, David fulfilled that dream when he earned spots first on the youth team and later on the professional team. Ask: *If you could fulfill one of your childhood dreams, what would it be?* Instruct students to write a descriptive essay in which they describe a childhood dream and what it would be like if they fulfilled it. Encourage students to use their imaginations in their responses (e.g., a child may describe his or her dream of flying into outer space and may imagine what he or she would see, touch, smell, taste, and hear on such a journey).

# **DEREK JETER** by Hal Marcovitz

## **CHAPTER 1: MOST VALUABLE PLAYER**

Early in his career, Derek Jeter spent many games waiting on the sidelines. After sitting on the bench during two All-Star Games, the shortstop and famous baseball star finally got to start against the National League. Derek received the 2000 Most Valuable Player award for his performance during the game, an honor that no other New York Yankee had ever won. A win against the New York Mets in the 2000 World Series earned him another MVP award. Derek became the only player to win both MVP awards in a single season.

## **CHAPTER 2: FROM KALAMAZOO TO NEW YORK CITY**

As a child, Derek dreamed of playing baseball for the New York Yankees. His parents and sister encouraged Derek by playing baseball with him. Derek worked hard on the field and in the classroom. In high school, he proved himself as both an athlete and a scholar. After graduation, the Yankees offered Derek a contract to play for their farm teams. For years, Derek struggled on several minor league teams. The organization knew Derek was talented, and they gave him the time he needed to succeed. In 1995, Derek played fifteen games with the Yankees. In 1996, Derek made his major-league debut as the starting shortstop.

## **CHAPTER 3: NATIONAL CELEBRITY**

Derek showed strong skills in his first year and won the title Rookie of the Year. Derek also played on the All-Star team that year and received a nomination for Most Valuable Player. In 2001, he re-signed his contract with the Yankees for \$189 million over ten years. Even though his team didn't win the World Series that year, Derek was still in the spotlight. Gossip magazines claimed that he was dating various celebrities.

## **CHAPTER 4: ROLLERCOASTER YEARS**

After suffering a dislocated shoulder in 2003, Derek missed almost 40 games. The Yankees went on a losing streak. Upon the shortstop's return, the team owner named Derek the Yankees' captain to boost morale. While the team quickly rebounded, critics said that Derek was going through a slump. The addition of superstar Alex Rodriguez—the highest paid player in baseball history—compounded rumors of tension between the teammates.

## **CHAPTER 5: CHALLENGES AHEAD**

For the 2005 season, Derek and the Yankees were determined to step up their game. While they didn't make it to the World Series, the shortstop reached a high point in 2006 by earning his 2,000<sup>th</sup> career hit. Despite Derek's excellent plays and batting average, the team continued to plummet. By 2007, the Yankees had replaced long-time manager Joe Torre. Derek tried to rise above the controversy by creating the Turn 2 Foundation, a charity to help children live healthy lifestyles by avoiding drugs and alcohol. Though Derek's contract expires in 2010, he plans to stay with the Yankees for as long as possible.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Ask students to work in groups of four or five. Have students use quotes from the book and the author's words to write a description of Derek Jeter. They may choose to describe him as a student, an athlete, a celebrity, or a charitable organizer. Students should use words from the text to form a well-written paragraph. Encourage students to present their paragraphs to the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Break students into groups of four or five. Have one student select a vocabulary word from the glossary. This student must use related words to get his or her group members to say the vocabulary word aloud. The student may not use any of the words used in the definition. The goal is for students to think of words that will lead their group members to the vocabulary word. For example, for the word *immortal* the student might say "vampires" because they are mythological creatures that reportedly live forever. Give each student one minute before switching to another group member. The game ends when each team has gone through all the vocabulary words.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Explain to English language learners that authors choose their words very carefully. Word choice is an important part of any text. When choosing words, an author should consider both the subject of the text and its intended audience. In a book about a baseball player like Derek Jeter, an author uses sports jargon as well as action verbs to make the story come to life. Turn students' attention to page 31. Ask them to reread the section called "The Dive." As they read, have them write down words they think are important to this part of the text. When they have finished, ask them why they think the author chose these words. A good example would be the use of the word *dive* to explain how Derek jumped into the stands after a fly ball, which makes the sentence more exciting and shows how dedicated Derek is to the game. Go through students' choices and point out other important words in this section.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a response to the following question: *As a child, Derek Jeter dreamed of playing baseball for the New York Yankees. What was your childhood dream? Has the dream changed over time? What will you do to fulfill your dream?* Students should answer in well-written paragraphs. Ask volunteers to share their childhood dreams with the class.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Ask students to work in pairs. Each pair should use the Internet or library resources to research one of the Cross-Currents sections in the back of the book. They should use their research to answer the following questions: *What effect has [insert topic] had on Derek Jeter? What effect has it had on his personal life? Use details from the book and research to support your answer.* Encourage volunteers to present their responses to the class.

# DWAYNE “THE ROCK” JOHNSON

BY JAMES A. CORRICK

## CHAPTER 1: THE ROCK HAS HEART

As a professional wrestler, “The Rock” has earned several awards including the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) Championship and the World Tag Team Championship. His autobiography achieved best-seller status. He made several appearances in action and comedy movies. Yet, Dwayne Johnson, the man behind “The Rock,” is more than just an image. Dwayne is involved with charities such as the Giving Back Fund, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and his organization, the DJ Rock Foundation, which educates children about healthy lifestyles.

## CHAPTER 2: BEFORE THE ROCK

Wrestling has always been a part of Dwayne’s life. Both his father and grandfather were professional wrestlers. In Dwayne’s autobiography, he wrote, “I love everything about it . . . By the time I was six years old I was practicing dropkicks and head locks on our dog. By the time I was eight I was trying to have serious discussions about the business with my father.” With his father’s help, he began training as a professional wrestler. He signed in 1996, becoming “Rocky Maivia” and winning his first match, held at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

## CHAPTER 3: BECOMING THE ROCK

As “Rocky Maivia,” Dwayne became the youngest WWE champion in history. He was winning matches, but fans didn’t like his “innocent” image. The WWE changed him into a villain, and his new persona, “The Rock,” was a hit. He appeared cocky, insulting both his opponents and the audience. In 1998, he beat Mankind to win the WWE World Championship.

## CHAPTER 4: THE ROCK WRESTLES AND ACTS

Dwayne’s new fame helped him earn respect both inside and outside the ring. He won several matches and defeated big-name acts. While he was involved in the choreography of wrestling, he also created several of “The Rock’s” promos and scripts, which became popular with fans. His acting in the ring led to work in television. He guest starred on *That ‘70s Show*, *The Net*, and *Saturday Night Live*.

## CHAPTER 5: THE ROCK AS MOVIE STAR

For his first movie role, Dwayne played a half-man, half-scorpion in *The Return of the Mummy*. Later, he played the title character in *The Scorpion King*. His next few movies failed to attract a large audience, but critics were impressed with his acting skills and screen presence. He left pro wrestling in 2004, and in 2006, in an effort to be billed as a serious actor, he dropped “The Rock” nickname and simply went by Dwayne Johnson. His most recent movies, *The Game Plan* and *Get Smart*, performed very well at the box office.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups. Have each group discuss the ways in which Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson uses his fame and fortune to help others. Have groups select one of Dwayne’s charitable activities and present a short speech to the class explaining why they think that activity is most important.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Introduce students to the idea of jargon. Say: *Jargon is a word or phrase that is specific to a certain activity or field of study.* Ask: *What are some examples of wrestling jargon used in this book?* Have students identify words related to wrestling: *babyface* (p. 14), *heel* (p. 18), *tag team* (p. 18), *promo* (p. 18), *leg drop* (p. 20), *body slam* (p. 20), *signature move* (p. 20), *ladder match* (p. 23), and *choreograph* (p. 28). Tell students to look up the meaning of each term in the glossary. Then review the remaining vocabulary words from the book: *criminology* (p. 12), *forklift* (p. 23), *Anubis* (p. 37), *bounty hunter* (p. 39), *alumni* (p. 44), and *rugby* (p. 44).

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may struggle with some of the idioms used in the book. Tell students that *idioms* are words or phrases that have a deeper meaning than what they literally mean. For example, explain that the phrase *larger than life* in chapter 3 means “excessive” or “exaggerated” and not “physically bigger.” Help students understand the meaning of these idioms in the book: *buckled down* (p. 12; concentrated), *could not get enough of* (p. 27; truly adored), *raise the bar* (p. 27; get better, improve), and *a gamble* (p. 39; a risk).



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Dwayne’s mother’s family is from Samoa, a group of islands in the South Pacific. Have students pinpoint Samoa on a globe or world map. Have students work with a partner to use the Internet or library sources to find additional information about Samoa. Consider assigning a different aspect of Samoan culture—such as food, clothing, or holiday traditions—to each pair of students. Then ask pairs to share their findings with the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Everyone has to overcome obstacles in his or her life. Have students point out some of the obstacles that Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson faced in his life. How did he deal with these obstacles? How do you think these obstacles helped to shape the person that he is today? Have students write an essay in which they explain the obstacles faced by Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson and the influence those obstacles had on his life. (Students may respond that Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson dreamed of playing professional football but was injured in college and did not receive an NFL contract. They may also point out that he was dropped from the Canadian football league. Students will note that he overcame these obstacles by focusing on his studies, earning a degree, and finally realizing his dream of becoming a professional wrestler.)

# DWYANE WADE

by Jeff C. Young

## CHAPTER 1: 2006 FINALS MVP

Dwyane Wade has made a name for himself on the Miami Heat by helping his team when they need it most—in the last minutes of a game. In many games, he has been the top scorer for his team. His grace under pressure and modesty make Dwayne an incredible asset to the NBA.

## CHAPTER 2: A HARD BEGINNING

Dwyane was born into a poor family, and his parents did not stay together. After living with his mother for a while, he moved in with his father and step-siblings. He began playing basketball with his family. At the same time, his mother got caught up with drugs and went to prison. In high school, Dwyane was a star basketball player. Despite his bad grades, colleges recruited him. He chose to go to Marquette University, where he attended school for a year without playing basketball and to get grades good enough to play. He scored a B average and was able to play the next year. He quickly became the star player of his team and his conference. Dwyane left school so that he could join the NBA. He also married his girlfriend and had a son.

## CHAPTER 3: A ROOKIE MAKES AN IMPACT

The Miami Heat chose Dwyane fifth in the 2003 draft. Dwyane was a high scorer until an injury caused him to sit out 13 games. He was an outstanding rookie of the NBA. Though he occasionally had a bad night, Dwayne took his team to the playoffs. He played in the 2004 Olympics, where the American team took the bronze medal. Shaquille O'Neal joined the Heat in the 2004–05 season, and Dwyane was happy to have him as a teammate.

## CHAPTER 4: STEADY IMPROVEMENT

At the beginning of the 2004–05 season, Shaq was injured. Some sportswriters said Dwyane was “carrying” his team. After Pat Riley returned as head coach, Dwyane and Shaq took turns earning wins for their teams. Dwyane played a major part in taking the Heat to a championship win, but he modestly shared the acclaim with his teammates.

## CHAPTER 5: UPS AND DOWNS

Dwyane signed an extension on his contract and said that he would stay with the Heat as long as they would have him. Everyone expected the Heat to have a record-breaking season until Dwyane and Shaq were injured and Coach Riley had to take a medical leave. Even with an injury, Dwyane was a top scorer for the Heat. Though the 2007 season was not successful, Dwyane's personal life was good. He reunited with his mother and helped her get back on her feet. Dwyane donates a percentage of his salary to his church and has established the Wade's World Foundation, which helps support at-risk children. At the end of the 2007–08 season, Dwyane and his team decided that Dwyane should have experimental knee surgery.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students play the synonym game. Have them choose any word in the text. They should read aloud the sentence where the word appears, say the word by itself, and then say a synonym of the word. Ask volunteers to offer an antonym for the word as well. Make sure that students offer a synonym of the word as it is used in the sentence. Correct students who offer incorrect synonyms, or provide them with a thesaurus to look up the correct synonyms.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners often have trouble remembering what they have read. Help these students by teaching them how to create an outline of the text. Break Dwyane's life into sections such as "childhood," "academics," and "professional." Have students work in small groups to enter details from the text into the proper sections in the outline. After allowing the groups to work together, have the class create a group outline on the board. Each group should contribute something to the outline.



### CRITICAL THINKING

Divide the class into five sections. Assign a chapter of the book to each section of the class. Students should independently read their chapter, writing questions and comments about the text in their notebooks. Provide the students with sample questions and comments, such as "*What other teams were involved in that series?*" or "*I was at that game!*" After allowing students to work independently, encourage them to share their questions and comments with the class.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have groups of students choose a professional sports team whose name they like. Allow them to use the Internet to research the history of the team name. After students do their research, have groups make short presentations about the history of the team name. As a fun follow-up, have individual students come up with a team name for their town, school, or family. If time allows, let students choose a mascot and colors and design a jersey for their team.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Point out that Dwyane had many challenges in his life, but he did not allow them to stop him from reaching success. Have students reflect on their own lives and try to remember a time when they had to overcome a challenge. Students should write about how they overcame the challenge. Write these three points on the board so that students know how to set up their papers:

- Explain the challenge you experienced.
- Explain how you overcame the challenge.
- Explain how overcoming the challenge has made you a better person.

# GWEN STEFANI by Stuart A. Kallen

## CHAPTER 1: THE ROCK GODDESS

Gwen Stefani has used her many talents to forge an amazing career. She admits being heavily influenced by 1980s style, but has succeeded in creating very modern pop music. In 2004, Gwen released her first solo album titled *Love.Angel.Music.Baby*.

## CHAPTER 2: DANCING AT DISNEYLAND

Gwen had a normal middle-class childhood in California. Her family was very musical, and many of the games she played with her three siblings involved music. As a shy high school student, she found comfort in singing and dancing. She learned about music from her older brother Eric. At her brother's request, she joined his rock band, Apple Core, as a back-up singer. The band soon changed their name to No Doubt. After the original singer, James Spence, committed suicide, Gwen took over as lead singer and started dating band mate Tony Kanal.

## CHAPTER 3: TRAGIC MAGIC

No Doubt's self-titled first album was upbeat compared to the grunge music that was popular at the time. Their first album didn't get radio airplay and didn't sell well, but the band toured anyway. Gwen started to assert herself more, and she and her brother Eric began to fight. In 1999, Eric left the band and Tony and Gwen broke up, which inspired her to write some emotional songs. When *Tragic Kingdom*, the band's second album, was released, the single "Just a Girl" shot the record to national spotlight, and No Doubt was invited to tour with rock band Bush. The lead singer of Bush, Gavin Rossdale, flirted with Gwen, and many young girls wanted to be just like Gwen.

## CHAPTER 4: LOVE.ANGEL.MUSIC.BABY

By 1999, Gwen was at the pinnacle of success. No Doubt released *Return of Saturn* in 2000, and it was another hit. Gwen began collaborating with other artists like Moby and Eve, and she and Gavin got engaged. Gwen and Gavin were married 9 months later, and Gwen announced that she would be taking a break from No Doubt to pursue solo projects. Gwen started her own fashion line called L.A.M.B., and she appeared in a movie. Her solo album, also called *L.A.M.B.*, was a success. In 2005, Gwen gave birth to her first son, Kingston.

## CHAPTER 5: THE SWEET ESCAPE

While raising her son, Gwen continued to work on her fashion line and planned a worldwide concert tour. She released a second solo album in 2006 and went on a successful tour. In 2007, No Doubt announced that they were about to begin working on an album together. Soon after, Gwen announced that she was pregnant with her second son. Gwen often participates in projects for charity. She even donated all the proceeds from one show to the victims of a forest fire.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups. Remind students that throughout her life, Gwen used music to deal with her emotions—for instance, when Gwen broke up with Tony Kanal, she wrote hit songs about her feelings. Have students brainstorm different ways that people deal with hardships. After allowing students time to work in groups, have each group share their ideas in a class discussion. Have students list ways to deal with problems on the board. Have students consider whether each method will produce positive or negative results.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students turn to page 60. Point out that most of the words on the page are related to music. Explain that every industry has its own vocabulary words. A set of words that is specific to a certain field is that industry's *lingo* or *jargon*. Ask: *Do you know any jargon?* Students may know terms that are specific to a game they play or a series of books they read. Have each student give an example of jargon and explain what it means.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners often have trouble remembering what they have read. Give students a brief exercise in paraphrasing. Have students read a Cross-Currents section of the book, and then have a volunteer paraphrase the section. Make sure students know that they can take notes as they are reading if that helps them paraphrase the section. Challenge students to paraphrase how Gwen joined No Doubt or how she met Gavin Rossdale. Encourage them to consult the text if they have trouble coming up with the answer from memory.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Print out the lyrics to some of Gwen Stefani's songs. Make sure you have enough copies so that each student has a set of lyrics. Instruct students to read the lyrics as if they were a poem. Have students paraphrase the lyrics in one or two paragraphs and then write a response to the song. Students should answer these questions in their responses:

- How would you describe the tone of the speaker?
- What images appear in the lyrics?
- What is the theme of the song?



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students work with a partner to use the Internet to research one of the types of music that influenced Gwen Stefani. They can choose musicals, punk, reggae, or any other genre discussed in the book. They should research how that type of music came to be, including the country it came from and any people who played a major part in the creation of that type of music. Once students have presented their research to the class, help students see that many old styles resurface to become something new. Use Gwen Stefani's music as an example.

# JEFF GORDON by Kerrily Sapet

## CHAPTER 1: A FOUR-TIME CHAMPION

Jeff Gordon is one of the most successful drivers in NASCAR history. Jeff earns millions of dollars racing cars and advertising for companies. Jeff has been involved with race car driving since age 4. Despite his ups and downs, Jeff earned the title of youngest four-time champion in NASCAR.

## CHAPTER 2: RACING TO THE TOP

Jeff got his first BMX bike and began racing when he was still a child. He showed an affinity for racing and eventually moved up to racing quarter-midget cars. Though Jeff's parents wanted him to attend college, he opted to become a full-time race car driver. He raced in the Busch series, the "minor league" of NASCAR, and later moved up to the Winston Cup series. He began dating Brooke Sealey, a model, and was named Rookie of the Year in 1991.

## CHAPTER 3: DOMINATING THE TRACK

Intent on a Winston Cup series win, Jeff trained hard for the 1994 season, intent on a Winston Cup series win. After several losses, Jeff won his first Winston Cup race at Lowe's Motor Speedway. At the end of the season, he married Brooke. At 24, Jeff became the youngest driver to win the Winston Cup championship. The 1999 season began with wins, but later saw accidents, injuries, and the announcement that Jeff's crew chief was leaving to start his own racing team. Jeff and his new crew chief worked hard to rebound. In 1999, Jeff started the Jeff Gordon Foundation, which helps kids with life-threatening diseases. In 2001, Jeff and his new crew chief scored a Winston Cup championship.

## CHAPTER 4: TOUGH TIMES

While Jeff's racing life was a success, he and his wife separated and went through a messy divorce. Jeff lost a lot of money and property. In 2002, he became a mentor and friend to young driver Jimmie Johnson. Jeff worked on a lot of projects, including writing two books. Jeff's team suffered a big loss in 2004 when a plane crash killed many people close to the team. In 2005, Jeff had a string of bad luck. At the end of the season, Jeff hired a new crew chief and began winning races again. Through a friend, Jeff met and began dating Ingrid Vandelbosch, a Belgian model.

## CHAPTER 5: THE DRIVE FOR FIVE

Jeff hired Steve Letarte, whom he had known since he was 16, as his new crew chief. Jeff also announced that he and Ingrid were getting married. Jeff found time to contribute to helping kids with chronic diseases live happier lives. In May of 2007, Jeff and Ingrid had a daughter named Ella Sofia. Jeff performed well on the track and even starred in a documentary called *24 x 24: Wide Open with Jeff Gordon*. Although Jeff has had his ups and downs on and off the track, he has found happiness with his wife, daughter, and current race team.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into groups of three. Remind them that a pit crew must work together to help a driver succeed. If any person on the team does not do his or her job, the whole team fails. In each group, one person must be the driver, another person must be the spotter, and the other member is the chief. Set up an obstacle course in the classroom. Blindfold the driver who must find his or her way through the course. The chief stays with the driver and tells the driver what to do. The spotter can run around the course seeing what is coming next or developing ideas to help the driver and spotter work together. Instruct the rest of the class to quietly watch as each team goes through the course. Follow this activity with a discussion about teamwork.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students turn to page 14 and find where the Busch series is described as the “minor league” of racing. Have someone explain what it means to be “in the minor leagues.” Point out that many idioms come from sports terms—for instance, “getting the checkered flag” means winning, and “having a pole position” means starting from a good place. Have students suggest other sports terms that are often used as metaphors for non-sport concepts (i.e., “striking out,” “hitting it out of the park,” “shooting a slam dunk,” and being “par for the course”).

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may not understand that NASCAR is an acronym for the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing. Write *acronym*, *NASCAR*, and *National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing* on the board. Ask students to suggest other acronyms and explain their meanings to the class. Some examples are SCUBA, CD-ROM, LASER, and NATO.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Ask students if they think that Jeff Gordon made the right decision by not attending college. Encourage them to think about what would be different about Jeff’s life if he had attended college. Have students come down on a definite side—either Jeff made the correct decision or not in opting not to get a college education. Explain that students should support their answers with evidence from the text.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Many students do not completely understand what the term “stock car” means. Have students research the definition of the term “stock car.” They should also research what changes a team can make to a stock car. Then discuss how their understanding of this information helps them to better understand the sport of NASCAR.

# JOHN CENA

by Robert Grayson

## CHAPTER 1: TOP OF THE WORLD

Wrestler, rapper, and actor John Cena has made a name for himself in the world of wrestling. He has won several championship titles, competed in a reality television contest, and endorsed many products. John has also taken time to give back to the less fortunate by playing tennis at the Arthur Ashe Kids' Day and by donating his time to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Along with other WWE wrestlers, he has traveled overseas to meet and thank U.S. soldiers for their service.

## CHAPTER 2: LEARNING TO BE STRONG

John and his family have always bonded over wrestling. As children, he and his four brothers used to reenact wrestling matches. After being bullied at school, John began lifting weights. His love for weightlifting led him to wrestling, and he enrolled in Ultimate University, a school for professional wrestling. In 2000, he won his first wrestling title, and later, he joined the WWE.

## CHAPTER 3: MAKING OF A CHAMPION

John's first televised match for the WWE was in 2002 against Kurt Angle. Although he lost, John had created an image that fans liked. With his good looks and athletic build, fans enjoyed when he rapped about his opponent and dressed in baggy pants and throwback jerseys. John's signature move, the FU, was a popular pinning gimmick. In 2003, he attempted to win the WWE Championship. He lost against Brock Lesnar.

## CHAPTER 4: HITTING THE BIG TIME

John's first WWE Championship win came in 2003 against a wrestler named Big Show. After pinning his opponent, his title was challenged by Kurt Angle, who claimed John had violated rules. As a result, John's title was taken away. Even though wrestling was a priority, John also took time to do other projects. John filmed *The Marine* in 2004 and released a CD, *You Can't See Me*, in 2005. In 2004, he won the championship for the third time and focused on winning the WWE World Championship. He defeated JBL and was named world champ in 2005.

## CHAPTER 5: BEING THE BEST

As a popular wrestler, John always took time out for autographs, interviews, and working with children in the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Over the next year, he had to defend his title. He battled many opponents that wanted his championship belt, but he continued to defeat them. He also won the WWE Tag Team title with Shawn Michaels. In 2007, the WWE took away his championship title after John was injured and was unable to defend his title. Four months after the injury, he was back in the ring and trying to regain his trophy.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students turn to the glossary on page 60 and scan the vocabulary words. Students should use at least three of the words in a paragraph about John Cena. After allowing students to draft their paragraphs, have student volunteers write their paragraphs on the board. Read the paragraphs aloud, noting if the words were used correctly and correcting them if they were not.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have difficulty comprehending a section even after they've learned to read it correctly. Have students read aloud short sections of text. Then have them paraphrase the section of text in their own words. Correct students' misunderstandings of the sections, or have other students help them paraphrase the sections correctly.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

As a class, go over the different topics examined in the Cross-Currents sections of the book. Using what they have learned about John Cena, students should come up with ideas for additional Cross-Currents sections. Show students the importance of the Cross-Currents sections by emphasizing how the Cross-Currents articles expand on something briefly mentioned in the rest of the book. As students come up with ideas for Cross-Currents sections, allow them to do some online research to find more information about their idea. Then have students present their ideas for new Cross-Currents sections to the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Chapter 3 discusses John Cena's experience of finding a wrestling "gimmick," a characteristic that makes each wrestler a character who stands apart from others. Have students design a wrestling identity for themselves. They should choose a name and describe how they will dress and act in the ring. Point out that John Cena dresses like a rapper and comes up with freestyle rhymes. They should use their own personalities and interests to design a persona that represents who they are. Have students flesh out their ideas through writing. Then allow each student to explain his or her wrestling persona to the class.



### READING COMPREHENSION—RECALLING DETAILS

One point the book makes about John Cena is that he was always looking for opportunities to further himself in life. For instance, when a customer at the gym where he worked told him about Ultimate University, John looked into it further and ended up enrolling as a student. Have students look through the book and find examples of John seizing opportunities to get ahead. Help them see that successful people do not sit back and wait for accomplishment; instead, they actively seek out opportunity.

# MARIA SHARAPOVA

BY KERRILY SAPET

## CHAPTER 1: AN UNEXPECTED CHAMPION

Russian tennis player Maria Sharapova is one of the most famous athletes in the world. Her natural abilities and her dedication to tennis brought her fame at a young age. At 17, Maria competed in a 2-week tennis tournament at Wimbledon, where she played many talented tennis stars. In the final round of the event, Maria's 115-mile-per-hour serves overpowered her opponent, American tennis star Serena Williams. Much to the world's surprise, teenage Maria won the Wimbledon trophy and began her ascent to iconic status.

## CHAPTER 2: THE ROAD TO TENNIS FAME

Maria proved her tennis talents at an early age. When she was just 4 years old, she was given an old tennis racket to play with. Before long, Maria was practicing daily. At a tennis clinic, a tennis superstar noticed Maria's talent and suggested she attend a tennis academy in Florida. She obtained a scholarship to attend the famous academy. At 10, Maria played in her first tournament. At 11, she began to practice with a tennis coach for 6 hours a day. Maria became a professional player at 14.

## CHAPTER 3: BECOMING THE BEST

Maria's 2004 win at Wimbledon turned the 17-year-old into an overnight star. Maria held many media interviews and gave endorsements of some of the biggest brand names in the world. Maria also donated some of her money to help others. In 2004, the busy tennis pro was awarded the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Player of the Year and Most Improved Player awards. After her Wimbledon win, Maria won six more tournaments, among other major feats.

## CHAPTER 4: THE GOOD AND THE BAD

Early in 2006, Maria suffered a bone bruise on her right ankle, which forced her to stay out of tournaments for 2 months. She continued to excel upon her return, though Grand Slam wins eluded her. Finally, at the 2006 U.S. Open, Maria won her second Grand Slam title. She also founded the Maria Sharapova Foundation to help at-risk children. In 2007, Maria's injuries continued and her winning streak wavered. By year end, her playing improved, and she was also named a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations.

## CHAPTER 5: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In 2008, Maria began to practice harder than ever. At the Australian Open, she won her third Grand Slam title. Maria maintains excellence on the court and continues to donate money and time to help children and to combat poverty.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups of four or five. Explain that most writing is made up of causes and effects. Write this example on the board: *Cause: Maria Sharapova practiced tennis for hours every day; Effect: Maria Sharapova became a famous tennis star.* Have each group search one chapter in the book for five cause-and-effect relationships. After allowing students time to work with their groups, have them present their five cause-and-effect relationships to the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Explain that once students know the meaning of one word, they can often use that knowledge to figure out the meaning of several other words. For instance, if you know the meaning of the word “victory,” you can easily determine the meaning of the words “victor” and “victorious.” Instruct students to find a word in the text and note the definition of the word. Then they should try to come up with at least two different words that share the root of the word they defined. Based on the defined word, have students guess the correct meaning of the new words.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Explain that most of the book is written in the past tense. Select a sentence from the passage to use as an example. Change the sentence to present tense to show students how the change would be made. Then assign students a paragraph from the book and have them change the paragraph so that it is in present tense instead of past tense. After allowing students some time to work, have volunteers share their changes with the class.



### FORMING OPINIONS

Point out to students that on page 23, the author explains that some critics think that Maria spends too much time fulfilling endorsements when she should be practicing tennis. Have students choose a side in this debate. Tell them that being undecided is not an option. They should choose one viewpoint. Have a class debate in which students use the information in the book to support their opinions.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Point out to students that Maria, as well as many other role models, began to give back to needy people after she became successful. Have students give examples of Maria’s charitable work and draw conclusions about why she chose to help those particular groups. Have students imagine that they became successful and wealthy role models. Instruct students to write about how they would use their fame and wealth to make a difference in the world and how they came to their decision.

# MATT DAMON

BY PAMELA TOLER

## CHAPTER 1: HONORED WITH A STAR

In 2007, Matt Damon received one of the highest honors an actor can achieve: a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The same year, Matt was asked to leave his footprint in the cement courtyard at Hollywood's Grauman's Chinese Theater, a distinction given to few celebrities. In 2007, *Forbes* magazine described him as "Hollywood's best investment" and *People* magazine dubbed him "Sexiest Man Alive," despite his attempt to decline the nomination. Although he is a Hollywood icon, Matt sees himself as a typical family man.

## CHAPTER 2: A SHARED DREAM

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Matt's mother encouraged his creativity. After his parents' divorce, Matt and his brother moved to a new neighborhood where Matt met Ben Affleck, an aspiring young professional actor and soon, a prized friend. At 17, Matt landed a single-line role in the movie *Mystic Pizza*. He later excelled in drama classes at Harvard University. Matt joined Ben in Los Angeles, where they began work on a screenplay. The script for *Good Will Hunting* was auctioned off to Castle Entertainment, who insisted that the creators star in the film.

## CHAPTER 3: A SHOOTING STAR

Matt earned a role in the film *Courage Under Fire* in 2005, portraying a soldier consumed by guilt and drug addiction. Soon after, Matt and Ben renegotiated their script deal with a new director and production company. Matt starred in *Good Will Hunting* and—with Ben—received a Golden Globe for Best Original Screenplay. Matt and Ben teamed up again to form an entertainment company called LivePlanet.

## CHAPTER 4: BACK ON THE A-LIST

Though Matt's next projects did not receive as much positive critical attention, in 2001 he accepted the lead role in the action movie *The Bourne Identity*. His dedication prompted an extensive study of stunt work. His performance—followed by the quick success of *Ocean's Eleven*—elevated Matt's career to a new level. He later followed up with successful sequels to both movies. In 2005, he married a single mom named Luciana, with whom he has managed to lead a private life.

## CHAPTER 5: NEW ROLES

The famed Martin Scorsese directed Matt's next starring role in the film *The Departed*. Many large roles followed, including the sequels *Ocean's Thirteen* and *The Bourne Ultimatum*. Matt and Luciana had a daughter, Isabelle, in 2006. Matt shared his good fortune by joining the charitable organizations DATA and ONE to help combat AIDS and poverty in Africa. Matt later cofounded the organization H2O Africa to help provide African citizens with clean water. Matt also cofounded Not on Our Watch to help victims of war.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups. Have students flip through the text and write down the many different genres of films in which Matt Damon has starred. For each genre, students should also note the title of the Damon film and a short explanation of how they classified its genre. After allowing students to work in groups, have them share their lists with the class. If two groups identified the same movie as different genres, have them compare their explanations. Explain that some films can be classified as multiple genres.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students turn to the glossary on page 60. Ask volunteers to choose a word and act it out in front of the class. For instance, a student may pretend to receive an *Oscar*, take pictures like the *paparazzi*, or perform a *slapstick* act. Inform students that talking is permissible, as is working with a partner or group. Allow them to perform. Then have other students guess which word is being acted out.



### READING COMPREHENSION—COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

Have readers compare Matt's experience in applying to and studying at Harvard University to his character's experience in *Good Will Hunting*. Help students understand that many artists are inspired by their own experiences. Ask them to suggest other writers, actors, or musicians who have used experiences from their real lives in their work. Also have students explain the connections they see between the stars' lives and their work.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students work with a partner to use the Internet to research Grauman's Chinese Theatre. Each group can share what they have learned with the rest of the class. For more advanced classes, have each group choose something in the book they'd like to learn more about (i.e., *The Walk of Fame*, the original *Oceans 11*, or director Martin Scorsese). Have students research the subject and give a short presentation to the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Write this question on the board: *How has financial success allowed Matt Damon to live his life on his own terms?* Make sure students understand what the question is asking. Then have students use the information in the book to answer the question. They should find examples of Matt "living his life on his own terms" and then show how Matt's financial success has allowed him to fulfill those aspirations.

# MILEY CYRUS

BY DAVID ROBSON

## CHAPTER 1: THE BEST

Through her role as Hannah Montana, Miley Cyrus has earned fame, fortune, and adoring fans. She's blended girl-next-door looks with a talent for singing and acting to build an extraordinary career. *Hannah Montana* debuted on the Disney Channel in March 2006 and gained immediate success. Miley headlined as Hannah Montana in late 2007 and became one of the hottest concert acts of the year.

## CHAPTER 2: SMILEY

Miley was born Destiny Hope Cyrus. When she was very young, her father hit it big in country music with his song "Achy Breaky Heart." Miley went on tour with her dad—where her constant happiness earned her the nickname "Smiley." She couldn't pronounce "smiley," and mispronounced it "Miley"—a nickname that stuck. When her dad, Billy Ray, was offered a part in a show called *Doc*, the Cyrus family moved to Toronto, Canada. The show was a success, and Miley played some guest roles, which led to other big acting parts.

## CHAPTER 3: THE BIG AUDITION

At 11, Miley convinced her parents to send an audition tape to Disney Studios. Though the tape caught the eye of a Disney executive, there were no parts for Miley. When Billy Ray's show *Doc* ended, the family moved back to Tennessee. At the same time, the president of Disney was screening audition tapes for a new show called *Hannah Montana*. Remembering Miley's video, he called her in to audition. Billy Ray realized that they were also casting someone to play Hannah's father. He asked if he might audition. Once he and Miley performed a scene together, the chemistry was evident.

## CHAPTER 4: THE BIRTH OF A PHENOM

*Hannah Montana* uses an age-old convention of popular stories—the actor who plays two roles. In *Hannah Montana*, a normal teenager hides her secret life as a rock star. While the audience is aware of her secret, the other characters are not. Soon *Hannah Montana* became the most popular show on cable television. Miley had to adjust to the pressures of being away from her family and friends.

## CHAPTER 5: BOTH WORLDS

After the first season of *Hannah Montana*, Miley recorded an album and went on tour with a show called "Best of Both Worlds," which became one of the biggest concerts of the year. The popular show allows her to perform as both Hannah Montana and Miley Cyrus. In 2008, Miley officially changed her name from Destiny Hope to Miley Ray.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups and have them come up with five things that make Miley Cyrus so appealing to young people. Then have students discuss what they look for in role models. Students should use this information to answer this question: *Why is it important to have role models?* After allowing the groups to work independently, have the class participate in a discussion about why we have role models and what qualities we look for in role models.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students flip to the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 61. Have each student choose 10 words from the list. Then have students write 10 sentences apiece. Each sentence should use a word from the list. When students are finished with their 10 sentences, have volunteers read a sentence aloud without saying the vocabulary word. Have the rest of the class try to guess what vocabulary word the student used in the sentence.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners can benefit from studying the structure of the sentences used in the book. Choose any sentence in the book, and write it on the board. Help students identify the subject and the verb in the sentence. Explain that all sentences have a subject and a verb. Have students pick sentences from the book. As a class, identify the subject and the verb in each sentence. Finally, choose sentences in the book and have volunteers identify the subjects and verbs in the sentence.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students work with a partner to use the Internet to research former teen idols. Make sure they search for someone who was famous before 2000. Some examples are Elvis Presley, Frankie Avalon, and Debbie Gibson. Have students research the biography of the teen star of their choice and take notes on any similarities they find to the career of Miley Cyrus. In a class discussion, have students discuss what experiences seem to be universal among teen idols, and what details make Miley different.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students write a chapter of their own biography. They should use the Miley Cyrus biography as a sample. Explain that the chapter should have a title and should explain how the student triumphed over something or achieved a goal in his or her life. Make sure students do not write in the first person. Students should objectively view their lives and write about their experiences in the third person.

# RAVEN-SYMONÉ by Terri Dougherty

## CHAPTER 1: CUTE KID, GENEROUS ACTRESS

Though actress Raven-Symoné has been in the public eye for most of her life, she uses her fame to promote positive messages to youth. Raven-Symoné first became famous for her role on the hit TV series *The Cosby Show*. Later roles earned her many awards, including an NAACP Image Award nomination. She has since starred in her own show, *That's So Raven*, and has acted in many movies. Raven-Symoné believes in the importance of empowering girls and working against the negative influences of Hollywood on female youth.

## CHAPTER 2: THE ROAD TO STARDOM

Raven-Symoné began acting when she was only 16 months old and signed with Ford Modeling Agency at age 2. At 3, she impressed comedian Bill Cosby and was given a role on his popular sitcom, where she played the funny and charming Olivia and for which she received a Young Artist Award in 1991. She started singing and earned several TV roles, including a lead on the series *Hangin' with Mr. Cooper*. She also performed in her first movie, *The Little Rascals*. Though her fame caused her to suffer some isolation as a teen, Raven stayed focused and released an album in 1999. She also joined causes such as Safe Kids and D.A.R.E. to help keep children on track.

## CHAPTER 3: SHE'S SO RAVEN

When Raven-Symoné auditioned for a Disney Channel role in 2002, the producers decided to make her the star and rename the show *That's So Raven*. Here, she showcased her comedic talent and earned many young fans. She soon followed with a role in the hit movie *The Cheetah Girls*, where she showed off her singing talents. Raven-Symoné continued singing and released another album in 2004, on which she cowrote several songs with positive messages encouraging girls to stay true to themselves.

## CHAPTER 4: NEW CHALLENGES

In 2006, Raven-Symoné began to help produce her hit show. She also released another solo album, followed by a tour, and starred in a movie about racial integration. Raven-Symoné has kept her personal life out of the public eye by avoiding attention-seeking behaviors. She takes pride in the realistic image she presents to her fans simply by being herself.

## CHAPTER 5: BEYOND RAVEN

Though her Disney show ended in 2007, Raven-Symoné continued her family friendly performances with a hit film, *College Road Trip*, in which she played opposite comedian Martin Lawrence. She toured after releasing another album and launched a Web site on which she demonstrates how to cook, craft, and decorate. The young star is also dedicated to helping other children, with contributions to the March of Dimes, Inner City Games, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. She was recognized for her charitable efforts by Disney in 2006 when she was awarded the first ever VoluntEAR "Show Your Character" award.



## LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Most of the vocabulary words in this book relate to the television and entertainment industries. Remind students that *jargon* refers to words and phrases that are specific to a certain activity or field of study. Instruct students to review the meanings of the boldfaced terms in the glossary. Then tell students to use each vocabulary word in a sentence. Students should know and understand the following terms: *animated film*, *audition*, *contract*, *costars*, *episode*, *mug*, *music video*, *pratfall*, *producer*, *reruns*, *role*, *sequel*, *series*, *sitcom*, *soundtrack*, and *typecast*.

ABC

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may be uncomfortable voicing their opinions in a classroom discussion, especially if they have not yet mastered the English language. Encourage ELL students to participate by writing, drawing, or using gestures to indicate their responses. Such contributions will not only provide valuable insight to the overall discussion, but will also help students gain the confidence they need to express themselves in front of others.



## READING COMPREHENSION—ANALYZING TONE

Tell students that *tone* refers to an author's attitude toward the subject of his or her writing. An author's tone may be positive, negative, or neutral. It may also be sympathetic, reminiscent, enthusiastic, and so on. Remind students that a *biography* is the story of someone's life written by someone else. Instruct students to analyze the information in the biography *Raven-Symoné* and determine the author's tone.



## WRITING PRACTICE

Ask: *How does the author of this book most likely feel about Raven-Symoné?* After analyzing the tone of the biography, students should have a good understanding of the author's attitude toward Raven-Symoné. Have students construct a short response in which they cite examples from the book to demonstrate the author's attitude toward Raven-Symoné.



## CLASS DISCUSSION

The following quote from Raven-Symoné appears on the cover of the book: "Be comfortable with who you are!" Tell students to consider what they learned about Raven-Symoné from the book and discuss whether her actions and lifestyle live up to this motto. Students should provide examples from the book to support their arguments. (Students will likely point out that Raven-Symoné feels good about her body, is comfortable with her weight, has made many appearances without makeup and glamorous clothing, prefers a clean reputation to popularity, and believes in making family friendly entertainment that everyone can enjoy.)

# SHAUN WHITE by Karen Schweitzer

## CHAPTER 1: THE QUEST FOR GOLD

To qualify for the 2006 Olympics, snowboarder Shaun White needed to perform well at the 2005 Grand Prix series. He did better than expected by becoming the first person to win every halfpipe contest of the season. He was a favorite at the 2006 Olympics, but the pressure got to him and he fell; however, he rebounded and ended up winning a gold medal. Shaun became a superstar, endorsing products, making films, and appearing on late-night talk shows.

## CHAPTER 2: GROWING UP ON THE SLOPES

Shaun grew up in Carlsbad, California, and began skiing when he was only 4. After overcoming a heart condition, Shaun wanted to be active. His older brother taught him to do skateboarding tricks. Shaun's father taught his sons to snowboard. Shaun won his first snowboarding contest when he was only 7. Because he was so young, he could not find a snowboard small enough for him. When his mother called a business to find a snowboard, the company offered to sponsor Shaun. Shaun turned pro when he was 13. He won many competitions, but when he tried out for the Olympics, he didn't make the team.

## CHAPTER 3: TWO-SPORT SUPERSTAR

While Shaun was excelling in snowboarding, he was also impressing people with his skateboarding skills. He was asked to join Tony Hawk's skateboarding tour, but he decided to focus on snowboarding. In 2003, the X Games went global. Everyone expected Shaun to win the gold for the United States, and he did not disappoint. He decided to try out professional skateboarding, and he became the first athlete to participate in both the Summer and Winter X Games in 2003. Shaun had to keep up with school, but he was given school credit for some of his business responsibilities.

## CHAPTER 4: DOMINATING THE COMPETITION

Shaun injured his knee during the 2004 season. He returned too early, re-injuring himself and having to sit out even more competitions. By December of 2004, he felt good enough to compete in the Air and Style contest in Europe. Some people worried that he was not ready, but he proved that he was by winning. Shaun competed in several events and worked on snowboarding movies. At 19, Shaun scored a gold medal at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin and became an ambassador for the RED project, which helps fight AIDS in Africa.

## CHAPTER 5: STILL RIDING HIGH

Shaun became a superstar, appearing in magazines, movies, and TV shows. Shaun entered the 2007 Summer X Games as a skateboarding competitor, and although he fell on his first two runs, his strong performance on the third run earned him the Summer X Games gold medal. He is also the first athlete to win gold medals in both the Summer and Winter X Games. Shaun gives to charity and performs at benefits to raise money for several organizations. He is involved in talks to create a snowboarding video game, and his career is still going strong.



### READING COMPREHENSION—COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

Unlike most athletes who specialize in a single sport, Shaun White excels at both snowboarding and skateboarding. Have students work in small groups to create a chart that compares snowboarding and skateboarding. The main questions they should answer are “*How are the sports alike?*” and “*How are the sports different?*”



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students turn to page 59 and choose 10 words that they would like to use in a story. Have students write a fictional story about a snowboarder using the 10 words. They can make themselves the snowboarder in the story, or they may approach the snowboarding aspect in any other manner. After allowing students time to write their stories, have volunteers share their stories with the class.



### CRITICAL THINKING

Have students brainstorm experiences they have had that are like Shaun White’s experiences. Help students understand what they have read by helping them relate to Shaun White. After allowing students to scan the text and make some notes, have students identify something from the text that reminded them of their own lives. They should explain the detail from Shaun’s life, explain the detail from their own life, and explain how those two details are similar.



### QUESTIONING THE TEXT

Have students write a question about the text. Explain that they should not write a question that requires only a one-word answer. They should write a question that requires a response that is about a paragraph long. After students finish their questions, collect them, shuffle them, and give them out randomly to the students. Have each student respond to the question he or she is given. Then allow volunteers to read the question and their response to the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Shaun has been a talented athlete for most of his life; therefore, getting a knee injury and having to sit out of the games for two seasons was very hard on him. He overcame this challenge and went on to win more medals and earn more accolades for his performance. After providing students with this example, have them write about a challenge they have experienced in their life and how they overcame the hardship. Tell students to focus on how the challenge made them a better person or a tougher competitor.

# **SHERYL SWOOPES** by Karen Schweitzer

## **CHAPTER 1: THREE-TIME OLYMPIC GOLD METALIST**

A lover of basketball since age 7, Sheryl Swoopes is an icon in American sports history. She was the first woman signed to the WNBA, was named Player of the Year by nine different organizations, and can claim ownership to three consecutive Olympic gold metals. Sheryl played for Texas Tech University and then went on to become one of the most recognized and highly paid female athletes in U.S. history.

## **CHAPTER 2: EARLY SUCCESS ON THE COURT**

A born Texan, Sheryl was the only daughter in a family of three sons. She first started playing basketball with her brothers and later joined a girls' league. She continued playing basketball through high school and received a scholarship to the University of Texas, but quickly returned home because she was homesick. She enrolled at Texas Tech, where she won the NCAA Women's Basketball Championship during her senior year. After college, Sheryl traveled to Italy to play for the Basket Bari team, only to leave disappointed. Back home, she joined Team USA and, in 1995, the Olympic team.

## **CHAPTER 3: WNBA CHAMPION**

The WNBA was the first American professional female basketball league, and Sheryl was one of its first players. She signed with the Houston Comets, but discovered shortly thereafter that she was pregnant. Though she feared what the association would say, Sheryl embraced motherhood and received nothing but support. Only 2 days after giving birth, she began training. Forty-three days later, she premiered for the team and became one of the best players in the league. Her dedication paid off, earning her \$1.2 million in endorsements. Her busy life led to divorce, but she channeled her energy into basketball and won her second consecutive Olympic gold in 2000.

## **CHAPTER 4: QUEEN OF THE COURT**

After helping her team to its fourth straight WNBA Championship, Sheryl tore her ACL and lateral meniscus. She went on to coauthor a book titled *Hoops with Swoopes* and received WNBA First Team Honors, MVP, and Defensive Player of the Year awards. She won her third consecutive gold in the 2004 Olympic Games.

## **CHAPTER 5: BASKETBALL LEGEND**

Sheryl disclosed a secret 7-year relationship with Alisa Scott, the Comets' assistant coach, in 2005. She had tired of hiding her life and embraced the declaration, becoming a model for overcoming adversity. She also overcame another injury when she had the disc between her third and fourth vertebrae removed. Refusing to slow down, she donned a new uniform and joined the Seattle Storm. Sheryl continues to make history as a female basketball star.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Sheryl Swoopes was the first female athlete to have a shoe named after her: Nike Air Swoopes. Break students into groups and have each group choose an athlete that they believe is a good role model. Have them design a product and think of a slogan to honor that athlete for his or her positive influence in their lives. Have students share their final designs and slogans with the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Review the following basketball-related terms with students: *All-WNBA team*, *assist*, *double-double*, *exhibition games*, *Final Four*, *forward*, *MVP*, *playoffs*, and *triple-double*. Have students write sentences that contain the remaining vocabulary words: *anterior cruciate ligament*, *endorsement*, *formidable*, *inaugural*, *lateral meniscus*, *lumbar vertebrae*, *pickup games*, *rehab*, *scholarship*, and *semester*.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Remind English language learners that they can use prefixes and suffixes to help them determine the meanings of unfamiliar words. For example, the suffix *-able* in the word *recognizable* on page 6 hints that the meaning of the word is “able to be recognized.” Have students identify other words containing prefixes or suffixes and tell them to break apart the words to determine their meanings. The following are a few examples: *immediately*, *commitment*, *international*, *endorsements*, *unstoppable*, and *impossible*.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Sheryl Swoopes has said repeatedly that when she retires from basketball, she hopes to become a broadcast journalist or sports commentator. Broadcast journalists are always looking for a good story, and they often must perform a lot of research to uncover one. Have students work with a partner to use the Internet or library resources to do research on up-and-coming college athletes (male or female, from any sport) who are likely to move into professional sports upon graduation. During their research, students should attempt to answer the following questions: *Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?* Have students create an outline of their research.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Tell students to use the outlines they created in the Conducting Research activity to write brief news reports about the up-and-coming college athletes they chose. Students’ reports should answer the following questions: *Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?* Have students share these reports with the class. (As an alternative, students may write a script for a mock interview. One partner can play the broadcast journalist and the other can play the athlete. The two can perform the interview in front of the class.)

# SOULJA BOY TELL 'EM by Karen Schweitzer

## CHAPTER 1: SOULJA BOY TELL 'EM

DeAndre Cortez Way, better known as Soulja Boy Tell 'Em, was interested in music and rhythms since childhood. He experimented with beats and recording techniques when he was 12. Soon after, he started posting his recordings on Internet sites. The flood of positive responses prompted him to record a video featuring his original "Soulja Boy" dance moves. He was asked to perform on the popular MTV show *Total Request Live*, and before long, his song "Crank That" became number one for 7 weeks.

## CHAPTER 2: GROWING UP IN THE SOUTH

Soulja Boy Tell 'Em's upbringing led him all over the South. Despite financial challenges, he excelled in school. His love of music deepened when he learned how to produce beats and record music. He moved in with his father, who provided him with new opportunities. With new knowledge, a computer, and access to a studio, Soulja Boy Tell 'Em formed his own Web site and started a band with his friend. He then founded a record label and discovered his millions of fans. He obtained a manager and booked live performances. Soon after, "Crank That" saw a national debut.

## CHAPTER 3: FROM ONLINE SENSATION TO SUPERSTAR

Soulja Boy Tell 'Em signed a record contract and released a music video of "Crank That." Hollywood stars began imitating the now famous "Soulja Boy" dance. His first record, which he helped produce, was titled *Souljaboytellem.com*. The album sold well, including an unprecedented 3 million downloads of his hit single. In 2007, the artist received a Grammy nomination and released a hit instructional video showing the steps of his famous dance. He faced legal and censorship troubles later that year, but found himself with another hit single, "Soulja Girl," a collaboration with R&B trio i15.

## CHAPTER 4: HIP-HOP TRENDS

Many credit Soulja Boy Tell 'Em's success to his savvy marketing skills. Others say he paved the way for young hip-hop artists, though he credits the history of hip-hop, which began with the chants of African slaves. Recently, the industry has called for a movement against the racism and depreciation of women in hip-hop lyrics. Some deny the value of Soulja Boy Tell 'Em's contributions, while others praise him.

## CHAPTER 5: WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

Though his hit song "Yahhh!" and the two releases that followed didn't receive as many positive reviews as his previous releases, Soulja Boy Tell 'Em has continued to stay relevant in the hip-hop industry. In 2007, he toured as an opening act for the Up Close and Personal Tour, and in 2008, he announced his own headline tour with other big names in the industry. His nonmusical contributions include an online store featuring his merchandise, a clothing company, a feature-length film, and continued treasured interactions with his fans.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups of four or five. Have students discuss why they think Soulja Boy Tell ‘Em is or is not a good role model. (Students who think he is a good role model will cite his self-made success, his entrepreneurial spirit, and his vision for the future. Students who do not think he is a good role model will cite the controversy surrounding the lyrics of his song “Crank That” or the opinions of established hip-hop artists who believe that his songs have no substance and may actually cause more harm than good to the hip-hop industry.)



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Help students understand unfamiliar vocabulary by reviewing the boldfaced terms throughout the book. Students should know and understand the following words: *beats*, *controversy*, *culture*, *cut*, *denigration*, *domestically*, *entrepreneur*, *genre*, *groove*, *impromptu*, *label*, *one-hit wonder*, *parody*, *ringbacks*, *ringtones*, *tag*, *tempo*, *tracks*, *unprecedented*, and *viral marketing*. Tell students to write sentences containing each of these words.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Soulja Boy Tell ‘Em is no stranger to the online world, but English language learners (and less tech-savvy students) may have trouble with the computer-related terms in the book. Discuss the following terms with students: *Internet* (p. 4; a communications network that links computers from around the world), *download* (p. 5; to transfer or save files from the Internet or another computer to one's own computer), *online* (p. 5; connected to the Internet via computer), *Web site* (p. 5; a group of linked Web pages sponsored by an individual or group and made available online), *post* (p. 6; to display material online), *upload* (p. 13; to transfer or save files from your own computer to the Internet or onto another computer), *viral marketing* (p. 19; a form of marketing that encourages other people to promote something via word of mouth), and *blog* (p. 44; an online personal journal)



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

One obstacle that Soulja Boy Tell ‘Em had to overcome in his career was censorship. Some people felt that his lyrics were too racy for teens. Have students conduct research on the issue of censorship and the First Amendment right to freedom of speech. Then divide students into two teams: those who believe that censorship is sometimes acceptable and those who believe that censorship is a violation of First Amendment rights. Encourage students to debate the issue.



### WRITING PRACTICE

The book reveals that Soulja Boy Tell ‘Em not only creates original hip-hop music, but also has other projects in the works, including a clothing line, a signature shoe line, a feature-length film, and a cartoon. Tell students to consider their own plans for the future. Have students write short raps about their future plans. Encourage them to perform their raps with the class.

# STEVE NASH

 by Ian Kimmich

## CHAPTER 1: KID CANADIAN BECOMES MR. MVP

With his record number of points and assists, Phoenix Suns' team captain Steve Nash drove his team to finals during the 2006 NBA season. The league recognized his accomplishments and named him the Most Valuable Player. Steve's dedication to the game, his drive to be a team player, and his positive attitude has led him to be a fan and teammate favorite.

## CHAPTER 2: THE RISING STAR

Steve first started playing soccer while living in Canada, but he also played hockey, baseball, and basketball. Even though he focused his attention on basketball, many American universities ignored the Canadian athlete. Only Santa Clara University near San Jose, California, offered Steve a scholarship. In 1996, he was the 15<sup>th</sup> pick for the Phoenix Suns in the NBA Draft. Because the team already had two excellent point guards, Steve spent most of his debut season sitting on the bench. The team eventually traded Steve to the Dallas Mavericks in 1998.

## CHAPTER 3: FROM DALLAS TO THE WORLD

Dallas fans were just as cool to the young player as Phoenix fans, but Steve didn't let it bother him. He said, "How many people get the chance to be booed by 20,000 people?" His positive attitude paid off, and Steve began playing more often. He was a fan favorite during the 1999–2000 season, and he helped Team Canada get to the quarterfinals in the 2000 Olympics. Nominated for the All-Star award twice, Steve doubled his point average and assisted Dallas in getting to several championship games. In 2004, he signed a \$65 million contract with the Phoenix Suns.

## CHAPTER 4: THE VALLEY OF THE SUN

The Suns had a young, inexperienced team when Steve joined. With Steve's support, the Suns turned their losing streak around. He was named MVP during the 2004–05 season for his outstanding sportsmanship as well as his amazing abilities on the court. That year, he also won the All-Star Skills Contest. Steve led the Suns to the Western Conference Finals for the first time since 1993. The league named Steve MVP again in 2005, earning him the extra distinction of being one of the only NBA players to win back-to-back MVP titles.

## CHAPTER 5: HIS TIME IS NOW

Steve often uses his time to raise money for charities. In 2001, he started the Steve Nash Foundation, a charity that concentrates on children and environmental issues. Four years later, the first Steve Nash Charity Classic allowed kids to play basketball with some of their favorite NBA players. The event benefits underprivileged children. The Canadian government made Steve an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2007, and he made the All-Star team for a sixth time in 2008. Though Steve has many reasons to be proud, he still hopes that he will eventually lead his team to an NBA championship before he retires.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Have students work in small groups of four or five. Remind students that one of Steve Nash's personal crusades is to get families involved in physical activities. Ask students to come up with a weekly activities schedule that will help families get the exercise they need. Students should think of activities that all family members could take part in for about half an hour each day. Activities can range from raking leaves and pulling weeds to playing touch football in the backyard. Any activity that gets families moving is acceptable. Students should present their finished schedules to the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Break students into groups of three or four. Ask each group to use a pencil to write a paragraph that includes several of the vocabulary words listed in the glossary. Remind students to make their paragraphs logical. When they have finished, ask them to erase each vocabulary word and insert a blank line in its place. Groups should then switch paragraphs and try to fill in the correct words from the new paragraph. Encourage students to use the glossary if they need assistance.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Help English language learners understand how to form plural possessives. In plurals that end in *s*, students will sometimes put the apostrophe before the *s*. Ask students to turn to page 6. In the fourth paragraph, point out the phrase "the Suns' point guard." The word *Suns* is plural. To show possession, the apostrophe comes after the *s*. Plural words that do not end in *s* are different. Have students look at page 14. Point to the phrase "the NCAA men's basketball tournament." Tell students that plural words like *men* and *women* need an apostrophe *s* at the end to show possession. Write several plural words on the board (e.g., trees, women, people, and horses) and ask volunteers to show the class how to make these words possessive.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Steve Nash's teammates have praised him for being a true team player. Ask students to answer the following question: *Why is teamwork important? Use details from the book and your own personal experiences to support your answer.* (Sample response: Teamwork is an important part of everyday life. Businesses have to work with other businesses to complete projects. Students have to work with teachers to learn new material. Families work together to solve problems and support each other. Today, more than ever, we see just how interconnected people around the world are. If we were constantly fighting, we would never accomplish anything. This is why it is important to remember that we need to help each other as much as possible.)



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, ask students to use the Internet or library resources to research the similarities and differences between Canada and the United States. Students should try to find at least five similarities and five differences between the two nations and record this information in a chart. Ask students to present their completed charts to the class.

## TIM DUNCAN by Chuck Bednar

### CHAPTER 1: A TRUE CHAMPION

Four-time NBA championship winner Tim Duncan is anything but a flashy basketball player. Leading the San Antonio Spurs to several basketball titles, the star helps his team with rebounds, assists, and scoring. Former teammate Sean Elliott wrote, "You have this great team on the floor, playing ego-less, selfless basketball. You have a guy so sound fundamentally that you put taller, more athletic guys on him and he still destroys them."

### CHAPTER 2: A BITTERSWEET ROAD TO STARDOM

Born in the Virgin Islands, Tim was a talented swimmer and dreamed of going to the Olympics. In his early teens, Tim's life was turned upside down. In 1989, his mother, diagnosed with breast cancer, passed away the day before his birthday. That same year, a hurricane devastated Tim's home of St. Croix and destroyed the pool where he trained. Tim turned his attention to another sport: basketball. He enrolled in Wake Forest University where he joined the basketball team and studied psychology. After graduation, Tim was the first pick in the 1997 NBA Draft.

### CHAPTER 3: AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Tim signed a 3-year deal with the San Antonio Spurs. He won several Rookie of the Month honors and was selected to the All-Star team during his first season. He led the Spurs to the finals in 1999 and won the MVP award. During his third year, the Orlando Magic offered him a 6-year contract, but Tim re-signed with San Antonio. The forward was once again named to the All-Star Team, but he failed to take the Spurs to the finals. Tim married his long-time girlfriend, Amy Sherrill, following the conclusion of the 2000–01 season. The couple started the Tim Duncan Foundation, a charity that creates programs that promote youth sports.

### CHAPTER 4: TAKING CHARGE

After two repeated defeats in the finals, Tim was anxious to lead his team to victory. He broke records in scoring and rebounds. He was named the MVP of the league in 2002, but was unable to take his team to victory, losing to the Los Angeles Lakers for the third season in a row. After another great year with the Spurs, the basketball star received the MVP award again in 2003, becoming the eighth player ever to achieve the honor consecutively. That year, the team won the NBA Finals and the league named Tim MVP of the championship.

### CHAPTER 5: CEMENTING HIS LEGACY

Despite battling injuries, Tim still led the Spurs to the championship playoffs in 2005. The win and a Finals MVP award made him the fourth player in NBA history to earn the title. He was named to the All-Star team in the following two seasons. Tim scored his 15,000<sup>th</sup> point in 2006, and the Association of Professional Basketball Research named him one of the 100 Greatest Professional Basketball Players of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



### INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Ask students to work as individuals. Have them select an important event from Tim Duncan's life. Then ask students to write a journal entry about the event from Tim Duncan's perspective. They should try to imagine how Tim felt after this event and what he would write in his journal. Remind students to use quotes from the book to get an idea of Tim's voice. Encourage artistic students to include a picture that represents Tim's feelings in their journal entries. Ask volunteers to share their entries with the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Break students into groups of three or four. Ask students to familiarize themselves with the vocabulary words in the glossary. Encourage students to come up with rhymes to help them remember the meaning of the vocabulary words. Tell students that the rhyme is a mnemonic device, or memory aid. Write this rhyme on the board to help them get started: *Work hard your first season/Don't skip practice to play hooky/Listen to older players/And you'll make it as a rookie.* Remind students that their rhymes don't have to be perfect, but they should include words that will help them remember the definition of the vocabulary word.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners can monitor comprehension as they read by asking and answering questions while they read. Encourage students to keep a notebook with them as they read. Have them write a question for each section that they read. For instance, while reading the section "Building Relationships as a Rookie," students might ask the question, "Who most helped Tim through his rookie season on the NBA?" When students have finished reading, they should go back and attempt to answer their own questions.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, students should use the Internet or library resources to research one of the following people: Michael Jordan, George Gervin, or David Robinson. Using their research, which may include information from the Cross-Currents sections, have students create Venn diagrams to show the similarities and differences between the person of their choice and Tim Duncan. Show students an example of a Venn diagram on the board. Encourage students to share their completed diagrams with the class.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Tim Duncan overcame many obstacles to achieve his dreams. Have students work to answer the following question: *What is a major obstacle Tim faced in his life? How did he overcome it? How has it shaped the person he is today?* Students should respond with well-written paragraphs. Encourage volunteers to share their experiences with the class.

# TOBEY MAGUIRE

by Terri Dougherty

## CHAPTER 1: HE IS SPIDER-MAN

Tobey Maguire has played the title role in three blockbuster *Spider-Man* movies. Audiences love his portrayal of the character because he shows that aside from being a superhero, Spider-Man has the same problems everyone else has. Although some critics panned *Spider-Man 3* for being too complicated, the movie fared very well at the box office.

## CHAPTER 2: OUTCAST

Tobey was born to very young parents who held normal jobs in California. His mom encouraged him to try acting. At 13, Tobey earned his first role. He quit school to act full time. Losing a lot of roles was hard on Tobey, so he was happy to have his friend Leonardo de Caprio, a fellow child actor, to rely on. Tobey decided to relax and not worry so much about stardom. He stopped drinking and started living a very healthy lifestyle.

## CHAPTER 3: RESPECTED ACTOR

Tobey's improved attitude helped him secure roles. After starring in the short film *The Duke of Groove*, Tobey received a lot of attention. The film was nominated for an Oscar, and many directors were suddenly interested in casting Tobey. In 1998, Tobey earned his first leading role in the major movie *Pleasantville*. Though his movies were not always huge moneymakers, Tobey consistently tried to take roles that challenged him. Critics and coworkers praised Tobey for his subtle ability to convey emotion through body language. Tobey decided to take time off from acting to focus on his personal life, but he always planned to come back to acting. That time came when Tobey read the script for *Spider-Man*.

## CHAPTER 4: SUPERSTAR

Director Sam Raimi wanted his Spider-Man to be a little more complex than most superheroes, and he thought that Tobey would be perfect for the role. Some executives thought Tobey was wrong for the part and wanted a teen idol who could guarantee financial success. Sam Raimi insisted that Tobey was the right actor for the job and brought him in for two screen tests. Tobey got the part. *Spider-Man* was a huge hit in 2002, breaking records with its financial success. Tobey received great praise for his complex portrayal of Peter Parker. He began to produce films as well as act in them. *Spider-Man 2* was released next and was another financial success.

## CHAPTER 5: FAME AND FAMILY

Before filming *Spider-Man 3*, Tobey acted in an experimental period piece called *The Good German*, which bombed. In *Spider-Man 3*, Tobey played a darker Spider-Man. Though the film received some bad reviews, audiences loved it. Tobey continues to produce and act in movies. He has also made a commitment to spending time with his wife and daughter. He uses his success to help charities that are important to him.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Point out that many successful people incorporate healthy lifestyles into their routines. Have students consider how living a healthy lifestyle can help a person be more successful (i.e., good nutrition and exercise make people more energetic). Point out that Tobey practiced yoga, became a vegetarian, and gave up drinking. After making these changes, he achieved the success he sought. (Students may take the side that a healthy lifestyle does not help a person achieve success, but help them see the connection.)



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students turn to the glossary on page 60. Show students a few current movie reviews and ask volunteers read them to the class. Instruct students to write a review of a movie that they have seen. They should use the vocabulary words from page 60 in their review. Though they do not have to use all words, they should incorporate as many words as they can into their review. After allowing students time to write, encourage volunteers to read their reviews to the class.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have difficulty grasping the concept of a “darker and more complex Spider-Man.” Having the class perform the “Conducting Research” assignment may help them understand this difference. After performing this assignment, have students give examples of characters who are dark or complex. Then have them give examples of characters who are light and uncomplicated. Have them offer details about the characters to support their answers.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students work with a partner to use the Internet to research the old *Spider-Man* comics. Have them create a Spider-Man timeline that includes Spider-Man’s introduction to the world all the way through the movies starring Tobey as Spider-Man. Ask them to research how the comic icon has changed over the years, including his look and the different mediums through which his story is told. After the groups have made their presentations, engage students in a discussion about which version of Spider-Man they like or do not like and have them explain their reasoning.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Tobey’s subtle body language and his style of acting earned him many roles as anxiety-ridden teens going through big changes in their lives. His series of roles as troubled teens is what made some directors afraid that he would not be able to pull off the role of Spider-Man. Tobey actively sought out roles that challenged and interested him. Have students imagine they are up-and-coming actors seeking out roles that interest them. Instruct them to write a short essay that answers these questions: *What sort of roles do you want to play? What about your personality makes you particularly able to play such roles?* Students can choose actual people they would play (e.g., Tom Sawyer) or generic types (e.g., brooding teens in unrequited love). Encourage volunteers to share their writing with the class.

# TONY PARKER

by Chuck Bednar

## CHAPTER 1: CHAMPION AND MVP

Tony Parker has an impressive basketball resume: All-Star player, NBA playoffs champion, and world champion. With his dedication to the game and his perseverance on the court, he helped the San Antonio Spurs win the 2007 NBA Championship. He also walked away with the title of Finals MVP, becoming the first European-born player to obtain the honor.

## CHAPTER 2: BASKETBALL IN HIS BLOOD

Basketball has always been in Tony's blood. His father was a player in the European basketball league and the Parker family joined in his travels around the world. Tony followed his father's example and became a basketball player. Tony played with several European teams, and while playing at the Nike Hoop Summit, an event that pitted United States and international players against each other, Tony drew the attention of NBA coaches. Several colleges offered Tony scholarships, but he refused. After declaring himself eligible for the 2001 NBA draft, the San Antonio Spurs offered Tony a deal. He played only five games before being named a starter.

## CHAPTER 3: HIGHS AND LOWS

While Tony's first season was a triumph, he played inconsistently during the next year. He scored less than half the shots he attempted. By 2003, he had improved and helped the team to the Western Conference. In the finals, the Spurs defeated the New Jersey Nets to become the NBA Champions.

## CHAPTER 4: RISING ABOVE

Tony may have had problems on the court, but he was a fan favorite across the world. The ratings for the NBA Championship were high in Europe, especially in France, where Tony grew up. Fearing he would be replaced, Tony worked hard to enhance his game. In 2005, he led the Spurs to victory in the NBA Finals against the Detroit Pistons. Tony finally realized another of his goals when he played in the All-Star Game in 2006.

## CHAPTER 5: CHAMPION, ON AND OFF COURT

Because of his high scoring average, Tony was named one of the NBA's best guards for the 2006–07 season. The Spurs reached the playoffs and the NBA named Tony the Finals MVP. He was also a success off the court. At the end of the season, Tony married his girlfriend, actress Eva Longoria. Tony also released a French hip-hop album, and one of his songs even reached number one on the charts. He continues to work hard at helping others. Basketball Without Borders, a program that the NBA sponsors for communities, allows Tony to travel the world and play the sport with children. Currently, he is the first ambassador for the Make-A-Wish Foundation in France.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into groups of four or five. Point out that Tony Parker speaks both English and French. Though students might not realize it, they use French words in their everyday conversations. Borrowing words from another language is common in English. A few French words we have adopted include *memoir*, *rendezvous*, and *ballet*. Ask the groups to think of as many borrowed words as they can in a minute and write them down on a piece of paper. The group with the most correct borrowed words wins a small prize.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students break into groups of three or four. Ask students to familiarize themselves with the vocabulary words in the glossary on page 60. Have groups write a short story about a rookie basketball player using as many of the words as possible. Remind students that they need to use the words logically within the story. They should not just include the word in order to use it. Encourage artistic students to illustrate the story. Have students share their stories with the class.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Tell English language learners that transitional words and phrases help connect ideas and events. They are especially important in writing when moving from one paragraph to another or when starting a new chapter. Ask students to examine how the author starts a new paragraph in a section. Point out the transitional words the author uses. Remind students that words like *however* and *afterwards* are good indications of a transition. Go over other transitional phrases with students.



### CLASS DISCUSSION

Remind students that though several universities offered Tony Parker scholarships, he opted to go straight to the NBA. Many people believe that players need more experience in order to handle the pressures of professional basketball and improve as players. Some argue that teams spend too much money on young players who may never live up to their potential, while others feel that college makes the players well rounded. Ask students what they think. Should players be required to play in college before declaring themselves for the NBA draft?



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, students should use the Internet or library resources to research the European Basketball Leagues and the NBA. Ask them to look for similarities and differences between the two leagues. Encourage them to create a graphic organizer of their choice that shows how the two leagues compare. Ask volunteers to present their graphic organizers to the class.

# TYRA BANKS by Karen Schweitzer

## CHAPTER 1: AMERICA'S TOP MODEL

Supermodel Tyra Banks has proven that she is more than just a pretty face. A model at 17, she conquered the runway and successfully entered the television industry with her reality program, *America's Next Top Model*, and her talk show, *The Tyra Banks Show*. Though her early goals included acting and modeling, she has turned her name into an empire.

## CHAPTER 2: GROWING UP TYRA

Tyra's childhood wasn't always happy. Growing up, her peers teased her about her height and skin problems. After enrolling in a private school, she grew more confident and was persuaded to try modeling. A few weeks before her freshman year in college, Elite Model Management signed her as a model and she traveled to Paris for runway work. Her modeling led to jobs in music videos, on television shows, and in movies. Tyra's big break came when she became the first African-American woman to be the face of CoverGirl Cosmetics and to appear on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*.

## CHAPTER 3: INNER AND OUTER BEAUTY

In 1997, the supermodel was honored as Supermodel of the Year with a Michael Award and a VH1 Fashion and Music Award. Her fame helped her raise awareness for abused children, education, and the environment. She started TZONE, a camp to teach leadership to teenage girls. She also worked in movies, on books, and in television to help young women learn to be comfortable with self-image. While working on other projects, Tyra also continued her modeling career, becoming a Victoria's Secret Angel in 1999.

## CHAPTER 4: AMERICA'S NEXT TOP HOST

In 2002, Tyra developed the idea for a reality show based on the lives of models. The network UPN picked up the program and it became a hit. Showing the ins and the outs of the modeling industry, *American's Next Top Model* received praise from critics and continues to air on the CW network today. The success of *ANTM* helped Tyra launch her own talk show in 2005, which was renewed for two new seasons within its first year. Tyra also made a major decision that year: she retired from modeling.

## CHAPTER 5: STILL ON TOP

*The Tyra Banks Show* was nominated for Daytime Emmy Awards, a Prism Award, an NAACP Award, and a GLAAD Award. Several magazines named Tyra a role model and one of the most influential people in the world. The talk show host and former model shows no signs of slowing down. In the future, she plans to develop several television programs, straight-to-DVD movies, and projects that help to inspire young women.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

On her daytime talk show, *The Tyra Banks Show*, Tyra Banks discusses many important issues such as race, body image, and female empowerment. Have students pair up and take turns interviewing each other in front of the class. In the interviews, students should address the qualities they think make a person a good role model.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Introduce the phrase “Renaissance person” as a person who excels in a wide variety of subjects or fields. Tell students to make a list of the many job titles Tyra has held throughout her life. Students should be sure to include the following career-related vocabulary words from the book: *mogul* (p. 5), *supermodel* (p. 5), *executive producer* (p. 6), *spokesperson* (p. 18), and *correspondent* (p. 22). Students may also identify Tyra’s other job titles such as *photographer*, *author*, *actress*, *counselor*, and so forth. Ask: *Why is Tyra Banks a good example of a “Renaissance person”?* Then ask students to identify other people who fall into this category and explain why.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may struggle with some of the vocabulary words used in the book. Remind students that context clues can help them figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words. Say: Context clues *are words or phrases that hint at the meaning of an unfamiliar word*. Have students locate the bold words throughout the text and use context clues to guess the words’ meanings. Then tell students to check the glossary in the back of the book to see if their guesses were correct.



### READING COMPREHENSION—COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

Many people look at Tyra Banks as a role model, but Tyra looks to Oprah Winfrey as a role model. On the chalkboard, create a chart that compares and contrasts Tyra Banks and Oprah Winfrey. Ask students to use information in the book to identify similarities and differences between the two women. When you have finished filling in the chart with their suggestions, ask them to pick which woman they think is a better role model.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Tyra Banks has worked hard to turn her name into a worldwide brand. In addition to achieving fame as a supermodel, she hosts a reality show and a talk show, runs an inspirational camp for girls, has written a book about building self-esteem and confidence, and owns both a production company and a real estate and retail company. Break students into groups of four or five and have each group list several adjectives that they think best capture what the Tyra Banks “brand” stands for. Instruct students to use the adjectives to write a slogan that best describes the Tyra Banks brand. Have each group present their slogan to the class.

# VENUS AND SERENA WILLIAMS

BY HAL MARCOVITZ

## CHAPTER 1: OLYMPIC GOLD

Sisters/tennis stars Venus and Serena Williams have proven their talent on the court. They have not only battled injuries and setbacks but have also proved the naysayers wrong with their impressive collection of medals and championship wins. In 2000, the sisters walked away with three gold medals at the Olympics: two for the doubles match and one for Venus in the singles competition.

## CHAPTER 2: MOMENTS OF TRIUMPH AND BITTERNESS

After realizing how much money his daughters could make, Richard Williams began to teach them how to play tennis. It was an unusual choice of sport for the family living in Compton, a suburb of Los Angeles, one of America's most dangerous cities. When his youngest daughters, Venus and Serena, started to win tournaments, however, the household moved to Florida to get coaches to better train them. The sisters turned professional at 14. Venus, the older sister, played in her first U.S. Open in 1997. Serena played in the same match in 1999 and won her first Grand Slam title.

## CHAPTER 3: SISTER AGAINST SISTER

The sisters first played against each other in the 2000 Wimbledon match. In the past, their father had separated the two during matches. Despite Venus's win, they remained close on and off the court. Serena said, "Tennis is just a game, and we're entertainers. People come to see us play and perform. After that, we go home, and Venus will always be my sister, we're always going to be a family. No matter what, she's always going to be there." In 2002, Serena was ranked number one in the world.

## CHAPTER 4: A WHOLE NEW DIRECTION

Venus and Serena played in fewer games after becoming involved in side projects. Venus took classes in design and opened an interior design company. The younger sister focused on fashion design. After moving to Los Angeles, she became involved with acting. Serena played roles in TV shows including *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* and *My Wife and Kids*. Their work with charities helped them give back. The stars raised over \$400,000 for the World Children's Day by organizing exhibition games.

## CHAPTER 5: RETURNING TO FORM

Even though they have separate jobs and are dedicated to helping others, Venus and Serena have not forgotten their passion for tennis. Venus took time off to recuperate from injuries, and Serena created her own fashion line, but they returned to tennis to win a few games. Venus won the Wimbledon tournament and Serena placed first in the Australian Open in 2005. In 2008, they began working together and played as doubles partners.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

As professional players in the same sport, Venus and Serena have had to face each other in tennis matches numerous times. Break students into small groups of four or five and have them discuss what it would be like to compete against a sibling or a best friend. Students should explain how they would separate their personal lives from the competition, as well as how they would feel if they won or lost.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Help students understand unfamiliar vocabulary words in the book. Have them work with a partner to use context clues to guess the meaning of each boldfaced term. Then have them check their guesses against the definitions in the glossary. Instruct students to write sentences to demonstrate their understanding of the vocabulary words in the glossary on page 60.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble with some of the idioms used throughout the book. Explain that an idiom is a phrase that has a different meaning than what it actually says. Help students understand the meanings of the following idioms: *burning up the courts* (p. 5; doing well in tennis matches), *steamrolled* (p. 8; easily defeated many opponents), *squared off* (p. 20; faced each other), *an eye toward* (p. 30; to put one's focus on something), *to sap the life out* (p. 40; to drain one's energy and enthusiasm), and *hit a dry spell* (p. 45; did not win for a while).



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Venus and Serena Williams do a lot of charity work, including working with the McDonald's charities. Have students research charity organizations in their own community. Students may use Internet or library resources to find information about soup kitchens, goodwill stores, and so on. Turn the students' research into a project by instructing them to develop an idea to help one of the charities in their community (e.g., a fundraiser, volunteering, etc.).



### WRITING PRACTICE

After reading the book, students should have a good understanding of Venus and Serena's accomplishments on the tennis court. Ask: *Who is the better tennis player—Venus or Serena?* Instruct students to write a persuasive essay in which they argue whether Venus or Serena is the better player. Students may use details from the book to support their arguments.

# YAO MING

by Travis Clark

## CHAPTER 1: HISTORY IS MADE

Yao Ming was a dominating basketball player in China, but he always wanted to play for the NBA. China allowed Yao to play in the NBA if he promised to come home every year to play for China's national team. Yao's agent, relative, and associate, nicknamed "Team Yao," helped Yao make it to the United States. Because he had poor English skills, he had to travel with an interpreter.

## CHAPTER 2: BIRTH OF A GIANT

Both of Yao's parents were basketball players, but they didn't want their son to play. Yao had no interest in the game, but a government school saw his potential and trained him in basketball. He played with the Chinese Basketball Association from age 17. Though he wasn't great at first, he gradually improved. Yao played for China in the 2000 Olympics. He also began to date Li Ye, a member of China's national women's team. In 2002, Yao led the Shanghai Sharks to their first-ever CMA title.

## CHAPTER 3: THE START OF SOMETHING NEW

Yao moved to Texas, where he played for the Houston Rockets. Yao was under a lot of pressure to succeed, and he was determined to make everyone proud. Yao's parents moved to Houston to help him adjust to life in the United States. Yao played poorly in his first U.S. game, probably because of nerves, but he improved over the course of the season. In 2002, fans voted for him to play in the NBA All-Star Game. Yao came in second for Rookie of the Year. After the season, he returned to China to play for the Chinese national team.

## CHAPTER 4: A GROWING STAR

When Yao returned to China, the country was suffering an outbreak of SARS, and Yao decided to help raise money to fight the disease. When Yao returned to Houston, he started all 82 season games and helped take the Rockets to the playoffs. Yao was again voted onto the All-Star team. Yao greatly improved during his third season in the NBA, but the Rockets fell short in the playoffs. After having toe surgery, Yao returned to the Rockets better than ever. After suffering a broken foot, he healed quickly enough to be able to play for China in the World Championship.

## CHAPTER 5: LARGER THAN LIFE

During the 2006 season, Yao injured his right leg and sat out of several games. Fans voted him onto the All-Star Team anyway. He began playing again in March 2007 and performed well, but he blamed himself for a season-ending loss against the Jazz. Since the Olympics were in China in 2008, Yao made appearances in support of the Olympics. Yao and Li Ye were married in Shanghai in August 2007. Yao started the 2007–08 season well, again receiving a spot in the All-Star Game. It looked like the Rockets might make it to the playoffs until Yao suffered a fracture in his left foot.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups. Point out that the book offers readers several small details about Chinese culture. Have students scan the book and look for details about China. Then have each group decide on an aspect of Chinese culture that they would like to research further. Allow each group time to do their research. Then have each group present their findings to the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have a vocabulary scavenger hunt. Give students a series of words that they must find in the book. For instance, you can list these on the board:

- Find an adjective that describes you.
- Find a plural noun.
- Find a three-syllable verb and use it in a sentence.
- Find a declarative sentence.
- Find an adverb that does not end in *-ly*.

Add some more requirements to the list and set students on the hunt! Have students share their answers with the class.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have a particular interest in Yao Ming's biography because he came to the United States without knowing much English. Encourage these students to express their opinions about Yao Ming's experience. Have them imagine what it would be like to have an interpreter follow them around and live with them for a year.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Some people argue that Yao's allegiance to China's national team hurt his ability to perform for the Houston Rockets. Have students write an essay in which they describe their feelings on this controversy. Have students try to imagine why Yao Ming chooses to play for both the NBA and his country's national team. Make sure students address whether they think Yao is correct in his decision to play for both teams or if he should commit his energy to just one team.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Working in pairs, have students use the Internet or library resources to research another athlete who began his or her career by playing in a country other than the United States but then played in America. Have students take notes on this athlete and compare or contrast the athlete to Yao Ming. After allowing students time to compare and contrast, encourage them to share their answers with the class.

## SUPERSTARS OF PRO FOOTBALL

America's love of professional football stretches across many generations and serves as a common thread for fans across the country. Many Americans have long histories as fans of specific teams, and children often grow up idolizing certain players. The biographies in the Superstars of Pro Football series tell the stories of how today's stand-out players rose to iconic status. They are stories of the hardships and triumphs of some of the most recognizable faces in professional football today. These stories contain valuable lessons about beating the odds, staying smart while experiencing success, and overcoming difficulties to rise to superstar status. Through these books, students will

- read about current topics that modern adolescents will find interesting—and often surprising.
- expand on the stories by relating a variety of concepts and circumstances to their own lives.
- subconsciously fine tune basic learning skills to achieve classroom success.

Students will be wholly entertained by these books. While they learn about the lives of these recognizable figures, they'll also hone reading skills, engage in critical thinking, broaden vocabulary development, and practice writing and responding to questions based on what they read. This series will help resistant or struggling learners find value in reading books while reinforcing and expanding the reading skills of others.

# ADRIAN PETERSON by Stephen Currie

## CHAPTER 1: M! V! P!

Football star Adrian Peterson had two objectives during the 2008 NFC Pro Bowl: to help his All-Star team, the National Football Conference squad, win the game and to go home with MVP honors. He achieved both of these goals. At only 22, he was one of the youngest players in the NFL and one of the best players in the league.

## CHAPTER 2: UPS AND DOWNS

Born to an athletic family, Adrian loved watching football, especially the Dallas Cowboys. His family went through a series of unfortunate events when he was a child. His brother was killed in an accident and his father was arrested. Despite these tragedies, he excelled at playing football as a running back and became one of the best football players in Texas. In his senior year of high school, he decided to attend the University of Oklahoma.

## CHAPTER 3: COLLEGE STANDOUT

As an Oklahoma Sooner, Adrian surpassed expectations and spent more time on the field than a normal college freshman. He had more carries than all his teammates combined. His achievements earned him the first-team All-American and he was selected as the runner-up for the Heisman Trophy. For the next few seasons, Adrian played well, but he battled injuries due to his aggressive playing style. He left school early in hopes of signing with an NFL team.

## CHAPTER 4: A TOP PICK

Scouts for the NFL worried about Adrian's health and injuries. At the scouting combine, however, Adrian showed scouts and coaches that he was healthy and fit, despite his grief over the murder of his stepbrother a day earlier. The Minnesota Vikings chose Adrian as the seventh pick in the draft. He signed a contract for \$17 million. The Vikings had a running back, so he split playing time with Chester Taylor. Adrian trained hard and impressed his teammates at training camp. He became a star player in preseason games.

## CHAPTER 5: ROOKIE SENSATION

In the first regular season game, Chester was injured, so Adrian stepped in as the starting running back. In his first year with the Vikings, Adrian broke records and won many awards. He rushed for 296 yards, the best for any NFL player. He was selected for the NFC Pro Bowl and won the title of NFL Rookie of the Year. Adrian also works with the Special Olympics and the African American Adoption Agency. He gave money to his hometown in Texas to build new sports equipment. Though many critics worry about future injuries, others see the 2007 season as the start of a long, prosperous career.



### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Ask students to read the Cross-Currents on page 48 titled “Emmit Smith.” Point out that Adrian Peterson idolized Emmit Smith when he was young. Ask: *Who did you idolize when you were young?* Follow up each response by asking students why they idolized that person, as well as if they still idolize that person today.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Write the following sentences on the chalkboard: (1) *At the NFL’s \_\_\_\_\_, Adrian showed coaches and scouts that he was healthy and in good shape.* (2) *During the \_\_\_\_\_, Adrian was picked up by the Minnesota Vikings.* (3) *Though he was young and a \_\_\_\_\_ in the NFL, Adrian played well during his first season.* Then ask students to turn to the glossary on page 59. Have students fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary words. Student volunteers may share their answers with the class.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have difficulty understanding the concept of compound words. Explain to these students that a compound word is a combination of two words that form a new word with its own meaning. Say: *Football is a compound word. It is a combination of the words foot and ball.* Point out the compound words *teammates*, *touchdowns*, and *sideline*. Then have students turn to the glossary on page 59. Ask: *Are any of these vocabulary words compound words?* (Students should point out the following vocabulary words: *kickoff*, *overtime*, *playoffs*, and *quarterback*.)



### INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Ask students to look at the picture of the Minnesota Vikings’ mascot on page 53. Explain to students that a mascot is a character that represents a sports team, company, or other group. Have students name their team and draw a picture of their mascot. Student volunteers may display their pictures and explain why they have chosen to represent their team in this way.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Read aloud the first two paragraphs of chapter 4. Then ask students to pretend that they are scouts whose teams are considering a trade for Adrian Peterson. Have students write a report on his playing abilities, using the information listed on pages 56 and 57. Tell students that they may include personal information about Adrian as well.

# ANTONIO GATES by Ian Kimmich

## CHAPTER 1: ALL PRO, ALL THE TIME

Known for his agility and reflexes, Antonio Gates is one of the best tight ends in NFL history. With only 5 years in the NFL, all spent with the San Diego Chargers, Antonio's speed and strength have helped him break several records, earn four Pro Bowl selections, and boost his team's confidence and status. In those 5 years, Antonio has helped the Chargers win 50 of 80 games.

## CHAPTER 2: THE PIGSKIN AND THE HOOP

While growing up in Michigan, Antonio enjoyed playing both basketball and football. He chose to attend Michigan State University because the school allowed him to play both sports. His college grades were not good enough, however, and he did not get to play. He transferred to Kent State, where he took the basketball team to the quarterfinals. Though Antonio did not receive offers to play professional basketball, several football scouts said he would make an excellent tight end. He signed with the San Diego Chargers in 2003.

## CHAPTER 3: FROM ROOKIE TO PRO BOWLER

In 2003, Antonio did not see a lot of time on the field. Although he was the right build and had the right attitude for the game, he was a rookie and had not played in college, and the team's coaches wanted him to adjust to the NFL. The Chargers had a bad season, but the new star played better than many new NFL draft picks. In the 2004 season, he started in every game he played and was selected to play in the Pro Bowl.

## CHAPTER 4: BIG MONEY, BIG GAMES

Antonio signed a 6-year deal with the Chargers for a 6-year deal. Even though he suffered an injury in 2005, the tight end set records. He had 1,100 receiving yards and 10 touchdowns in one season, one of the best records in the NFL. Antonio's efforts were largely responsible for the team's excellent 14–2 record as well. The Chargers entered the playoffs in 2006, but lost to the New England Patriots in their first game. Though disappointed, the team kept their sights set on the Super Bowl.

## CHAPTER 5: CHARGING AHEAD

With three Pro Bowls under his belt, Antonio was an idol to the fans and to other players. His likeness was featured in video games and on magazine covers. He donated his time to raise money and awareness for Huntington's disease, childhood obesity, and poverty. Recently, he participated in the "Take a Player to School" program and attended school with a child. On the field, Antonio played his best season. He was named to the Pro Bowl in 2007 and led the Chargers to the AFC Championship game. In his football career, he has only fumbled the ball once, making him well respected.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Form a phrase or short sentence using one or more of the vocabulary words listed in the glossary on page 59 (e.g., “a fluke catch-and-run play”). Draw blank spaces on the board, leaving one short line for each letter in the phrase. Ask each student to volunteer a letter. After each correct letter guess, let the student guess the phrase. If the letter guess is incorrect, write the letter on the chalkboard and move on. The first student to offer the correct phrase will conduct the game and come up with a new vocabulary-related phrase. After three students have provided incorrect letter guesses, the first student to stand up and offer the correct answer will conduct the game.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have difficulty understanding the concept of acronyms. Explain to students that an *acronym* is a word formed from the first letter of each major word in a compound term. Write “Students Against Drunk Driving” on the board. Then underline the first letter of each word and write the acronym: SADD. Say it aloud for students. Then demonstrate the concept again with the “National Football League” (NFL). Ask students to provide more examples of acronyms from the reading (e.g., p. 13, NCAA; p. 14, All-MAC; p. 26, AFC; p. 39, HD).



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students visit the San Diego Chargers Web site ([www.chargers.com](http://www.chargers.com)). Ask students to visit the “Community” section of the site. Have students choose one of the community groups or activities listed on this page and conduct more research about it. Students should prepare a short presentation about the activity or group.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Have students turn to page 13. Read the third paragraph and the quote that follows aloud to students. Then ask: *Do you think that Antonio made a smart decision when he chose to leave Michigan State University? Why or why not?* Then have students think about their own lives. Ask: *Have you ever done something—or failed to do something—that you later regretted? What did you do? How did you feel?* Have students write a paragraph or two in response to these questions.



### CRITICAL THINKING

Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 49 titled “Undrafted and Free.” Then draw a pros/cons T-Chart on the board. Explain to students that *pros* are the good points about a topic while *cons* are drawbacks. Ask students to volunteer some pros and cons about being a free agent football player. Write student responses on the board.

# ASANTE SAMUEL by Carla Mooney

## CHAPTER 1: A PRO BOWL PLAYER

Called the “best cornerback in the league,” Asante Samuel, standing at only 5' , 10", quickly made a name for himself in professional football. In 2007, the cornerback led the league in interceptions and ranked high in passes defended. Asante's talents were rewarded at the end of the 2007 season when he was selected for the Pro Bowl team. He also became a free agent, which allowed him to negotiate a new contract with any interested team in the league.

## CHAPTER 2: TOO SMALL, TOO SLOW

Asante was born in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He was the star quarterback for his high school football team and he played baseball, though basketball was his favorite sport. He knew he was too small to make it playing basketball and that football would be his ticket. During a landmark game, he played both quarterback and defense, gaining the attention of several college scouts. He decided to attend the University of Central Florida. In 2003, the New England Patriots drafted Asante.

## CHAPTER 3: TWO RINGS

Asante signed a \$1.7 million contract with the Patriots and quickly proved himself a fearless player. During his second pro game, he intercepted a pass to win the game and was promptly named Rookie of the Week. The Patriots went on to win the AFC East Division and beat Tennessee in the first playoff game, thanks to Asante, who blocked a game-winning pass once again. The Patriots went on to win the 2003 Super Bowl. Asante suffered a few minor injuries during his second season, but he carried on, earning his second Super Bowl ring in 2004.

## CHAPTER 4: BREAKOUT PERFORMANCE

In 2005, Asante finally secured his place as starting cornerback for the Patriots, who won the AFC East again. The Patriots lost in the playoffs, however, for the first time in Asante's professional career. His generosity off the field didn't go unnoticed, however. In 2006, he received an award for his charity efforts in promoting the importance of reading and education. He also began training even harder for his upcoming season with the Patriots.

## CHAPTER 5: SUPER BOWL AND SUPER CONTRACT

When Asante's rookie contract ended, he faced renegotiation troubles with his team. Asante and the Patriots eventually came to a one-year agreement. The Patriots won all of their regular season games and both postseason games in 2007. They headed to the Super Bowl undefeated, but lost to the underdog New York Giants. Now at the end of his new one-year contract, Asante signed a \$57 million contract with the Philadelphia Eagles. Though he was sad about ending his career with the Patriots, he looked forward to a new start with a new team.



### FORMING OPINIONS

Initiate a class discussion about the tough situation Asante faced after the 2008 Super Bowl. Point out that up to this point, Asante had spent his entire professional career as a Patriot. Discuss the idea of personal worth. Ask: *Do you think Asante made the right decision? If you were faced with the same situation, what do you think you would do?* Encourage students to share their opinions until students have presented a variety of responses.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Turn students' attention toward the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 58. Have students choose the five terms that they think would be most important to use in a discussion about Asante's football career. Then ask students to write a paragraph about Asante's football career using the five terms they have chosen. When students have finished, ask student volunteers to share their paragraphs. Discuss how the paragraphs differ.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners might struggle more than other students to decipher the meanings of unknown words in the text. Ask all students to write down the words that they don't know and the page numbers on which those words appear. Divide students into groups of three or four and provide each group with a dictionary. Ask students to share the unfamiliar words with their groups. Have students look up the words and record the definitions in their notebooks. Encourage students to assist fellow students' understanding by using the words in a new sentence. Walk around and listen to students' dialogue as they look up and define words.

Assist groups when necessary.



### CLASS DISCUSSION

Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 53 titled "The Book Bank Foundation." Ask: *Why do you think education is important?* (Students may respond that education helps you get a good job, keeps your mind active, and prepares you for the future.) Then encourage students to further their critical thinking by asking: *What are some real-life examples of what can happen to people without an education?* (Students may say that those who are uneducated or undereducated won't have the same opportunities that those who are educated will have.)



### WRITING PRACTICE

Remind students that Asante's height prevented him from becoming a professional basketball player. Say: *Instead, Asante turned his attention to football and became one of the top football players in the NFL.* Then ask: *Have you ever faced an obstacle that prevented you from doing something you really wanted to do? How did you overcome the obstacle? If you haven't overcome the obstacle, how might you do so in the future?* Ask students to write a one-page essay that answers these questions. Give students time to brainstorm on their own before they begin writing.

# BRIAN URLACHER by Michael V. Uschan

## CHAPTER 1: NFC CHAMPION

While many football players may play for the fame or money, Brian Urlacher does it for the love of the game. After a disappointing 2005 season, the linebacker returned with the need to win. In 2006, the strong defensive player helped lead his team, the Chicago Bears, to the playoffs and to the Super Bowl.

## CHAPTER 2: NFL SUPERSTAR IN THE MAKING

In high school, Brian excelled at all sports he played, though he was too small to play football in his freshman year. Brian trained hard, grew 7 inches taller, and gained 54 pounds of muscle by his junior year. On the football field, Brian showed his versatility by playing both offense and defense. He received a scholarship to the University of New Mexico. In his junior year, he had more tackles than any college player in the country. Brian played well and was named an All-American. In 2000, the Chicago Bears drafted him as the ninth pick.

## CHAPTER 3: MONSTER OF THE MIDWAY

Despite his strength, Brian was not picked to start. When the starting linebacker was injured, however, Brian stepped in with 13 tackles and a sack. The fans loved him. He was named NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year and he played in the Pro Bowl. In 2001, he helped lead the team to the playoffs. Earning the name “Monster of the Midway,” Brian broke the Bears’ record for tackles, was chosen for his second Pro Bowl, and was nominated for the MVP award. He signed a 9-year contract with Chicago for \$57 million. With his new money and fame, he supported his family and raised money for charities.

## CHAPTER 4: THE NFL'S BEST DEFENSIVE PLAYER

The Bears won the NFC North Division title in 2005, their first championship since 2001. Because of his strength and commitment, Brian was named the Associated Press NFL Defensive Player of the Year. *Sports Illustrated*, however, labeled him one of the most overrated players. Brian said, “All I can do is go out there and play hard and try and help my team win, and that’s what I’m going to keep doing.” His jersey is among the best-selling NFL apparel. His likeness has been portrayed in video games and commercials.

## CHAPTER 5: LOSSES AND INJURIES

Before 2007’s Super Bowl, Brian became Chicago’s most famous athlete. The mayor of Chicago even named February 4<sup>th</sup> “Brian Urlacher Day.” Across the country, Bears fans were pulling for a win over the Indianapolis Colts and their star quarterback, Peyton Manning. When the team lost, Brian took the blame and fans respected him for it. He struggled with injuries the following season and had surgery. He also continues to suffer the hardship of being away from his daughters, who live in Arizona. In 2008, Brian was honored with the Piccolo Award for his dedication and leadership.



### READING COMPREHENSION—RECALLING DETAILS

Ask one student a question about the information in the text, such as: *What obstacle did Brian Urlacher overcome as a high-school athlete?* (Brian was small and had to train hard to become a big, strong football player.) The student should then create a question to ask the student sitting next to him or her. Students should continue asking questions until each has answered a question.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students look at the vocabulary words listed in the glossary on page 59. To test students' understanding of these words, ask students to free associate words for each. For instance, for *All-American*, students might come up with some or more of the following words: *hot dogs; apple pie; baseball; red, white, and blue; 4<sup>th</sup> of July; president; and suburbs*. For arthritis, students might offer some of the following ideas: *grandfather, grandmother, pain, aspirin, joints, and ache*.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble understanding the concept of the compound adjective. Explain to students that when two or more words act as a single adjective, they are sometimes joined by a hyphen. Have students turn to pages 6 and 7. Read the following sentence from page 6 aloud: *When the 2006 season began, Brian played with a pent-up fury born of his anger and humiliation over the season-ending loss to Carolina.* Say: *This sentence has two compound adjectives: pent-up and season-ending.* Ask students to find more compound adjectives on these pages. Point out that compound adjectives can contain numbers. (Students should find *all-star, 16-game, second-round, 40-year, blue-and-orange*.)



### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Have students turn to page 11. Point out the picture of Brian and his mother. Then read aloud the first two paragraphs on the page. Ask: *Do you ever think about the struggles that parents sometimes face?* Ask students to think about struggles faced and sacrifices made by their own parents, grandparents, or guardians. Point out that students may have to put themselves “in their parents’ shoes” to understand some of the struggles that might not be obvious. Then have



students write about the difficulties parents sometimes face in providing for their families.

### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 48 titled “Lovington, New Mexico.” Ask: *What do you know about your hometown? Do you know who founded your town? When did this occur? Has anyone famous ever lived there?* Have students conduct library and Internet research to discover the history of their hometowns.

## **BRIAN WESTBROOK** by David Robson

### **CHAPTER 1: A SECRET NO LONGER**

In December 2007, Brian Westbrook went to Hawaii for the annual NFL Pro Bowl. The shy player felt validated for his hard work. When Brian's career started in 2002, critics wondered whether the 5' 10" athlete was big enough for the NFL. Since then, he has wowed fans and sports critics. Despite his success, he still craves a Super Bowl ring.

### **CHAPTER 2: DC TO THE MAIN LINE**

Raised in Fort Washington, Maryland, Brian always excelled at sports. He lettered in football and basketball. Just before his senior year, he injured his knee. He bonded with the head coach, who recommended him to scouts. His good grades and talent earned him a place at Villanova University in Philadelphia. Though he broke records for the team, NFL coaches showed little interest. Philadelphia Eagles head coach Andy Reid, however, took a chance on Brian, choosing him as a third-round draft pick in 2002.

### **CHAPTER 3: SMALL BUT TOUGH**

Like Brian, Eagles coach Andy Reid was a quiet hard worker who was underestimated by the press. He had improved the Eagles, but they lost their chance to go to the Super Bowl in Brian's rookie year. In 2003, Brian did well, but he ended the season with a triceps muscle injury and missed the playoffs. Brian was the starting running back in the 2004 season. Along with quarterback Donovan McNabb, Brian took the Eagles to the Super Bowl. Despite the Eagles' best efforts, they lost the Super Bowl to the New England Patriots.

### **CHAPTER 4: WE CAN REBUILD HIM**

When McNabb was injured in 2006, Brian became the de facto team leader. Brian gelled with replacement quarterback Jeff Garcia. Together, they took the Eagles to the playoffs, where Brian helped his team win. Brian dropped three passes in the divisional playoffs, however, and owned up to his role in the team's loss. Some fans wanted Garcia to take over as Eagles quarterback, and everyone was surprised when quiet Brian commented on the situation. Despite the disagreement, McNabb started the 2007 season as quarterback.

### **CHAPTER 5: STILL HUNGRY**

The Eagles' next season was filled with both wins and losses. The whole team contributed to the tumultuous season, but Brian had consistently given his all on the field. Brian won praise from sports critics and an invitation to the Pro Bowl. Brian uses the off-season to do charity work with children. He has become outspoken about the direction his team should take. Brian asked for a raise after the 2007 season and got it. Although he is pleased with his own success, he longs for a Super Bowl win for the Eagles.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Have students get into small groups for a prediction exercise. Ask: *After reading the book, based on what you know about Brian Westbrook and the Eagles, what do you think the Eagles will do to reach another Super Bowl game?* Give students a few minutes to brainstorm with their teams and then have them share their predictions and opinions with the class.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Ask students to think about and offer some of the words the author has used to describe Brian Westbrook. Write student responses on the chalkboard. (Students may provide any of the following answers: *quiet, reserved, powerhouse, small, a leader, encouraging, humble, proud, scrappy, talented, modest, hard-working, confident, fast, versatile, determined, generous, consistent, or passionate*) Ask: *How does Brian Westbrook fit the description of what you think professional football players are like?* (Students may express that football players are powerhouses and should be hard-working and confident. Students may cite any of the words listed in the text or provide others based on personal opinions.) Ask: *How is he different than your image of a professional football player?* (Students may express the idea that sometimes football players are hot-headed or egotistical, and that Brian does not exhibit these traits.)

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners might not yet grasp the concept of proper nouns and common nouns. Explain to students that a *noun* names a person, place, or thing. Tell students that a *proper noun* names a specific thing and usually begins with a capital letter. (For example, “football player” is a common noun, while “Brian Westbrook” is a proper noun.) Ask students to turn to page 4 and have student volunteers name the proper nouns on this page (*Philadelphia Eagles, Brian Westbrook, National Football League, NFL Pro Bowl, Honolulu, and Hawaii.*) Ask students to name the corresponding common nouns for each proper noun they have named (*team, running back, organization, game, city, and state*).



### EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Have students look at the “Power of One” advertisement on page 27. Say: *The Philadelphia Eagles used the slogan “the power of one” as part of their 2006 marketing campaign. This image represents that campaign.* Ask: *What were the Eagles trying to convey with this image? Do you think it is effective?* (Students may respond with the ideas of unity, solidarity, and passion. They may say that the image links the team to the city and its fans. Many students may feel that the image effectively portrays these ideas. They may say that the image shows the players’ dedication to their fans.)



### WRITING PRACTICE

Point out to students that the Philadelphia Eagles have made only two Super Bowl appearances: one in 1981 against the Oakland Raiders and another in 2005 against the New England Patriots. Remind students that the Eagles did not win either game. Ask: *How do you think this fact affects the drive of Brian Westbrook and other Eagles players? How do think it affects the fans of the Philadelphia Eagles?* Have students write a paragraph or two in response to these questions.

## **CHAD JOHNSON** by Frank Angst

### **CHAPTER 1: OCHO CINCO'S PROMISE**

Receiver Chad Johnson broke the Cincinnati Bengals' long losing streak. Chad is known as "Ocho Cinco," which is Spanish for "eight five," the number he wears as a Bengals player. Chad is a leader in the AFC for receiving yards and is a five-time Pro Bowl player. He is also famous for his touchdown celebrations and the fines he has incurred for his inappropriate behavior on the field.

### **CHAPTER 2: LONG ROAD TO STARDOM**

Chad's focus has always been on sports. He struggled throughout high school and college, despite the efforts of his grandmother, a teacher. Even though Chad played football well, he suffered several setbacks and had to transfer from college to college. In 2000, he led Oregon State University to a number four ranking. His team beat Notre Dame in the Fiesta Bowl.

### **CHAPTER 3: EARNING HIS STRIPES**

In 2001, Chad was drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals. Chad practiced hard in hopes of working his way to a starter position. Despite poor results at first, Chad kept working with coaches, other team players, and former NFL stars to improve his game. His improvement in the next two seasons led him to play in the 2003 and 2004 Pro Bowls.

### **CHAPTER 4: TIME TO CELEBRATE**

Before long, Chad was the best receiver in the AFC. He led his team to a win against the Detroit Lions, guiding them to their first playoff game in 15 years. His love for the sport became obvious when he began performing elaborate dances after touchdowns. He later asked to be called "Ocho Cinco." The 2006 season started badly, however, with the team losing five of their six beginning games.

### **CHAPTER 5: FUTURE HALL OF FAMER?**

At the first celebration of the 2007 season, Chad suggested he may one day be in the Hall of Fame. His talent on the field also helps raise money and awareness for charities. He raced a horse and won to raise money for the Feed the Children organization, which helps sustain a school in Africa. He also gives his time to local football teams and the Special Olympics. Chad has been featured in video games, commercials, and magazine advertisements, but he also enjoys a quiet life off the field. Chad hopes to continue improving his game until he is a Super Bowl champ.

## “” EXAMINING QUOTES

Read the following quote on page 8 aloud to students: “How much of it is entertainment? All of it. I entertain. That’s what I do. . . . I’m never going to be boring in the end zone. Fans don’t want to see that. People paying \$3,000 a season ticket don’t want to see me hand the ball to the official. They want to see my personality.” Ask students if they agree with this quote and have them explain their answers. (Some students may agree that Chad is an entertainer. They might argue that football should be fun and exciting. Other students might argue that Chad is not an entertainer. They might argue that football players are serious athletes and that clowning around on the field lessens the respect that they earn when they play.)



## LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Read the vocabulary words and definitions in the glossary on pages 58 and 59 aloud with students. Ask students to choose one of the boldface terms on these pages to describe something personal about themselves. Starting with the student in the first chair on the right side of the room, have each student stand and share a sentence or two about something in their lives, using at least one vocabulary word. (For example, one student might say, “I signed a *contract* with my parents promising them that I would never drink and drive,” while another might say, “I *recommend* that everyone watch the Bengals’ game on Sunday.”)

## ABC

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners might have a bit of difficulty understanding that some words in the same family can be classified as different parts of speech. Have students turn to page 6. Ask them to locate the word *celebration* on the page. Have them point to the word. Say: *The word celebration is a noun. It describes a type joyful public performance or a happy occasion. The word celebrate describes the action of taking part in a celebration. It is a verb because it describes an action.* Direct students’ attention to the word *violation*, located further down on the page. Have students point to the word. Say: *The word violation is a noun. It describes an act that fails to follow the rules.* Ask: *Can anyone tell me the verb that describes the action of carrying out a violation?* (Students should offer the word *violate*.)



## CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Ask students to visit Chad Johnson’s Web site ([www.chadjohnson85.com](http://www.chadjohnson85.com)). Allow students to explore the content of the site, including the Bengals’ wins/losses record for the season. Afterward, ask: *Did visiting this site change your opinion of Chad? How? Did it stay the same? Why?* Have students respond to these questions in a short paragraph and then ask student volunteers to read their paragraphs to the class.



## WRITING PRACTICE

Turn to page 6 and point out to students that Chad has been fined for uniform violations more than once. Ask: *Why do you think the NFL takes uniform violations so seriously?* (Students may respond that players are supposed to follow the rules and that when one player doesn’t, it sets the stage for other players to misbehave. They may say that refusing to follow the rules is disrespectful to the organization and takes away from the idea of being part of a team.) Students should respond in writing.

# CHAMP BAILEY by D.C. Snow

## CHAPTER 1: THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS

Champ Bailey is one of the best cornerbacks in the NFL. He has been selected to play in the Pro Bowl eight times, has assisted in several big plays, and is respected both on and off the football field. Teammate John Lynch said, "Big-time players make big-time plays. Champ's that kind of player. When it's important, you want players like him around you."

## CHAPTER 2: A STAR IS BORN

Born into a sporty family, Roland Bailey, Jr., was called "Champ" because of his love for athletics. He played as a quarterback and tailback on his high school football team. Champ successfully competed in track and basketball as well. After graduation, he attended the University of Georgia and played on its football team. He played several positions during his 3 years with the team. Following his junior year in 1999, Champ wanted to enter the NFL draft.

## CHAPTER 3: CHAMP TURNS PRO

The Washington Redskins chose Champ as the seventh pick in the draft. After lots of practice, he began starting in games during the 1999 season. He became the youngest NFL player to make three interceptions, and he helped the Redskins win the NFC East division title. Champ finished his first season with 73 solo tackles, one sack, and five interceptions. During his second season he earned a spot in the Pro Bowl. The Redskins had poor seasons in 2001 and 2002, but Champ kept learning. In 2003, Champ faced injuries including a sprained shoulder, a broken wrist, and a season-ending concussion.

## CHAPTER 4: A NEW UNIFORM FOR CHAMP

When his contract with the Redskins expired, the team made a renewal offer, but Champ felt that he deserved more money. He signed a record-breaking 7-year, \$63-million contract with the Denver Broncos. The trade was a success, and the star won games for his new team. At the end of the 2004 season, Champ was invited to another Pro Bowl. The Broncos advanced to the playoffs but lost to the Indianapolis Colts. That year, Champ also returned to college to finish his degree in psychology. In 2005, Denver played in the AFC Championship and lost to the Pittsburgh Steelers. Champ, however, was selected to his sixth Pro Bowl.

## CHAPTER 5: STILL THE CHAMP

Champ's abilities stretch off the field. He regularly assists younger or struggling team members. He has also earned the respect of other NFL players. The 2007 season was a struggle for Denver. Two Broncos died that year, and several players were moved around. In 2008, Champ's younger brother, Boss, was picked up to play linebacker. The football star's goal is to reach the Super Bowl.



### CLASS DISCUSSION

Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 48 titled “Nicknames.” Say: *Family members and friends often give us nicknames to show affection, to capture memorable moments in our lives, or to tease us. Nicknames can be interesting, silly, or respectful.* Invite students to share nicknames they have received over the years. Ask students to explain how they got their nicknames and whether they do or do not like them. Point out that sometimes people give others mean nicknames. Then ask: *How might a mean nickname be damaging to someone?* (Students may respond that a mean nickname could cause someone to suffer embarrassment or to feel hurt. They may point out that a mean nickname that sticks with a person for a long time can cause those feelings to last a long time.)



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Ask students to read the vocabulary words and definitions in the glossary on page 59. Then ask students to choose a word on the list and draw a picture that represents this word. Model the activity by drawing a stick-figure representation of one of the words. Remind students that they do not have to be good artists to show that they understand the word. Invite two or three students to recreate their drawings on the chalkboard.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may not understand that some prefixes represent numerical values. Have students turn to the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 59. Have students point to the word *quadriceps*. Say: *The quadriceps is a large muscle of the upper leg. It begins with the prefix quad- because it is divided into four parts. The prefix quart- also means “four.”* Ask: *Why do you think the prefix quart- has been used in the word quarterback?* (Students might guess that a football game has four quarters and that a *back* is a name for a football player.) Ask: *Can you think of any other words that begin with prefixes that represent numerical values?* (Students may cite any of the following: a *bicycle* has two wheels, a *tricycle* has three wheels, an *octagon* has eight sides, a *decade* is 10 years.)



### WRITING PRACTICE

Ask students to turn to page 45. Say: *Champ and his fellow players have commented on his good instincts.* Ask: *Who can tell me what an instinct is?* (Students should respond that an *instinct* is a natural impulse or urge.) Discuss with students situations in which people might have to rely on their instincts (such as navigating through a dark room, avoiding a situation that could be dangerous, understanding how to handle a situation so that nothing goes wrong). Then ask students to write a short story in which the main character relies on his or her instincts.



### CRITICAL THINKING

Ask students to read the Cross-Currents on page 51 titled “Playing Both Ways.” Ask: *Why might coaches want two-way players on their team?* (Students should say that two-way players are highly skilled and can fill in for other players, if necessary.) Ask: *Why might coaches not want their players to be two-ways players?* (Students may point out that two-way players are not likely to have perfected their play in one position or the other.)

# DEVIN HESTER by Jeff Young

## CHAPTER 1: AN EXPLOSIVE YOUNG PLAYER

Devin Hester accomplished some amazing things in his rookie season with the Chicago Bears. His team competed in the Super Bowl, he earned a spot on the Pro Bowl team, and he quickly became a respected and feared player on the field. In addition, Devin was named the Special Teams Player of the Week three times and held the title of NFC Player of the Month for the month of December.

## CHAPTER 2: A ROUGH START

Devin suffered tragedy at an early age when his parents were stricken with illness and injury. To get away from the sadness, he played sports. He was ranked second in the nation for his long jump and was named to Florida's All-State team in his senior year for his achievements on the football field. *Parade Magazine* also named him High School All-American in football. Devin's outstanding plays earned him the Most Valuable Player title in the CaliFlorida Bowl. He decided to attend the University of Miami to play for their football team.

## CHAPTER 3: HURRICANE HESTER

Devin worked hard on the field and in the classroom. He attended the Hurricanes' practice sessions and underwent intense training. He also studied for the SAT and took the test four times before he became eligible to play. He finally made the team. The Hurricanes went to the Orange Bowl in Devin's freshman year and beat Florida State University. In his second year, the Hurricanes played in the Peach Bowl and Devin was named to the All-American Team. When his family's home was destroyed, Devin knew that he had to help provide for his family. In 2006, he decided to do this by becoming an NFL player.

## CHAPTER 4: A RISKY DRAFT PICK

The Chicago Bears picked Devin in the second round of the draft. He served as a kicker and wide receiver and proved within his first season that he could do both. He broke several records for touchdowns. The team advanced to the Super Bowl that year, and Devin came out fighting on the first play, becoming the first Super Bowl player ever to return an opening kick for a touchdown. Though the Bears lost the game to the Indianapolis Colts, Devin was selected to the Pro Bowl and became a finalist for the Rookie of the Year award.

## CHAPTER 5: BECOMING A WIDE RECEIVER

Chicago struggled in Devin's second season. Other teams kicked the ball away from the wide receiver. When teams did allow Devin to have the ball, though, he scored several touchdowns. He is second in NFL history for touchdown returns. In 2008, he signed a contract with the Bears for 5 more years. Off the football field, Devin enjoys giving back to the community. He participates in the charity Bears Care, a program to help with education, athletics, and medical research. He donates to food banks and inspires people with his religious upbringing.



### CLASS DISCUSSION

Discuss “cause and effect” with students. Introduce the concept that life is a series of causes and effects with the phrase “Everything happens for a reason.” Explain that the *cause* is what makes something happen, while the *effect* is what actually happens. Say: *Things happen in our lives every day. Sometimes it’s easy to see what caused something to happen. Other times it’s more difficult.* Provide students with a real-life example: *Cause: My shoelace was untied. Effect: I tripped when walking up the stairs.* Then provide students with an example from the book: *Cause: Devin failed the first round of SATs. Effect: Devin could not join the University of Miami football team for one year.* Ask students to offer more examples of causes and effects from the book.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Ask students to study the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on pages 59 and 60. Then ask students to put away their books and tell them that you will have a reverse spelling bee. Divide the class into two teams. Then choose a word on the list and spell it for students. The first student to raise his or her hand and then provide the correct definition for the word earns a point for his or her team. The team with the most points at the end should receive a classroom bonus, such as a point on a test grade or one homework exemption.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may struggle to find the correct adjective, or to find multiple adjectives, to describe something. Write a list of adjectives on the chalkboard (e.g., short, tall, young, old, smart, unintelligent, serious, goofy, weak, tough, dedicated, lazy, rough, gentle, graceful, clumsy, fast, slow, upbeat, depressing, friendly, reserved, small, big, exciting, boring, etc.). Beginning with the student sitting in the back corner on the right side of the room, call on students individually and ask each student to provide an adjective to describe Devin Hester. Using information from the book, each student should explain why she or he chose that adjective. Students may come up with their own adjectives as well.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Say: *Devin knew that he wanted to play football since childhood. His idol was Deion Sanders, an older, more experienced football player.* Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 48 titled “Deion ‘Prime Time’ Sanders.” Then ask: *Do you know what career you’d like to pursue? Is there someone in this field that you look up to?* Have students write a response to these questions.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Student volunteers may share what they have written with the class.

Have students visit the official Web site of the Chicago Bears ([www.chicagobears.com](http://www.chicagobears.com)) and ask students to write a one-page history of the organization. Students should use information found on this site to write their papers. Collect students’ work and choose model papers to read aloud in class.

## **DONOVAN McNABB** by Michael Chatlien

### **CHAPTER 1: ROAD TO THE SUPER BOWL**

Donovan McNabb helped the Philadelphia Eagles finish the 2005 season with a record of 13 wins and 3 losses. The team then fought their way to the championship game of the NFC playoffs for the fourth time in 4 years. The players surprised their dedicated fans this time, however, when they defeated the Atlanta Falcons and earned a spot in Super Bowl XXXIX opposite the New England Patriots. Though they lost a close game, the Eagles had played well.

### **CHAPTER 2: SPORTS FAN TO SPORTS STAR**

Donovan was born in Chicago but soon moved to Illinois. When he was 11, he decided that he wanted to be a pro football player. As a high school quarterback, Donovan led his team to victory and set a school record in his senior year with 27 touchdown passes. At Syracuse University, Donovan trained hard and set numerous records. When the Eagles drafted him, however, the team's fans reacted badly. Donovan set a goal to win them over.

### **CHAPTER 3: PROVING HIMSELF IN THE NFL**

Donovan started for six games in his first year, an unusual opportunity for a rookie quarterback. His team maintained a good record and stayed motivated by his drive and his humor. Donovan also founded a football clinic for children and started a family. Though he suffered some injuries in the 2002 and 2003 seasons, Donovan led the Eagles to two more NFC Championships and earned two NFL Player of the Month titles. Philly fans finally started to accept him.

### **CHAPTER 4: CONTROVERSY AND INJURIES**

In 2004, the Eagles drafted wide receiver Terrell Owens. Donovan and Terrell established a winning chemistry on the field, but the new recruit was suspended when he started publicly insulting Donovan and his skills. Donovan ignored the negativity and kept his team focused. Then Donovan suffered a serious injury. Now without their quarterback and wide receiver, the Eagles' record suffered. Donovan then faced another serious injury and became a media target.

### **CHAPTER 5: RUMORS AND RECOVERY**

In 2007, rumors that Donovan would be traded began to circulate, and his injury status was questionable. Donovan recovered quickly. Though his injury affected his playing, he played better than ever in a game against the Detroit Lions. He sprained an ankle in the next game, though, and struggled on his return. Donovan helped the Eagles finish the 2007 season with three wins. He then started the 2008 season with a solid record, and he continued his charity work. Donovan's positive attitude and strong will make him an asset to his team and community.



### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Have students look at the picture of Donovan McNabb's family on page 11. Then read aloud the paragraph describing the vandalism that Donovan's family suffered as African Americans in a white neighborhood. Ask students to volunteer opinions about how they might have felt in Donovan's position. Ask: *Why do you think some people act out in negative ways against other groups of people?* Then ask: *What are some ways to work against this kind of behavior?*



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Write the vocabulary words from the book on the chalkboard. Ask student volunteers to provide definitions for the words. As a class, decide on an appropriate definition for each word. Ask: *Can we all agree that [vocabulary word] means [definition]?* Write the classroom definition on the chalkboard. Then turn to the glossary on page 58 and check the classroom definition for each term against the definition listed in the glossary.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have difficulty understanding that some words are both nouns (words describing people, places, and things) and verbs (words describing action). Provide students with the following examples in chapter 1: *steam* (p. 4), *pressure* (p. 6), *coach* (p. 6), *pass* (p. 7), *drive* (p. 7), *strike* (p. 7), *favor* (p. 7), *win* (p. 8), and *finish* (p. 8). Ask students to point out words that can be both nouns and verbs in other chapters as you go through the text. This will help ELL students learn by listening to their peers.



### READING COMPREHENSION—RECALLING DETAILS

Ask students to recall facts from the book. Ask questions such as the following: *Did Donovan McNabb and the Eagles win the Super Bowl against the New England Patriots?* (No.) *Why did Philadelphia fans boo Donovan when he first joined the Eagles?* (They wanted coaches to draft a different player.) *Why did rumors of a possible trade start in 2007?* (Donovan kept getting injured.) Reward students with the most correct answers by awarding classroom points or providing students with small prizes.



### WRITING PRACTICE

In college, Donovan used humor to motivate and relate to his teammates. He cracked jokes in the locker room and often imitated the coaches. He used the same approach with his Eagles teammates. Ask students to think about a time when they used humor to improve a situation or to achieve a certain outcome. Ask: *Were you successful? How did you feel? How did others around you feel?* Have students write a paragraph about this situation. Ask student volunteers to share their paragraphs with the class.

## **ED REED** by Martin Gitlin

### **CHAPTER 1: BACK IN HAWAII AGAIN**

The Pro Bowl is one of the biggest games with some of the biggest football stars playing on the same field. Baltimore Ravens' safety Ed Reed has always loved the honor of playing in the game. Even though he was up against some of the most renowned players in the league, his reputation as one of the best defensive backs preceded him and made him a threat to the other team.

### **CHAPTER 2: PLANTING THE SEEDS OF GREATNESS**

To improve his grades and attitude, Ed moved in with his high school secretary's family. This move helped Ed not only in the classroom, but also on the football field. He was a star athlete in several sports and played different positions on the football team. Ed decided to attend the University of Miami. Ed broke many school records, led the team to a championship in 2001, and was named an All-American twice. In 2002, the Baltimore Ravens picked him in the NFL draft.

### **CHAPTER 3: THE MAKING OF A SUPERSTAR**

Though he was a rookie, Ed wanted time on the field. He was a starter and made other teams fear his ability to snatch the ball from their grasp. After just one season, he was considered one of the best players in the league. Ed received several honors in his second season, including being named All-Pro by *Sports Illustrated* and being selected for the Pro Bowl. In 2004, in addition to running a record touchdown, Ed caught nine interceptions and was named the NFL Defensive Player of the Year.

### **CHAPTER 4: BETTER PLAYER AND BETTER MAN**

Ed's fame on the field helped him donate to causes that were close to his heart. Hurricane Katrina damaged his hometown in Louisiana, so he asked NFL players to contribute to relief funds. He also helped the Baltimore community. He gave away Ravens tickets to schoolchildren, provided turkeys to families during the holiday season, and held football camps for kids. Ed also worked a lot on his game. In 2005, the Ravens played poorly, but the next year they offered Ed a 7-year contract worth \$40 million. Ed accepted the offer and went on to help his team to a winning season and a trip to the playoffs that year.

### **CHAPTER 5: GENEROUS HEART AND SURE HANDS**

The love and dedication Ed has for the community has not stopped. He continues to raise money for various causes and serve as a role model to children. In 2007, he held a golf tournament to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina and other needy people. Ed provided college scholarships to students. He also proved his skill on the field. In 2007, Ed caught seven interceptions and earned another spot in the Pro Bowl. Coaches, players, and fans admire Ed's skill, dedication, and generosity.



## LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Review the boldface terms and their meanings in the glossary on pages 59 and 60. Then instruct students to write sentences using each of the terms, leaving blank spaces in place of the correct answers. Sentences should contain enough context clues to hint at each word's meaning. When students have finished writing their sentences, ask them to switch papers with the student next to them and fill in the correct answers. Have students grade their partners' papers when they have finished the quiz.

### ABC

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may struggle with some of the idioms used in the book. Explain that *idioms* are phrases that say one thing but means something else entirely. Point out the following idioms and help students understand their meanings: *hot on Ed's trail* (p. 15; very interested in Ed), *no speed demon* (p. 16; not fast), *eyes . . . light up* (p. 16; look happy), *warming up* (p. 18; getting ready), *a first-class pest* (p. 21; a nuisance), *seemed to be catching* (p. 31; was happening to others), *on a roll* (p. 34; consistently doing well). Encourage students to find other idioms in the text and explain their meanings.



## CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Tell students to read the Cross-Currents on page 54 titled "Storm of the Century." Then divide students into small groups. Instruct them to use library and Internet resources to conduct research on hurricanes. Each group may work on a different aspect of hurricanes, such as how they form, how scientists measure their strength, which storms throughout history have caused the most damage, what people can do to protect themselves, and so on. When students have finished their research, have them present their findings to the class.



## WRITING PRACTICE

Ed Reed has shown time and again how much he loves his hometown of St. Rose, Louisiana. He donated time and money to help his hometown after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the area in 2005. He has also given numerous scholarships to help students from his former high school. Instruct students to write an essay in which they describe their own hometown. Students should explain what makes their hometown special (for example, it may hold the distinction as the first city in American to have paved streets or the former home of a celebrity, or it may simply have quiet streets, nice neighborhoods, and plenty of places for kids to have fun).



## CLASS DISCUSSION

Direct students' attention to pages 8 and 9. Explain that the author refers to Ed Reed as a "thief" because he has the incredible ability to steal the ball from the other team. Ask: *How is the author's depiction of Ed Reed on the field different from Ed Reed's actions off the field?* (Students will likely respond that while Ed Reed is a ball "thief" on the field, in his personal life, he is a very giving person.)

# LaDainian Tomlinson

by William W. Lace

## CHAPTER 1: A SEASON TO REMEMBER

LaDainian Tomlinson, running back for the San Diego Chargers, believes that hard work pays off. In 2006, LaDainian was nationally recognized when he was named MVP of the National Football League. LaDainian not only excels in his NFL career, but he also devotes his time to charity. He and his wife, LaTorsha, have created football camps for kids, set up college scholarships, and started many programs for youngsters. LaDainian has received many awards for his devotion to football and charity work.

## CHAPTER 2: WAITING HIS TURN

LaDainian joined his first football team as a first-grader in Waco, Texas. In high school, he excelled in defensive and offensive positions. When his mother got a good job offer in Marlin, Texas, LaDainian stayed in Waco in hopes of being noticed by recruiters. In his senior year, he excelled as a tailback. At Texas Christian University, LaDainian broke carrying records. In his senior year, he came in fourth in Heisman Trophy nominations. The San Diego Chargers drafted him in 2001.

## CHAPTER 3: ALL-ROOKIE TO ALL-PRO

LaDainian shined as the starting running back in the first game of the season and possibly the best offensive player on the team. For the next 3 years, though the Chargers' standing was not impressive, LaDainian broke many records and won several honors. In 2003, he became the highest paid running back in the NFL. In 2004, though the team achieved their best record in 25 years, they lost in the playoffs to the New York Jets.

## CHAPTER 4: A HERO ON AND OFF THE FIELD

LaDainian and LaTorsha suffered a personal tragedy in 2005 when they lost a child to a miscarriage. The couple rebounded with religious faith and charity work. The Touching Lives Foundation was born, giving youth a chance to play football and develop personal goals. LaDainian also spent time with young, troubled fans. The 2005 season was filled with ups and downs, including an injury. LaDainian kept playing and earned another spot in the Pro Bowl. In 2006, he broke a rushing touchdown record, earning 31 in one season.

## CHAPTER 5: SO CLOSE

In 2007, LaDainian lost his father. The 2007 season started slow. Though the Chargers made it to the playoffs, fans were skeptical of their 12-year losing playoff record. The team won two playoff games, but LaDainian suffered a hyperextension of his left knee. He tried to play in the next game, but his injury forced him off the field, and the team lost to New England. Nevertheless, LaDainian received the Bart Starr Award for outstanding character and leadership. He continues to be a respected player and role model.



### SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Have students work in small groups to brainstorm adjectives to describe LaDainian Tomlinson. Then have each group share their adjectives with the class. Students should be prepared to explain why their groups chose each adjective. Write each adjective on the chalkboard. When students have shared all adjectives, examine the words on the chalkboard and discuss the class's overall impression of LaDainian.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Examine the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 59. Read the words and their definitions with the class. Point out that many of the words relate to the game of football. Ask students to come up with similar words for each vocabulary word. The new words should not relate to the game of football. (For instance, students might suggest that a similar word for *rookie*—a player in his first year of competition—is *freshman*, a student in his or her first year at a school.) If students struggle with this exercise, divide them into small groups and provide each group with a thesaurus.

ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have difficulty determining word meanings using context clues. Ask students to watch for words they don't know. Provide students with sticky-tab strips to mark these words in their books. Then ask students to point out some of these words. Read the surrounding text with students to determine if the meaning of each word can be determined using context clues. Ask: *Are there any words in this paragraph that can help you guess the meaning of the word you don't know?* Students may volunteer words that they think might be context clues. If students are struggling to find clues, you may model the exercise by providing the context clues for them. Keep in mind that students who do not appear to understand the concept will need more help with context clues in future readings.



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 52 titled "A History of Giving." Ask students to offer opinions about why the National Football League places such importance on helping others and giving back to the community. Then ask students to work in pairs, using the Internet and library resources, to find charities they consider important. Student pairs should choose one charity that they might like to support. Have students use the following sentence frames to convey information about the charity:

- The charity we chose is \_\_\_\_\_.
- We think it is important because \_\_\_\_\_.
- We can help support this charity by \_\_\_\_\_.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Point out that when LaDainian suffered tragedies in his life, he turned to charity work and football. Ask students to think about an activity that they like to do when they are sad or angry to take their mind off of their emotions. Have students write a paragraph or two about this activity, explaining why it makes them feel better when they are upset.

# LARRY FITZGERALD by John Grabowski

## CHAPTER 1: A GLORIOUS SEASON

After the death of his mother, Larry Fitzgerald decided to dedicate his life and football career to her. He delved into the sport and won many honors. He was nominated to become part of all major All-American teams and was rewarded with the Biletnikoff Award and the Walter Camp Award. He also broke several records and was named the Eastern College Athletic Conference Division I-A Player of the Year, rare feats for a college sophomore.

## CHAPTER 2: A SOLID FOUNDATION

When Larry was in high school, he got an opportunity to become a ball boy for the Minnesota Vikings and to get an up-close look at pro football players in action. When his grades began to drop, Larry transferred to a prep school and worked hard for a year and a half to improve his academic record. His efforts earned him a scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh, where he would play football for the Panthers. In his freshman year, he played in the Insight Bowl against Oregon State.

## CHAPTER 3: WELCOME TO THE NFL

Larry submitted his name to the NFL despite his youth. He ended up signing a 6-year contract with the Arizona Cardinals—who had the third pick in the draft—with the potential to be worth \$60 million. He was the first wide receiver drafted that year. Despite the Cardinals' losses, the team expected to win more games with Larry and their new head coach, Dennis Green, who happened to be a family friend. Unlike other rookies, Larry was thrown right into pro games.

## CHAPTER 4: SUCCESS AND DISAPPOINTMENT

Even though the team didn't do well during Larry's first few seasons, the new football star played exceptionally well. He became the youngest NFL player to catch over 100 passes in one season. He also broke Cardinals' records and was selected for the Pro Bowl in his second year. The Cardinals had some wins and losses in 2006, and Larry missed a few games because of an injury. Arizona began to win again when he returned.

## CHAPTER 5: CARRYING ON THE FIGHT

Larry was upset when Coach Green was fired, but he ultimately grew to like the new coach, Ken Whisenhunt. Under new direction, the team was successful, finishing with its best season since 1998. In 2008, Larry signed a new contract for 4 more years with the Cardinals and became the highest paid player in the league who isn't a quarterback. Off the football field, Larry dedicates his time to other efforts. He helps raise money for disease awareness, and education.



### EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Have students look at the photo of Larry on page 33. Ask: *What does this picture say about Larry as an athlete?* (Students may say that he strives to be the best, is extremely athletic, always comes out on top, reaches farther and jumps higher than his opponents, gives every play his all, etc.) Then ask students to flip through the book and scan the photographs of Larry. Ask: *What do these pictures tell you about Larry overall?* (Students may say that Larry seems warm and friendly off of the field, is consistently a good player, is a tough opponent to beat, etc.)



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Ask students to turn to the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 59. Ask students to study the words and their definitions. Then have students write five sentences using the vocabulary words. Tell students that they must use all 16 words within their five sentences, and that the sentences must make sense. Encourage student to be creative with their sentences. Then invite several students to share their sentences with the class.

**ABC**

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Remind students that some words sound like others when they're spoken, but they're spelled differently and have different meanings. Tell students that these words are called *homophones*. Ask students to turn to page 29. Help them find the word *site* in the first paragraph on the page. Say: *This word sounds just like another word. The other sight means the ability to see.* Ask: *Can anyone spell the other word sight?* (Students should offer the spelling s-i-g-h-t.) Then direct their attention to the word *here* in the quote. Ask: *Who can spell the word that means to process sounds?* (Students should offer the spelling h-e-a-r.) Ask: *Can anyone find another homophone on this page?* (Students may point out the word *their* [there; they're], *made* [maid], *new* [knew], *guys* [guise], or *won* [one].)



### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students read the Cross-Currents titled "The Father of American Football" on pages 46 and 47. Then ask: *Do you know who founded any of your favorite activities or organizations?* Ask students to think of a favorite activity or organization. Then have them conduct Internet or library research to discover who founded the activity or organization and under what circumstances the founding took place. Students should write a one-page explanation of their research findings. Ask student volunteers to share their findings with the class.



### CLASS DISCUSSION

Ask: *Aside from his obvious talent, what do you think makes Larry Fitzgerald such a good football player? Do you think he is a good role model?* Initiate a class discussion about the qualities of successful people. (Students may say that Larry is a dedicated athlete with a lot of drive to succeed. They may cite his early entry into the NFL as an example of his dedication to pursuing his dreams. They may also mention that his solid upbringing contributes to the qualities that make him successful, such as his levelheaded approach to playing football and his dedication to charity work. Students who mention these points are likely to believe that Larry is a good role model.)

# THE MANNING BROTHERS by Hal Marcovitz

## CHAPTER 1: MOST VALUABLE PLAYERS

Brothers Peyton and Eli Manning both followed in the footsteps of their father, Oliver, as winning college quarterbacks destined for the NFL. As quarterback for the Indianapolis Colts, though, Peyton struggled to win an AFC Championship and make it to the Super Bowl. Eli faced the same struggle as quarterback for the New York Giants. In 2007, Peyton's struggle ended when the Colts beat the Chicago Bears to win the Super Bowl XLI trophy. Eli also excelled in 2008 when the Giants defeated the Patriots to win the Super Bowl XLII trophy. Both brothers won Most Valuable Player awards for their efforts in the winning games.

## CHAPTER 2: A FOOTBALL HERITAGE

In high school, Peyton played on a team with his older brother, Cooper. In his senior year at Isidore High School, Peyton was offered scholarships to 60 major universities. He decided to play for the University of Tennessee Volunteers. He broke several university passing records and received three Heisman Trophy nominations. Peyton was drafted by the Colts in 1998 and signed the largest NFL contract ever offered to a rookie.

## CHAPTER 3: GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT FOOTBALL

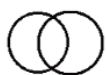
Eli followed in Peyton's footsteps as the starting quarterback at Isidore High School. He later became quarterback for the Ole Miss Rebels. Eli went on to break his father's passing records and set his own. He also led the Rebels to a win at the Cotton Bowl. Eli was drafted by the New York Giants. Meanwhile, Peyton achieved three highest quarterback ratings, two league MVP titles, and eight invitations to play in the NFL Pro Bowl. In 2004, he re-signed with the Colts and earned the largest signing bonus in NFL history.

## CHAPTER 4: THE MANNING BOWL

The brothers' teams faced off in Week 1 of the 2006 season. Though Peyton's experience made his team a favorite to win, Eli had become more consistent in the second half of the 2005 season. The Colts and the Giants played a great game, but the Colts kicked a field goal to win the game 26–21. While Peyton went on to beat the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl, Eli continued to play inconsistently, and he received criticism from skeptical fans.

## CHAPTER 5: LONG CAREERS AHEAD

Eli finished the 2007 season with a 10–6 record, and the Giants won Super Bowl XLII. Peyton's Colts finished the season with a 13–3 record. Both brothers are very involved in charity work. With their father, they hold summer classes at the Manning Passing Academy. Both brothers have had children's hospitals named after them in recognition of their contributions. Peyton has also founded the Peyback Foundation and Peyton's Pals. The brothers continue to give their fans and communities much to cheer about.



### GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Though Peyton and Eli Manning are brothers and star quarterbacks, they each have very different traits. Based on what students have read, ask them to compare and contrast the brothers using a Venn diagram. Be sure to explain to students that the traits shared by both brothers belong in the center, overlapping portion of the circles. Model this for students if necessary. Then ask student volunteers to share what they have written in their diagrams.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Present the following three vocabulary words: *fumble*, *interception*, and *quarterback*. Have students read the definitions for these words in the glossary on page 59. Then ask: *Which word is not like the other two? Which word does not belong in this group?* (Students should guess that *quarterback* does not belong because it describes a position on a football team, while the other two words, *fumble* and *interception*, describe actions that occur during a football game.) Then present the next set: *bonus*, *sack*, *contract*. (*Sack* does not belong because it describes an action that occurs during a game, while *bonus* and *contract* describe things to be gained by joining a team.) Ask students to come up with their own sets and to explain which word does not belong and why.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The figurative language in this book might be confusing for some English language learners. Have a student volunteer read aloud from pages 40 and 41. Stop the student when he or she reads phrases containing figurative language, such as “The words seemed to spark Eli,” “capturing their first seven games,” and “killed the drive.” Explain to students that *spark* as used here means *motivate* or *encourage*. Explain that *capture* is used to mean *win*, and that *killed* really means *stopped*. Write the words and their alternate meanings on the chalkboard as you explain them. Then have the student read the text again. Stop the student at these same phrases so that he or she can look at the chalkboard to substitute the alternate meaning you have provided.



### EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Explain to students the concept of juxtaposition. Say: *Juxtaposition occurs when two images or objects are placed side by side for comparison or contrast.* Have students look at the photograph of the Manning brothers on page 27. Explain that this photograph was taken before Peyton and Eli faced off as quarterbacks on opposing teams. Point out that the brothers look alike, are both quarterbacks, and are wearing similar T-shirts, but that the symbols on their shirts represent the opposing teams. Then ask: *Do you see another example of juxtaposition in this photograph?* (Students should point out that the two fans standing side by side in the background of the picture are wearing opposing football jerseys.)



### WRITING PRACTICE

Ask students to consider what it must be like for the Manning brothers to share the love of football, but also to constantly endure comparisons to one another. Ask students how they would feel if a brother or sister was good at the same things they are good at. Then have students write a paragraph or two explaining what they think it would be like to share a talent with a sibling.

# PLAXICO BURRESS

 by Robert Grayson

## CHAPTER 1: A SUPER SEASON

New York Giants leading wide receiver Plaxico Burress held an amazing record of 70 catches for 1,025 yards as his team headed into the Super Bowl in 2008. Standing 6' 5" and weighing 230 pounds, this Giant made a giant name for himself when he caught the winning touchdown pass against the undefeated New England Patriots. Though reaching the Super Bowl had been a hard-fought battle, Plaxico never doubted that his team would walk away the champions.

## CHAPTER 2: A STAR FROM THE START

Plaxico, a Virginia Beach native, was born August 12, 1977, and developed a love for sports at a very early age. By the end of high school, he had helped his football team claim three state championships and was rated the best receiver in the country by *Scholastic Sports*. Though Plaxico's bad grades caused him to sit on the sidelines at the start of his Michigan State career, he boosted his grades enough to play during his sophomore and junior years, breaking records for receptions and touchdowns. He claimed the MVP title during the Citrus Bowl.

## CHAPTER 3: MAKING THE PROS

Plaxico left college after his junior year and signed with the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2000. The first season was rough on him. After making some mistakes at the season's start, Plaxico seriously injured his wrist and had to miss the last four games of the season. The next year was better for the Steelers, though they didn't go to the Super Bowl. In the off-season, Plaxico suffered the loss of his mother, after which he took charge of the care of his two brothers. He had a hard time coping with the loss.

## CHAPTER 4: A GIANT STEP

After turning over a new leaf in 2002, Plaxico started in all 16 games of the season. The Steelers won the AFC North Division, and Plaxico partnered his talent with another receiver, Hines Ward. The Steelers, however, weren't able to give Plaxico the Super Bowl win of his dreams. The team struggled through 2003, and in 2004, Plaxico didn't receive as many passes from new quarterback Ben Roethlisberger. Plaxico became a free agent after the 2004 season and signed with the New York Giants in March 2005.

## CHAPTER 5: BECOMING AN NFL CHAMP

In 2005, the Giants had a stacked team of new talent. Plaxico and quarterback Eli Manning quickly became a dynamic team. Though it was a mediocre first season, Plaxico felt more at home with the Giants, though the team didn't make it to the Super Bowl. Plaxico played much of the 2006 season with a painful groin injury, and he suffered a torn ankle ligament early in the 2007 season. Nonetheless, he and his team pushed on, ultimately winning a legendary Super Bowl game against the heavily favored New England Patriots.



### INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Ask students to work individually. Have students think about their favorite athletes. The athlete may play football or any other sport. Have students create Venn diagrams that compare and contrast their favorite athletes to Plaxico Burress. (If students claim that Plaxico is their favorite athlete, instruct them to compare him to their second-favorite athlete.) Remind students to include both similarities and differences between the two athletes. When students have finished creating their diagrams, ask a few volunteers to draw their diagrams on the chalkboard.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Write the following sentence frames on the chalkboard:

- Plaxico tore a \_\_\_\_\_ in his ankle, which \_\_\_\_\_ his play for the rest of the season. (*ligament; hampered*)
- Plaxico had trouble connecting with Pittsburgh \_\_\_\_\_ Ben Roethlisberger, but when he moved to the Giants, he developed a great \_\_\_\_\_ with Eli Manning. (*quarterback; rapport*)
- The Giants \_\_\_\_\_ many people's expectations by winning all of their playoff games and earning a spot in Super Bowl XLII, where they \_\_\_\_\_ the Patriots' hopes of having a perfect 19–0 season. (*eclipsed; dashed*)

When students have completed these sentence frames with the correct answers, encourage them to develop their own using other vocabulary words.

### ABC

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may be nervous about speaking in front of the class, especially if they are in the early stages of developing their English skills. Give these students extra assistance in preparing their speeches. Help them choose the right words and organize their speeches in a clear and concise manner.



### PUBLIC SPEAKING

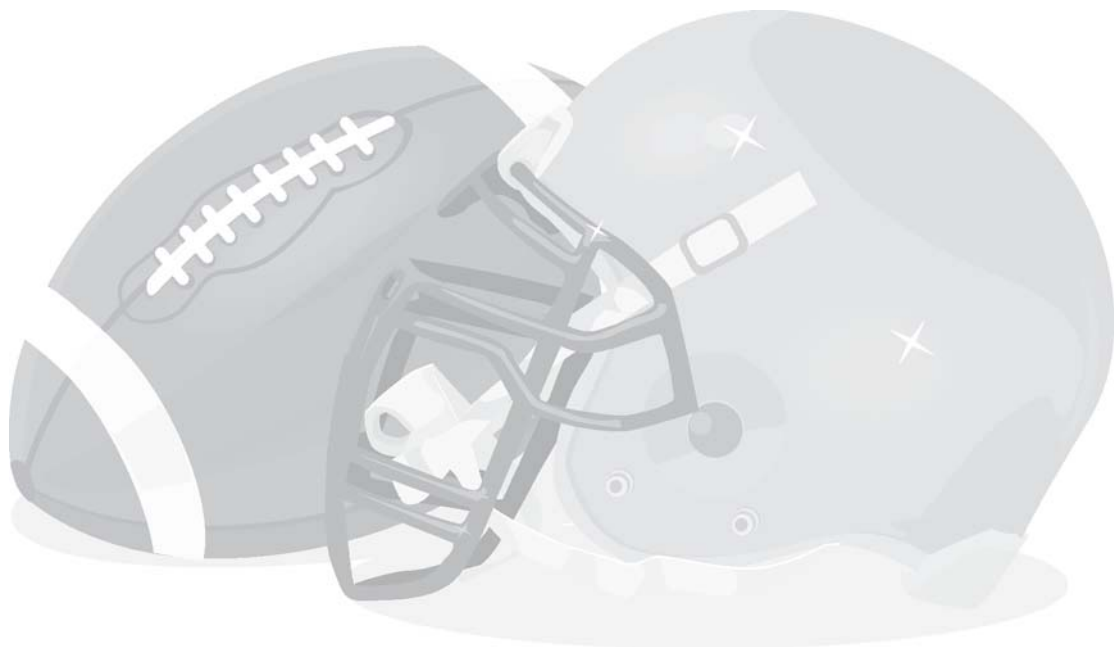
In chapter 2 of *Plaxico Burress*, Plaxico reveals that he admired his grandmother and his mother for their strength. He says, “My grandma was sort of a rock. . . . Everyone leaned on her. She was a quiet one who walked with swagger . . . I think my mom got a lot from her.” On the chalkboard, write the phrase, “One person I admire is . . .” Give students time to think about a person whom they admire (a friend, a family member, a world leader, etc.). Then have each student stand and deliver a short speech beginning with the phrase, “One person I admire is. . . .” Students’ speeches should describe the person they admire and include reasons to support their choices.



### WRITING PRACTICE

Ask: *Do you think Plaxico regretted leaving the Steelers prior to the season in which they won the Super Bowl?* Have students write a brief essay in which they explain how they would have felt if

they were in Plaxico's shoes.





# RANDY MOSS

 by David Robson

## CHAPTER 1: DOWN BUT NOT OUT

New England Patriots wide receiver Randy Moss helped his team achieve an undefeated 16–0 season prior to entering Super Bowl XLII, where they ultimately lost to the New York Giants, one of the biggest upsets in sports history. Despite his reputation as a hotheaded player, Randy is one of the best wide receivers in the NFL. In 2006, he was thrilled to join the New England Patriots, who had won three Super Bowls since the turn of the century. Though his new teammates had reason to be nervous, Randy showed composure on the field.

## CHAPTER 2: TROUBLED TALENT



Randy was raised in West Virginia and dreamed of playing football for the University of Notre Dame. Though he was motivated in school and on the field, his temper continually got him into trouble. At one point he received a 90-day jail sentence that caused him to lose a Notre Dame scholarship offer. He received a scholarship to Marshall University in West Virginia, where he set records as a rookie and helped win the Mid-American conference title in his senior year. In 1998, Randy was drafted to the Minnesota Vikings.

ABC

## CHAPTER 3: SEEING PURPLE

Randy joined an explosive offense in 1998, and Randy was named NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year. He did well in 1999, but was fined twice for fighting with officials. At the end of 2000, Randy had broken a team record and received his third invite to the Pro Bowl. The next season, Randy re-signed and became the highest paid player in NFL history. Though he played well for the next two seasons, the Vikings were unsuccessful overall. In 2003, Randy led the NFL in touchdown catches and matched his own career-high records.



## CHAPTER 4: CHANGE OF SCENERY

In 2005, Randy helped his team defeat the Green Bay Packers. He was fined for bad behavior in the game, though, and the Vikings traded him. He joined the Oakland Raiders in 2005. Though he played well in his first season, the team finished with a 4–12 record. When his team continued to play poorly in 2007, an angry Randy spoke out against them and was traded once again.

## CHAPTER 5: QUEST FOR THE RING



The winning New England Patriots picked up Randy under the condition that he take a pay cut and behave. He agreed and proved himself by excelling on the field. He supported his team and befriended quarterback Tom Brady. Randy's playing helped his team reach the Super Bowl opposite the New York Giants. With a 14–10 lead in the last minute of the game, it appeared that the Patriots would win. In the last 35 seconds of the game, though, the Giants scored and won. Randy still embraces his team and continues to pursue a Super Bowl win.

### READING COMPREHENSION—AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Ask students to name some of the low points in Randy Moss's career and life. (Serving jail time for violence, failing a drug test, losing scholarships, being fined for his bad behavior on the field, accusations of assault, drug charges) Ask: *Why do you think the author included these details in this book?* (to give an accurate picture of his life; to show that drug users must face very negative consequences; to show that violent behavior is dangerous.) Then ask students to discuss whether Randy Moss is or is not a good role model. (Students who believe that he is not a good role model will cite instances of bad behavior and legal troubles. These students may say that he provides a bad example for youngsters. Students who believe that he is a good a role model may say that despite his past troubles, Randy seems to have turned himself around and now works well with his team, making him a good example for troubled youth.)

### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students study the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 60. Then assign each student an acting partner. Have partners choose a word from the list and prepare a silent skit in which they will act out the chosen vocabulary word. Have each pair of students perform their silent skit for the class while other students guess which vocabulary word the pair has chosen. Encourage students to be creative.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Explain to English language learners that text features, such as chapter titles, are clues that authors give to their readers. Text features help readers understand what they are reading. A chapter title lets readers know what the chapter will be about. After students have read Chapter 1, write the chapter title—"Down but Not Out"—on the chalkboard. Ask students to collectively summarize the information in the chapter. Then ask: *How does the chapter title reflect what the chapter is about?* (Students should understand that though Randy's team lost the Super Bowl ["down"], he is still one of the best wide receivers in the NFL ["but not out"].)

### EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Ask students to study the photograph on page 33 featuring Randy Moss in a NASCAR advertisement for the Inta Juice franchise. Read aloud to students the line above the photograph. Ask: *What about this advertisement might have improved Randy's public image?* (Possible students responses: he is smiling rather than angry; he is drinking fruit juice, which is healthy; the Inta Juice logo is a friendly looking fruit, which might make Randy seem friendly.) Then ask students if they believe that the advertisement improves Randy's image. Encourage students to be honest in their responses.

### FORMING OPINIONS

Ask students to read the Cross-Currents on page 56 titled "Spygate." Discuss the details of the controversy with students to ensure their understanding of the event. Then ask: *Do you think that the Patriots were wrong to videotape the Jets?* Encourage students to discuss why they have chosen one side of the issue or the other.



## RAY LEWIS by Jeremy Dunn

### CHAPTER 1: SUPER BOWL CHAMPION AND MVP

In the 2001 Super Bowl, the Baltimore Ravens, faced the New York Giants, who ultimately struggled to overcome the stronghold of the Ravens defense. Middle linebacker Ray Lewis, the NFL Defensive Player of the Year, made huge defensive plays in the game and helped the Ravens achieve an impressive victory. The win was renewing for Ray, who had spent much of 2000



facing criminal charges for a fight involving two of his close friends, which ended in the deaths of two other men. Ray, who maintained his innocence, was sentenced to 12 months of probation.

### CHAPTER 2: FROM POVERTY TO THE NFL

The oldest of five siblings, Ray helped his mother by caring for his brothers and sisters while attending school and shining as a football and wrestling star. He was the MVP of his football



team in his junior and senior years. As a new member of the Miami Hurricanes, Ray became one of the leading defensive players in the country and was quickly chosen by the Baltimore Ravens.

### CHAPTER 3: RISE TO NFL STARDOM

Ray became the AFC Defensive Player of the Week after his first game. He earned a spot in the Pro Bowl at the end of his first season. In 1998, Ray re-signed with the Ravens and became the highest paid linebacker in the NFL. In 2000, Ray's court case went to trial. Afterward, Ray turned his focus to religion and football. He became the NFL Defensive Player of the Year, and the Ravens followed with a Super Bowl win against the New York Giants. In 2002, an injury early in the season caused Ray to miss the rest of the season.



### CHAPTER 4: IN HIS PRIME

Ray had one of his best seasons yet in 2003. He also became very involved in charity work. In 2004, he finished his college degree. The following year, he suffered another injury and surgery. In 2006, he was awarded the Act of Kindness Award and received his eighth Pro Bowl invitation. His team also made the playoffs once again.

### CHAPTER 5: STILL GOING STRONG



In the 2006 playoffs, the Ravens faced the Indianapolis Colts. Both teams showed weak offenses and strong defenses. In the end, the Colts beat the Ravens with a 15–6 score.

Ray had a solid 2007 season; his team, however, did not, finishing the season with a 5–11 record. Ray continues to train like a much younger athlete and devotes much time to his six children.

## EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Have students look at the photograph of the *Sports Illustrated* cover on page 24. Ask: *What does this image say about Ray?* (He is religious; he looks neat and professional; he looks nonthreatening; etc.) Ask: *Why do you think the magazine chose this photograph for the cover?* (It presents the opposite image of the one he had before.) Ask: *Do you think the image is a successful one?* Then have students find another photograph in the book that conveys the opposite image. (Students will likely single out the photograph on page 27.)

## LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Tell students that an *antonym* is a word that expresses the opposite of another word. Ask students to examine the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 60. Remind students that not all words have antonyms. (For instance, the word *amputee* does not have an antonym.) Then ask students to volunteer antonyms for words on the vocabulary list. (*consecrate/desecrate; detrimental/beneficial; endorse/denounce; nonprofit/for profit*) Consider supplying students with a thesaurus, as many of the antonyms are difficult words.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may need help understanding the difference between past and present tenses. Write present tense sentences from page 45 on the chalkboard, such as the following sentence: “As Ray approaches the latter stages of his career, he already knows what is waiting for him when he retires.” Ask: *Does this sentence use the past or present tense?* (Present.) Ask students to identify the verbs in the sentence: (*approaches, knows, is waiting, and retires*). Show students how to put this sentence in the past tense by changing the verbs: “As Ray approached the latter stages of his career, he already knew what was waiting for him when he retired.” Model this exercise with other sentences from the book.

## FORMING OPINIONS

Explain to students that when celebrities promote products, they are *endorsing* the product. Say: *Companies ask celebrities to support their products in the hopes that people who like that celebrity will become interested in the product.* Explain that companies have to be careful who they choose to endorse their products because people might avoid products endorsed by celebrities they don't like. Ask: *If you owned a company, do you think you would have asked Ray to endorse your product in the early years of his NFL career? Why or why not?* (Those who respond “yes” will focus on his athletic ability. Those who respond “no” will focus on his legal troubles.)

## CONDUCTING RESEARCH

In groups of four, have students use library or Internet resources to research some of the charitable organizations that Ray has founded or become involved in. Have students pick one foundation or effort to research extensively. Students should then prepare a 2- to 4-minute presentation on the charity and Ray's involvement in it.



# TERRELL OWENS

by Diane Marczely Gimpel

## CHAPTER 1: BACK ON TOP

Wide receiver Terrell “T.O.” Owens was selected for the Pro Bowl from 2000 to 2004, but controversies kept him out of the game in 2005 and 2006. His run-ins with coaches and players ultimately resulted in a suspension from the Philadelphia Eagles in 2005. In 2006, he transferred to the Dallas Cowboys, but could not escape controversy. The storm surrounding T.O. seemed to quiet in 2007, however, and once again, the athlete was voted into the Pro Bowl.



## CHAPTER 2: A ROUGHT YET PROMISING START

Terrell Eldorado Owens was born in Alabama. His family had very little money. As a child, T.O. endured taunting and bullying, but during high school, he excelled in many sports, especially football. Terrell struggled in his first year of football at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC), but by his senior year, he had set records and caught the attention of NFL scouts. The San Francisco 49ers drafted T.O. in 1996.

ABC

## CHAPTER 3: MOVING INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

In San Francisco, Terrell had the honor of playing with his idol, wide receiver Jerry Rice. Terrell experienced personal and professional ups and downs during his first few years in the NFL. He sparked controversies a few times for over-the-top behavior. He made positive contributions, however, promoting education and Alzheimer’s research. In 2003, the 49ers traded Terrell to the Eagles.

## CHAPTER 4: FLYING WITH THE EAGLES

“” In 2004, during his first season with the Eagles, Terrell did well early on, but an ankle injury sidelined him for the last few games. As he healed, he worked hard to make it to the Super Bowl. The Eagles ultimately lost, however, to the New England Patriots. The 2005 season was marred by failed contract negotiations, run-ins with head coach Andy Reid, and controversial marks about Eagles quarterback Donovan McNabb. Eventually, the Eagles released Terrell.



## CHAPTER 5: A STAR IN DALLAS

Terrell joined the Dallas Cowboys in 2006, but he also struggled to get along with Cowboys head coach Bill Parcells. Terrell wrote a children’s book called *Little T Learns to Share* to show the softer side of his personality. In 2007, the Cowboys got a new coach, and Terrell seemed much happier. He played in the Pro Bowl and continued his charity work, including raising awareness about Alzheimer’s.

### CLASS DISCUSSION

In 2007, Terrell Owens apologized to former teammate and Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Donovan McNabb for publicly criticizing him. Ask: *Have you ever said something about someone that you regretted later?* Invite students to participate in a discussion about the consequences of making negative remarks about a person or group of people. Tell students to consider why people say hurtful things and how others feel when people say hurtful things to them, about them, or around them. In addition, explain the importance of apologizing and asking for forgiveness.

### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Many of the vocabulary words in the glossary on page 59 are football jargon. Review the meanings of the football terms with students. Then have students act out the terms to demonstrate their understanding. Students may combine several terms into one scene. For example, in one scene, students may demonstrate the terms *quarterback*, *pass*, *wide receiver*, *reception*, and *fumble*. Have other students in the class identify each term as it occurs in the scene.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble with some of the idioms used in the book. Explain that an idiom is a phrase that has a different meaning than what it actually says. Help students understand the meanings of the following idioms: *over the top* (p. 6; showy or flashy), *butted heads* (p. 14; had disagreements), *lost his cool* (p. 25; became angry), and *has in store* (p. 45; has planned). Invite students to look for other idioms in the text and help students determine their meanings.

### EXAMINING QUOTES

Read the first quote from page 13 to students. Then ask: *Based on what you read about Terrell Owens, do you think he still enjoys being in the spotlight?* (Students will share a variety of opinions. Students should support their opinions with examples from the text.)

### WRITING PRACTICE

Tell students to read the Cross-Currents on page 55 titled “Catch A Dream Foundation.” Then instruct students to think of a cause for which they would like to start a charitable organization. For example, students may want to feed the less fortunate or provide toys and games for children in hospitals. Have students write a brief essay in which they explain the cause for which they would start a charitable organization, develop a name for their organization, and list activities or fundraisers their organization would hold to raise money for the cause. When students have finished their essays, invite a few students to share their ideas with the class.



## TOM BRADY by Craig Miller

### CHAPTER 1: GREATEST IN THE GAME

Quarterback Tom Brady entered the 2007 season with three New England Patriots Super Bowl wins and two Super Bowl MVP awards under his belt. He also helped the Patriots break a 35-year record when they entered the playoffs as an undefeated team. Supported by his coaches and his team, Tom fulfilled a childhood dream of becoming a football superstar.

ABC

### CHAPTER 2: QUARTERBACK DREAMS

Tom fostered his love of sports during neighborhood basketball and baseball games. He played both football and baseball in high school. Though he was recruited by professionals in both sports, Tom chose to join the University of Michigan's stellar football team. As one of seven quarterbacks on the team, however, Tom spent his first 2 years on the bench. He led the Wolverines to the Citrus Bowl in 1998 and then to an Orange Bowl win in 1999.



### CHAPTER 3: UNDERDOG CHAMPIONS

Though Tom was happy that the Patriots drafted him, he became the fourth quarterback on the team. He practice hard, improved his game, and became the backup quarterback. When the starting quarterback was injured early in the 2001 season, Tom stepped in. After a rocky start, Tom led the Patriots to the AFC Championship. When the Patriots won the Super Bowl, Tom became the youngest quarterback to win a Super Bowl. He also earned the MVP award.



### CHAPTER 4: CAPTAIN OF A NEW DYNASTY

Tom became an overnight superstar, signing autographs, doing endorsements, and making appearances. Though the Patriots missed the playoffs in the 2002 season, they finished with the best record in the AFC in 2003. They faced the Carolina Panthers in the Super Bowl and gained their second Super Bowl win. The Patriots earned another best AFC record in 2004 and found themselves head-to-head with the Philadelphia Eagles. Though the game was tied in the fourth quarter, New England pulled ahead to win with a score of 24–14.

### CHAPTER 5: QUEST FOR PERFECTION

The Patriots won the AFC title in 2005 and 2006. They finished the 2006 season with an undefeated 16–0 record and faced the New York Giants in the Super Bowl. The Patriots, however, would not win their fourth Super Bowl just yet. Despite his disappointment, Tom maintains a love of football and wishes to play for many more years.



### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Provide students with a list of words that the author has used to describe Tom Brady: *spectacular, valuable, modest, proud, confident, patient, optimistic, composed, good-looking, focused, cool, and happy*. Divide students into groups of three or four and provide each group with a thesaurus. Students should look up each of the words used to describe Tom Brady and write down each word's synonyms. As they move down the list, students should pass the thesaurus around the group so that each student gets to practice looking up words.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Explain to English language learners that *verbs* are words that describe an action. Explain that *past-tense verbs* describe something that has happened in the past. Give students a list of past-tense verbs from chapter 2: *floated, cheered, wondered, encouraged, urged, suffered, and wanted*. Provide students with a brief definition of each verb and then ask students to write a short story using the past-tense verbs from chapter 2. Collect the stories and review the verb usage in each to help you identify students who are having difficulty with the concept of past-tense verbs.

### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Have students read the Cross-Currents on page 54 titled "Gisele Būdchen." Tell students that Gisele joined the Forests of the Future project, which supports reforestation of the Brazilian Atlantic Forest. Using Internet and library resources, have students research the problems in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest and the efforts that are being made to solve those problems. Have students take notes as they research and then discuss their research results as a class.

### WRITING PRACTICE

Ask a student to read aloud the first full paragraph at the top of page 21. Then ask students to think about a time that they were teased. Ask: *How did it make you feel? How did you handle the situation? Say: Or maybe you remember a time when you teased someone else. Ask: How did you feel about doing it? How do you think the other person felt?* Explain to students that sometimes the best way to confront a situation that bothers you is to write about it. Have students write a letter to a person who has teased them in the past or to a person that they have teased in the past. Then have students rip their letters into tiny pieces. Walk around the room with a garbage can and have students sweep the pieces of paper off of their desks and into the garbage. Then ask students how they feel about the past situation after performing the exercise.

### EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Have students examine the photograph on page 27. Ask: *How do you think it would feel to become a superstar almost overnight?* Facilitate a class discussion about the ups and downs of being in the public eye.



# TONY GONZALEZ

 by Amy N. Hunter

## CHAPTER 1: BACK TO THE PRO BOWL

With 11 seasons and nine Pro Bowl appearances under his belt, record-breaking tight end Tony Gonzalez is undoubtedly one of the best football players in the NFL. By the end of the 2007 season, Tony had racked up 9,882 career receiving yards. Off the field, Tony does a lot of charity work.



## CHAPTER 2: A GIFTED ATHLETE

Tony's older brother, Chris, encouraged his early interest in sports. In middle school, playing basketball helped Tony become more assertive. He also excelled in baseball and football. Tony earned a scholarship to the University of California at Berkeley, where he played both football and basketball. In college, Tony helped the basketball team get to the NCAA Tournament twice. He entered the NFL draft in 1997.

**ABC**

## CHAPTER 3: A RISING STAR


The Kansas City Chiefs drafted Tony as a tight end during the first round. Tony's first two NFL seasons were solid, but he came into his own in 1999 during his third season and earned a spot in the Pro Bowl. He performed even better in 2000, but as a team, the Chiefs struggled through 2000 and 2001. Off the field, Tony continued his charity work and celebrated the birth of a son in 2001.

## CHAPTER 4: THE RECORD BREAKER

After a contract dispute, Tony threatened to sit out the entire 2002 season, but he and the Chiefs eventually reached an agreement. The team failed to make the playoffs in 2002, won their division in 2003, and ended with a disappointing record in 2004. Tony, however, racked up receiving yards, set an NFL record for catches by a tight end, and again attended the Pro Bowl. He was also named the number-one NFL "Good Guy" by *Sporting News*.



## CHAPTER 5: A SEASONED ATHLETE

 In 2006, the Chiefs hired a new coach. They had a rocky season before losing to Indianapolis in the playoffs. Tony received a contract extension early in 2007, but later that year, he developed Bell's palsy, which he treated with medicine and overcame. The 2007 season was Kansas City's worst in 30 years. Tony was frustrated that he had not yet made it to a Super Bowl, but he agreed to be a team leader. In the future, Tony hopes people remember him as a person who showed class both on and off the field.

### INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Ask students to work individually. Have students read the Cross-Currents titled “Catch and Connect” on page 52. Tony Gonzalez wrote a book about his personal life titled *Tony Gonzalez: Catch and Connect* in which he revealed personal stories about his life, such as challenges he faced growing up. Ask students to think of three stories about their own lives (challenges, triumphs, life-changing moments, etc) that they would like to include in a book. Then have students think of titles for their books. Ask volunteers to share their ideas with the class.

### LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Choose one or two students to create a word search containing all words in the glossary on page 59. Then ask the students to create a copy of the word search on the chalkboard, where the whole class will be able to view it. When the word search is ready, recite the vocabulary words to students one at a time. Read them in random order, so students will not know which word to expect next. After reading the word, ask the first student who raises his or her hand to circle the word in the word search.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners may have trouble recognizing the past and past participle forms of irregular verbs. Remind students that changing irregular verbs into their past and past participle forms may require a significant spelling change. Direct students' attention to the word *chosen* on page 4. Explain that this is the past participle form of the verb *choose*. Ask: *What is the past tense form of the verb choose?* (Chose.) Have students practice identifying all three forms of various irregular verbs used throughout the text. Consider creating a chart on the chalkboard to help students organize the various forms of irregular verbs. The following are a few instances of irregular verbs used in the book: *broke* (p. 6), *began* (p. 7), *caught* (p. 12), *drew* (p. 14), *thought* (p. 16), *gave* (p. 19), *lost* (p. 31), *felt* (p. 40).

### EXAMINING QUOTES

Divide students in small groups and ask them to select a quote from the book that best describes Tony Gonzalez. Have students discuss why they chose that particular quote. Then have students explain their quotes to the class. (It is acceptable for groups to choose the same quote as they may present different reasons for choosing the quote.)

### WRITING PRACTICE

Philanthropy is a desire to improve a community through charitable activities. Tony Gonzalez is involved in several charities that help to improve his community, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and the United Way. Ask students to write an essay in which they describe a charity or organization with which they are involved or want to be involved. In their responses, students should explain what this organization does, how it helps the community, and why they are involved or want to be involved with it.



## TONY ROMO by Chuck Bednar

### CHAPTER 1: THANKSGIVING DAY MVP

Quarterback Tony Romo had been starting for the Dallas Cowboys for only a month before he played in the famous Thanksgiving Day game. He helped lead his team to a win against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and tied a record for the most touchdown passes in a game. His MVP-style playing and his drive to do well earned the respect of his fans, teammates, and critics.

ABC

### CHAPTER 2: SUCCESS ON THE SMALL STAGE

Tony played football and basketball in high school. As a quarterback, he received all-country honors on the field, but he was unable to draw the attention of college recruiters. In 1998, he enrolled at Eastern Illinois University. Tony didn't shine right away, but his hard work earned the respect of his teammates. In 2000, Tony's game improved, and he started scoring touchdowns and winning awards. Tony signed with the Dallas Cowboys in 2003 as a free agent.

### CHAPTER 3: LIFE ON THE NFL SIDELINES

Despite his honors in college, Tony's throwing skills were not on par with NFL standards. He joined the team roster as third-string quarterback. Though he played in the preseason, he watched the entire regular season from the sidelines. In the off-season, as the team's weakest player, he stood to be let go. The release of a starter saved his spot, however. His inconsistency continued in 2004, but by the 2005 season, he had gained the position of backup quarterback.

### CHAPTER 4: OVERNIGHT SENSATION

After signing a 2-year contract with Dallas, Tony's game improved and he began to see more time on the field. Partway through the season, Cowboys coach Bill Parcells named Tony the starting quarterback. Tony's role in gaining 6 of 8 wins as starting quarterback earned him a spot in the Pro Bowl. Then, in a playoff game against the Seahawks, Tony made a critical fumble, causing Dallas to lose the game. The season had been good, but the fumble prompted critics to question his playing abilities once again.

“”

### CHAPTER 5: AMERICA'S TEAM, AMERICA'S QUARTERBACK

In Tony's 2007 debut game against the New York Giants, he hit a career-high 345 passing yards and played a large part in five touchdowns. In October, he signed a 6-year, \$67.5 million contract. He showed some unpredictability, however, later in the season. Fans and critics worried that his relationship with singer Jessica Simpson was a distraction. Before the playoffs, Tony spent time with his girlfriend instead of preparing for the game. The Cowboys lost to the New York Giants. The loss didn't stop him. He assisted the team in breaking many records and he earned a spot in the Pro Bowl.



## LEARNING NEW VOCABULARY

Have students review the list of vocabulary words in the glossary on page 60. Then ask students to write a short story with a partner. The story should include at least five of the vocabulary words. Give students at least ten minutes to discuss story ideas with their partners and record stories on paper. Walk around and listen to students as they plan their stories, providing help to students who appear to be stuck. Encourage creative and engaging use of vocabulary words. Then ask a few student volunteers to read their stories aloud to the class.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Explain to ELL students that some words contain a word and a word part. Tell students that just as each word has its own meaning, so does each word part. Explain that adding a word part to a word changes the meaning of the word. Write the prefix *un-* on the chalkboard. Say: *Un- is a prefix, which means that it can be added to the beginning of a word. Un- means “not,” “against,” or “opposite.”* Then write the word *happy* on the chalkboard. Show students how adding *un-* to the word creates a new meaning. Then provide students with dictionaries and ask students to turn to page 26 in their books. Point out the word *unacceptable*, and then ask students to look up the definition for *acceptable*. Ask: *Without looking up the definition for unacceptable, who can tell me what this word means?* (Students should respond that *unacceptable* means “not welcome” or “not pleasing.”) Follow this model for the words *uncertain* and *undeniable*, found on page 27.

## EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS

Direct students' attention to the photograph of Tony Romo on page 23 and ask students how it reflects the title of the chapter. (Students should indicate that Tony is sitting on the sidelines in the picture.) Have students discuss Tony's body language and what it says about his feelings. (Students may respond that he looks upset or dejected to be sitting on the sidelines.) Ask: *How does this attitude reflect the information in the chapter?* (Students should say that Tony wanted to be the starting quarterback, but that he had to wait his turn and prove himself before he could leave the sidelines.)

## EXAMINING QUOTES

Read the second quote on page 12 aloud to students and ask them to think about what this quote says about Tony's personality. Have students independently brainstorm adjectives to describe Tony and ask students to write a paragraph about his personality.

## WRITING PRACTICE

Ask students to read the Cross-Currents on page 47 titled “Football and Thanksgiving.” Ask students if their Thanksgiving experiences typically include football. Then ask students to think about other traditions that relate to certain holidays. Have students write a paragraph about a holiday tradition that they enjoy. (Students may write about eating hot dogs and attending a town parade on the Fourth of July or making pan de muerto on Dia de los Muertos.) Ask student volunteers to read their paragraphs to facilitate a discussion about how some traditions are developed and what they mean.



## TROY POLAMALU by Jim Whiting

### CHAPTER 1: SUPER BOWL CHAMPION

Prior to Super Bowl XL, Seattle Seahawks defensive Etric Pruitt imitated Troy Polamalu, strong safety for the Pittsburgh Steelers, during practice to help his quarterback learn Troy's unique moves. Troy's athleticism and versatility make him a threat to opposing teams' offenses on almost every play. Nicknamed the "Tasmanian Devil" for his constant motion, Troy is famous for the long, dark curls that protrude from his helmet and for his fierceness on the field. Despite the Seahawks' careful preparation for Troy, the Steelers won the game 21–10.



### CHAPTER 2: TEN YEARS IN TENMILE

Troy Polamalu Aumua was born outside Los Angeles on April 19, 1981. As a boy, he often got into trouble. He began to turn his life around, however, while visiting family in Tenmile, Oregon. Troy fell in love with the outdoors and decided to stay there with his aunt and uncle. Troy also started playing sports. He excelled in basketball, baseball, and football during his years at Douglas High School. His exceptional football skills earned the attention of college recruiters.

ABC

### CHAPTER 3: TROY THE USC TROJAN

Troy's abilities impressed Paul Hackett, head coach at the University of Southern California (USC), and he offered Troy a scholarship. Troy quickly made an impression as a hard-hitting player, and he played a lot during his freshman year. Though Troy was talented, USC struggled. A new head coach led the team in a new direction as they entered the 2002 season, Troy's senior year. They finished the season with a 7–1 record and went to the Orange Bowl. Troy pulled a muscle during a practice and could not play, but USC easily defeated Iowa State 38–17.

### CHAPTER 4: RISING TO THE TOP

During the 2003 NFL draft, the Pittsburgh Steelers picked Troy as a safety in the first round. At first, Troy struggled to learn the Steelers' complex defensive strategies, but he still won Pittsburgh's Joe Greene Great Performance Award, which goes to the top rookie on the team. In 2004, a new defensive coordinator and a new quarterback helped the Steelers to a 15–1 record. In 2005, Troy and the Steelers began a season that led Super Bowl XL against Seattle, which they won 21–10.



### CHAPTER 5: A BRIGHT FUTURE



The Steelers struggled in 2006, but Troy had another stellar year. In 2007, Troy legally changed his last name to Polamalu, and the Steelers offered him a \$30 million contract extension through 2011. The Steelers performed better in 2007, achieving a 10–6 record, but they lost in the playoffs. Though Troy is an aggressive, hard-hitting player, he is calm and soft-spoken off the field. He helps organizations such as the Harry Panos Fund, which he founded with his wife to help veterans returning from the Iraq War, and the United Way, among others.