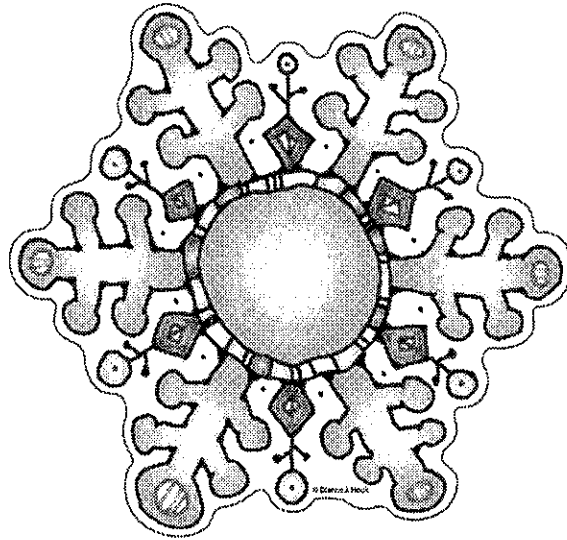


Name _____

Snow Day #6



- Read "Snow Expert Brings Racecourse to Life for Olympic Skiers"
- Answer 4 comprehension questions from article
 - Write about your Snow Day
 - Complete Number Grid Math Puzzle

Snow expert brings racecourse to life for Olympic skiers

By Washington Post, adapted by Newsela staff on 01.05.18

Word Count 482

Level 520L

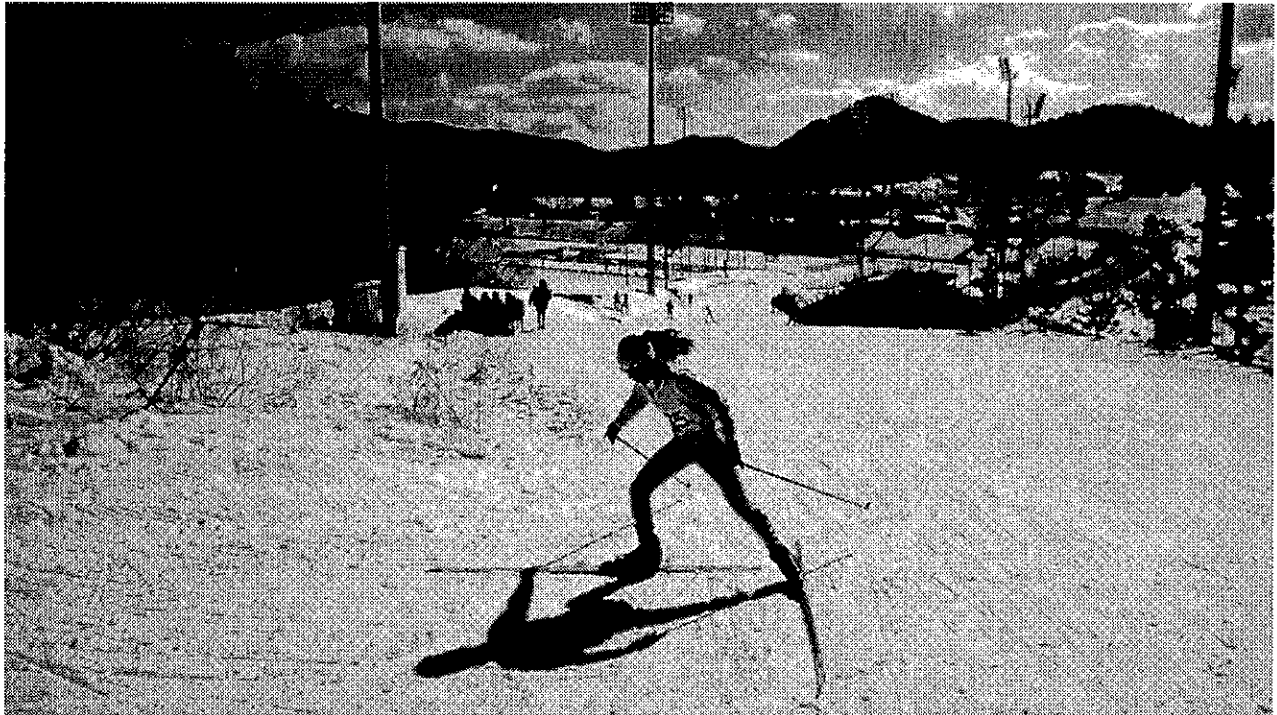


Image 1: A skier races during an event at the Alpensia Cross-Country Centre on February 14, 2017, in Pyeongchang-gun, South Korea. This is where the 2018 Winter Olympics will be held. Photo by Cameron Spencer/Getty Images.

Tom Johnston is a cowboy. He raises cattle on a ranch in Wyoming. Sometimes, though, he has another job.

Last month, Johnston left his ranch. He said goodbye to his wife and his cows. Then he made a 20-hour journey to South Korea, a country in Asia. Johnston will spend the next two months there. His job is to care for a mountain.

Johnston knows a lot about snow. He is in charge of getting a ski course ready. It will be used in the upcoming Winter Olympics. Johnston works with the snow on the course. He makes sure the jumps and turns are smooth. He has an important title, too. It is "chief of race for ski events."

"A Magician With Snow"

Johnston's job is not simply moving snow around. It is not a chore, like snow-shoveling. It is more like bringing the mountain to life. Johnston gets a plan for the race course. Then he has to make it a reality.

"Tommy is a magician with snow," said Steven Nyman. He is an American skier and three-time Olympian.

Johnston laughs at that. But professional skiers agree. They say they can tell the difference between a course that Johnston made and all the others.

"He knows how to put in the time it takes to make the snow good," said Travis Ganong, another skier. He is hoping to compete in his second Olympic Games this year.

"That's why he's the best in the business," Ganong says. "Every course he's always done, it's way better than everywhere else we go."

Fast But Not Too Fast

For Johnston, the real challenge is understanding the snow and the weather. Johnston wants a course that is fast. But it cannot be too fast. If it is, someone could get hurt.

Johnston hopes for cold weather with just the right amount of moisture. He wants snow that sticks. However, he hates when it really snows!

"I don't like natural snow," Johnston said. "You can't control it," he said. Instead, he prefers man-made snow. It can be blasted out of machines along his racecourses.

Ranching Is His Real Job

Johnston skied a lot growing up. He started coaching after college. That's how he started crafting courses and preparing the snow.

All that time, preparing racecourses was just a way to make money. It's a passion, he said. But it's not like cattle ranching. Ranching is his real job.

"Every year I was like, 10 more cows and I won't have to coach anymore," Johnston said.

Still, he works hard at both jobs. When he's on the ranch or on the mountain, he works very long days.

The mountain is not totally ready until the first race begins. Until then, Johnston will spend every hour making it perfect.

Quiz

1 Read the section "A Magician With Snow."

Select the sentence from the section that BEST shows what Olympic skiers think about Johnston's work.

- (A) Johnston's job is not simply moving snow around.
- (B) It is more like bringing the mountain to life.
- (C) "Tommy is a magician with snow," said Steven Nyman
- (D) He is hoping to compete in his second Olympic Games this year.

2 Which paragraph from the section "Ranching Is His Real Job" BEST explains how Johnston got involved with making racecourses?

- (A) Johnston skied a lot growing up. He started coaching after college. That's how he started crafting courses and preparing the snow.
- (B) All that time, preparing racecourses was just a way to make money. It's a passion, he said. But it's not like cattle ranching. Ranching is his real job.
- (C) "Every year I was like, 10 more cows and I won't have to coach anymore," Johnston said.
- (D) The mountain is not totally ready until the first race begins. Until then, Johnston will spend every hour making it perfect.

3 Finish the sentence below.

One MAIN idea of the article is that _____.

- (A) Tom Johnston's passion is taking care of cattle on his ranch.
- (B) Tom Johnston is an expert at preparing ski courses.
- (C) Tom Johnston works long hours at two different jobs.
- (D) Tom Johnston has to make sure that racecourses are not too fast.

4 What is the MAIN idea of the section "A Magician With Snow"?

- (A) Johnston spends a lot of time making a plan for moving snow.
- (B) Nyman and Ganong are professional Olympic skiers.
- (C) It is very difficult to prepare the snow on Olympic ski courses.
- (D) Johnston is very good at getting ski courses ready for the Olympics.

Name _____

Math
Number Grid Puzzles

Name: _____
Date: _____

Use your number grid counting patterns in order to complete the number grid puzzles below.

