

## Unit 4: Winning at Any Cost

### Ben Johnson's Olympic Journey

#### Keywords

bill	competition	deliver	increase	mention
observe	plus	rate	root	status

In the big city of Toronto in Canada, there was a sprinter named Ben Johnson. Ben was known for his speed, and many people in his town recognized him for his running skills. Ben was born in Jamaica but came to Canada as a boy. Moving to a new country was hard for Ben, but running made him feel at home. Running was not just a sport for Ben; it was a way to make new friends and feel strong. He loved to run more than anything. Every day, Ben thought about running. He dreamed of running faster than anyone else. Since he was a young boy, Ben had one big dream: to run in the Olympic Games. The Olympics is a very important **competition** where athletes from all over the world come together to see who is the best. Ben's parents worked hard to pay the **bills** for Ben's training. They believed in Ben's dream, even when paying the **bills** was hard. They wanted to see him be successful. Their support showed Ben that with hard work and love, big dreams can come true.

Ben worked very hard every day. He would get up early in the morning and **observe** other runners, learning from their techniques. Ben knew that to be the best, he had to learn from the best. Watching others was his way of getting better. Every runner Ben watched taught him something new. He used these lessons to improve his speed. He trained for many hours, always trying to run faster. His coach would time him and tell him his **rate** of running. Ben and his coach worked closely together. His coach's advice was very important to him. With every practice, Ben got a little faster. He felt proud of his hard work.

In 1988, something exciting happened. For the first time, Ben was going to compete on the world's biggest sports stage. It was a dream come true for him. Ben went to Seoul, South Korea, to run in the Olympics. The Olympics were held in Seoul that year, a city known for its amazing sights and friendly people. Ben was amazed by everything he saw. Seoul was a big and beautiful city, and Ben had never been to a place like that before. He was very excited but also nervous. Feeling nervous is normal for athletes before a big race. But Ben tried to stay calm. He remembered all his hard training. This was his chance to show the world how fast he could run. Ben was going to run in the 100-meter race. This race is very famous because it is so fast. Runners must run as fast as they can for a short distance. People from all over the world watch this race.

Before the race, Ben and his coach talked about their plan. They had a special way of running that they hoped would help Ben win. They thought this could be the **root** of Ben's success, but they had also heard about other good runners, and they knew the **competition** would be hard.

When the day of the race came, Ben felt ready. He stood at the start line, waiting for the signal to start. When the signal sounded, Ben ran as fast as he could. He could hear the crowd cheering, and he pushed himself to run even faster. Ben crossed the finish line first! He had won the race. Ben was so happy, and so were all the people from Canada who had come to watch him. After the race, Ben was given a gold medal. This medal was very special. It showed that Ben was the fastest runner.

But then, something surprising happened. The Olympic officials said that Ben had taken a drug that made him run faster. This drug was not allowed in the Olympics. It is important in sports to be fair and not take drugs that can help you win. This is called following the rules.

Because Ben had not followed the rules, he had to give back his medal. This is called being **disqualified**. To be **disqualified** means you are no longer the winner because you did not follow the rules. Ben had to **deliver** the medal back. To **deliver** means to return something to where it belongs. People in Canada and all around the world talked about what happened. They **mentioned** Ben's name in newspapers and on TV. To **mention** means to talk about something. Some people were sad for Ben, and others were disappointed that Ben lost his **status** as the world's fastest runner. After this, Ben's **status** changed. **Status** means how people see you. Before, people saw Ben as a champion, but now they were not sure. Some people were upset that he had taken a drug to run faster.

Ben's story made people think more about the rules in sports. The Olympic officials decided to **increase** the number of tests for drugs. To **increase** means to make more. They wanted to make sure that all athletes were following the rules. Ben's story is important because it teaches us about following the rules. It shows that winning is not always the most important thing. Following the rules and doing your best is very important.

Many people dream of winning. But winning the right way matters more. This means not cheating or breaking the rules. Sports are not just about being the fastest or the strongest. They are also about respect, for both the rules and other people. In the end, Ben's story is a lesson for all athletes. It teaches us to play fair in sports and in life. **Plus** it reminds us that how we play the game is just as important as winning. Playing fair means everyone has the same chance to win. No one should use tricks or shortcuts to be first. Sometimes, we might feel like winning is everything. But how we achieve our goals is what really counts. How we play the game is just as important as winning. Ben's story is remembered by many people because it shows that being true and honest is the best way to be in sports and everything we do.

## Questions

1. Where was Ben Johnson born?
  - A) Canada
  - B) United States
  - C) South Korea
  - D) Jamaica
2. What was Ben's dream?
  - A) To run in the Olympic Games
  - B) To visit Seoul
  - C) To work as a coach
  - D) To be a famous actor
3. Where did the 1988 Olympics take place?
  - A) Toronto
  - B) Jamaica
  - C) Seoul
  - D) New York
4. What race did Ben run in?
  - A) 100-meter race
  - B) Marathon
  - C) 200-meter race
  - D) Relay race
5. Why was Ben excited and nervous?

- A) He was visiting a big city.
  - B) It was his first time on a plane.
  - C) He had the chance to show how fast he could run.
  - D) He was going to meet famous athletes.
6. What did Ben and his coach hope would help him win?
- A) A new pair of shoes
  - B) Good weather
  - C) Cheering from friends
  - D) A special way of running
7. What did Ben win in the race?
- A) A trophy
  - B) A certificate
  - C) A gold medal
  - D) A ribbon
8. Why did Ben have to give back his medal?
- A) He was late to the race.
  - B) He broke a rule.
  - C) He did not finish the race.
  - D) He took a drug that was not allowed.
9. What changed for Ben after the race?
- A) His birthday
  - B) His status
  - C) His favorite sport
  - D) His coach
10. What is the lesson from Ben's story?
- A) Winning is everything.
  - B) Following the rules is important.
  - C) Running is the best sport.
  - D) Seoul is a big city.

## Vocabulary Review

**bill:** a piece of paper that tells you how much money you need to pay for something  
Example: *Ben's parents worked hard to pay the **bills** for Ben's training.* (Paragraph 1)

**competition:** a contest where people try to be the best at something  
Example: *The Olympics is a very important **competition** where athletes from all over the world come together to see who is the best.* (Paragraph 1)

**deliver:** to take or return something to a place or person  
Example: *Ben had to **deliver** the medal back.* (Paragraph 7)

**increase:** to make something larger or more in number  
Example: *The Olympic officials decided to **increase** the number of tests for drugs.* (Paragraph 8)

**mention:** to talk or write about something or someone, usually briefly  
Example: *They **mentioned** Ben's name in newspapers and on TV.* (Paragraph 7)

**observe:** to watch something carefully to learn

Example: *He would get up early in the morning and **observe** other runners, learning from their techniques.* (Paragraph 2)

**plus:** a word used to add something extra or to say “and also.”

Example: ***Plus** it reminds us that how we play the game is just as important as winning.* (Paragraph 9)

**rate:** the speed or frequency of something happening

Example: *His coach would time him and tell him his **rate** of running.* (Paragraph 2)

**root:** the main reason or cause of something

Example: *They thought this could be the **root** of Ben’s success, but they had also heard about other good runners, and they knew the competition would be hard.* (Paragraph 4)

**status:** the social or professional position of someone or something in relation to others

Example: *Some people were sad for Ben, and others were disappointed that Ben lost his **status** as the world’s fastest runner.* (Paragraph 7)