

Wilma Unlimited



Unit Study

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Bible

Philippians 4:13

“I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13

Discuss how Wilma overcame many struggles in order to achieve the things she did (walking, running, going to school, and attending college on a full basketball scholarship, going to the Olympics, and winning three gold medals). We also know that Wilma attended church, so perhaps she thought of this scripture. You may want to have your student memorize Philippians 4:13.

Comparing the Christian Life to the Athlete

There are many instances in the New Testament where Paul compares the Christian life to the athlete. Here are some verses for study:

I Corinthians 9:24-25

II Timothy 4:7-8 (fight literally means box)

Philippians 3:14

Philippians 2:16

Hebrews 12:1

Social Studies

Geography:

Mark Rome, Italy on a map. This is where the 1960 Olympics Wilma participated in were held. Explain that the Olympics are held in a different city each time. Your older student may enjoy making an Olympics map.

If you have an extra map of the world, let him compile some research stating which year and where each Olympics since 1960 has been held. Allow him to make

some torches and place them (with the year on them) in the different countries.

Setting Goals:

You may want to use this story as a springboard for discussion on setting goals. A few quotable quotes: "Shoot for the moon, even if you miss, you will still land among the stars" and "If you aim at nothing, you will be sure to hit it." The Bible reminds us, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

What goals does your student have for his life? For this school year? If you want, take some time together and set some goals (this could be for anything: chores, school, friends, Bible reading, relationships with siblings).

Help your student create a plan of tangible ways to reach his goals (small steps that will get him closer to the big step). For instance, if your student's goal is to get along better with his sister, think of things he could (and should) be doing each day to foster that relationship. Make a chart if you want and map his journey giving him a sticker or a stamp every time he gets a little closer to his goal.

History of Basketball:

Basketball was invented by James Naismith in the United States in 1891 (add to your timeline if you wish) and by the mid-1900s, it had become the world's most popular indoor sport!

Naismith was a P.E. instructor who was asked to create a team sport that could be played indoors during the winter. Naismith's "basketball" was really a soccer ball and his "goals" were two peach baskets which were attached to the gym's balcony railing. After Naismith's class played the game, he recorded the original 13 rules of basketball. The rules appeared in the school newspaper in 1892 and soon after basketball was being played everywhere: high schools, colleges, YMCA, and professional teams.

If you think your student would enjoy this activity, spend some time creating a new game. Determine if it will be an indoor or outdoor sport, how many players are needed, what equipment should be used, and write 13 rules. If you are able, try rounding up enough people and play!

Language Arts

Biography:

Explain what a biography is (the true story of someone's life written by another person). You may also want to include a discussion of autobiography (the true story of someone's life written by him/herself). Wilma Unlimited is a biography. Have your older child write a brief biography about anyone she chooses. You could also read a longer biography (or autobiography) together as a read aloud (or assign it as independent reading for your older student). One other option would be to have your student write her own autobiography. Some ideas to include could be:

- *birth facts (hospital, weight, height, eye/hair color, length, parents' names, etc.)
- *hobbies/interests
- *family (sisters, brothers, mom, dad, grandparents, pets, etc.)
- *favorites (favorite color, favorite food, favorite anything!)
- *school life/church life
- *friends

Art

Medium:

Look at the different pictures. Does your student notice anything different about these illustrations from any other book we've read? (The paintings are over top of actual photographs).

The paintings in this book were created with acrylics, watercolor, and gouache (pronounced "gwash") on watercolor paper. Gouache is a paint pigment mixed with water and gum. It is a watercolor type medium, but it is opaque, meaning you can't see the paper through it. Ordinary watercolor allows the paper to show through.

The backgrounds were composed and photographed by David Diaz and Cecelia Zieba-Diaz.

Talk about how the illustrator of this book chose two different kinds of methods for his illustrations, one with a brush and one with a camera. Look at the difference. Explain to them how one of the joys of being an artist is that you get to do what YOU want to. You create whatever ideas are in your head!

Let your student scrapbook a page using paper they have painted on first, then take them outside and have them each pick something outdoors to take a picture of. Using Print Shop, crop the picture to make it interesting (such as zooming in on a picture of a flower or taking a picture looking up into a tree) and print out their picture as an 8 x 10. Then, give them half a sheet of paper and let them paint a picture and when it is dry glue it on top of their photograph.

Science

Strengthening Our Bodies:

Talk about how Wilma fought through pain and worked hard to regain the use of her leg, even when the doctors has said that she would never walk again. Also, when she was at the Olympics she hurt her ankle just after she arrived in Rome (where the Olympics were at that year), but she didn't let that stop her. Even though it was still swollen and painful she didn't let her hurt ankle keep her from fulfilling her dream. She went on to win all three races she ran that day!

Use this to talk about keeping our bodies healthy and exercising to get stronger. You may even want to add a small exercise routine (even a 15 minute walk) as part of your school day.

Discuss how Olympic athletes work and train almost daily to get into the best shape they can and to do the best they can possibly do at their specific sport. For an add-along, read *Greg Louganis* (mentioned below).

Immune System:

If your student has not studied the human body, you may want to introduce the idea of systems (digestive, circulatory, etc.) and explain what a cell is before teaching this lesson.

The immune system is a system within the human body consisting of cells, molecules, and tissues that help defend the body against harmful invaders (including disease). The cells, molecules and tissues work together to fight infection when poison enters the body. The cells that cause your body to respond (fight) are lymphocytes, antigen-presenting cells, and other white blood cells.

Lymphocytes--

These include special white blood cells which originate in the bone marrow (blood forming tissue in the center of a bone) like other white blood cells. Different lymphocytes have different functions including attacking invaders and fighting infections by working through the body's lymph nodes.

Antigen-presenting Cells--

These cells gang up on foreign substances and digest them.

Other White Blood Cells--

There are four other types of white blood cells that help aid in immunity. Their main job is to engulf and digest poison that enters the body, killing parasites, and are associated with allergic reactions.

The following parts of the body have a role in immunity (your student may want to make a diagram labeling these parts):

Tonsils

Lymph Nodes (all throughout the body)

Thymus

Bone Marrow

Spleen

Lymphatic Vessels

Premature Birth:

Babies are ready to be born about 40 weeks from the first day of their mother's last menstrual cycle. If a baby is born three or more weeks before his due date, he is considered premature (about 10% of all babies born qualify into this category-- you could make a math lesson out of this).

A preemie (premature baby) has had less time to develop in the womb. Discuss this with your student. What could be the effect of having less time to prepare?

What if he was told it was time to go out to the car before he was ready (dressed)? And when he got outside he realized not only was he not dressed, but it was snowing! What happens to a cake that hasn't baked long enough? When a baby comes into the world before his body is ready, he is at risk for developmental and medical problems. What were some of the problems Wilma faced that were possibly due to her premature birth? How was she able to overcome them?

Applied Math

Counting:

Count all of Wilma's brothers and sisters.

Figuring Wilma's Age:

How old was Wilma when she got sick? (5) How old was she when she sent the brace back? (12) So how many years did she wear the brace? (7) Eight years after she mailed her brace back she went to the Olympics. How old was she then? (20)

Just for Fun

Family Time:

Have a special Family Night on Friday and watch Cool Runnings or You're the Greatest Charlie Brown. (Another choice would be Chariots of Fire).

Additional Olympic Unit Study Ideas

contributed by Esther in AL

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Olympic flag had 5 rings-each ring stands for a part of the world: Europe, Asia, the Americas, Australia, and Africa. Choose one country from each area and research the following facts:

- flag
- national anthem
- climate

- language
- location

Place a small flag on each chosen country.

LANGUAGE ARTS

List-making/Vocabulary

List Olympic events and describe each briefly (this will vary depending on whether you are following the summer or winter games)

Letter-writing

Write a friendly letter to an Olympic athlete. Work on this throughout the week. Review parts of a letter, punctuation, and paragraph/sentence formation.

ART

Discuss symbolism of Olympic flag, Olympic medals, and Olympic flame. Find symbols in everyday life and discuss their meaning. (Examples-street signs, Christian symbols-cross, fish, star, Jewish star, etc...)

MATH

Measurement-meters or feet. Show student common metric measurements and how these compare to English measurements. Discuss that most of the world uses the metric system. How does this play a part in the Olympic track and field events?

Time-Discuss and find the different time zones for each of your chosen countries, for your home, and for the city where the games are being held

SCIENCE

Weather-chart the weather in the city where the games are each day and where you live. Discuss differences between C and F.

Climate-Discuss how the climate in a country influences their activities.

Safety and Special equipment-discuss what type of clothing is needed for a favorite activity and why? Why should a bobsledder wear a helmet? Why do you wear a helmet when on a bicycle?

CHARACTER - Good sportsmanship. Follow one athlete from each chosen country for the week in their event/events and discuss how they are doing and how it would feel to be an Olympian. Discuss winning a gold medal versus doing your personal best, but still not winning a medal. How does God view us? Will He love us more if we win a medal?

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