

The Terry Fox Story

A Reading A-Z Level Q Leveled Book
Word Count: 992

Connections

Writing

Which five words do you think best describe Terry Fox? Explain your reasoning for choosing each word using details from the text.

Social Studies

Research to learn more about the Terry Fox Foundation. Write a brochure for your class highlighting some of the group's recent accomplishments.

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LEVELED BOOK • Q

The Terry Fox Story



**Multi
Level
Q•T•W**

Written by Michael Sandler
Illustrated by Gabhor Utomo

www.readinga-z.com

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Focus Question

What does Terry Fox's story teach readers about overcoming challenges?

Words to Know

athlete	prosthetic
challenge	province
disease	research
limping	treatments
marathon	

Cover: Terry Fox runs with a police escort through Ontario in July 1980.

Title page: Terry dries off after a swim in Jackfish Lake in Ontario.

Page 3: Terry talks to reporters, with his parents by his side, at the end of his amazing run.

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Correlation

LEVEL Q

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Reading Recovery	30
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The Fox family relaxes together. With Terry, from left, are his father Rolly, brother Darrell, mother Betty, and sister Judith.

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One Tough Kid

Terry Fox was born in 1958 in Winnipeg, Canada. As a young boy, he loved to play sports and games that went on for days. Terry was stubborn about finishing any project, no matter how long it took.

Though he wasn't big or strong, Terry loved sports. He played baseball and soccer with his little brother, Darrell, and his best friend, Doug Alward.

Terry earned a spot on his eighth-grade basketball team, but it wasn't easy. He was barely 1.5 meters (5 ft.) tall and not a very good player when he began. Still, through lots of hard work, Terry made the team.

High School and Beyond

Terry kept getting better at basketball while playing for his high school. In his senior year, he even shared an **Athlete** of the Year award with his buddy Doug.

Terry also got good grades in school. He wasn't sure what he wanted to be in the future, but he knew he wanted to keep playing basketball.

He went to college at Simon Fraser University, which had the best basketball team in British Columbia. Making the team would be another **challenge**, but that was just fine with Terry.



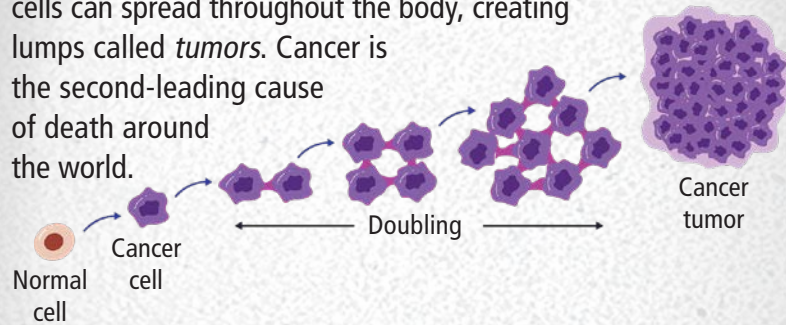
Things Crash

Terry earned a spot on the team, but then things started to go wrong. In November of his first year at college, he crashed his car. Terry wasn't hurt badly in the crash, but his knee felt sore. He didn't tell anyone about the pain. He thought his knee was hurting from basketball practice.

By late winter, however, he was **limping**. His mother took him to the doctor. The news was terrible. The source of Terry's leg pain was a rare form of cancer. The cause was unknown, but Terry had a type of cancer that could spread quickly and be deadly.

What Is Cancer?

Cancer is the name for a group of diseases that cause a person's body cells to grow out of control. The disease can start almost anywhere—in bones or even blood. Then, cancer cells can spread throughout the body, creating lumps called *tumors*. Cancer is the second-leading cause of death around the world.



Dr. Nicki Cain (center) and Dr. Deanna Mitchell, meet with two-year-old cancer patient, Austin Arwood, at a hospital in Michigan. When Cain was a teenager, Dr. Mitchell helped cure her of cancer.

Terry was angry and fearful when he first heard the news. He went through many different feelings as his life quickly changed. He moved into the hospital, and his right leg was removed above the knee. Doctors hoped this would keep the cancer from spreading. No one could say for sure, however, that the cancer wouldn't return.

Terry faced new challenges. He had to learn how to walk using a **prosthetic** leg. Months of cancer **treatments** followed. The treatments weakened his body and caused his hair to fall out. While working through these changes, Terry learned to let go of his anger. He met so many other cancer patients in the hospital that he realized he wasn't alone in his struggle.



Terry met many other people who battled cancer, including ten-year-old Greg Scott, who lost his left leg to the disease.



A New and Different Life

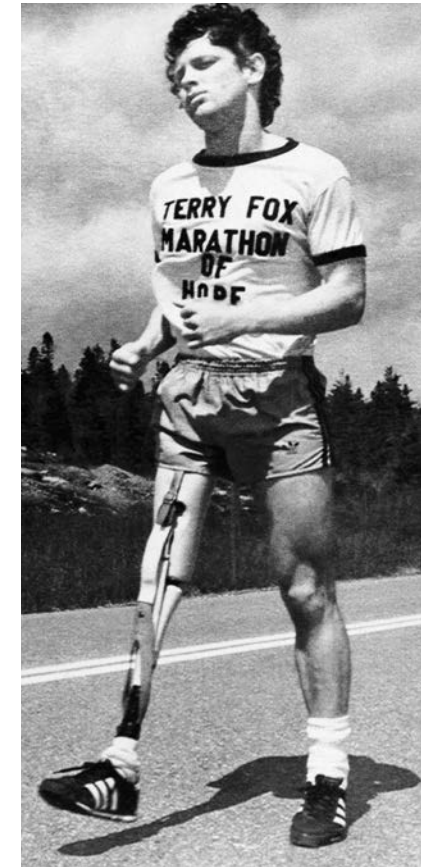
Terry began his new life. He discovered he could still enjoy sports, though often in new ways. He played wheelchair basketball. To strengthen his arms, he pushed his wheelchair up two mountains in British Columbia.

Next, Terry tried running, which was awkward at first with a prosthetic leg. Soon, however, he got the hang of it and began regular training. At his first race, Terry came in last. Still, he felt happy. He had learned that cancer couldn't stop him from doing what he loved.

A Plan Unfolds

Like other cancer survivors, Terry faced the chance that his cancer could return. He came up with a plan to help in the search for a cure for the **disease**. He was going to run across Canada. As he ran, people could give money for cancer **research**.

A huge run such as this one would be a lot for anyone to take on. For Terry, it was just another challenge, and he carefully planned the trip. He would call his run the Marathon of Hope. His friend Doug would go along with him, driving a van. On April 12, 1980, the Marathon of Hope began in St. John's, Newfoundland, in eastern Canada.



Terry's artificial leg was one of the best available at the time. It still caused him a lot of pain when he ran, though.

Running Across Canada

The run was hard from the start. The days were long, and the weather was freezing cold. At rest breaks, Terry and Doug huddled in the van, making snacks. The narrow country roads Terry ran on were dangerous to share with drivers.

Every day Terry's legs hurt, and he quickly grew sunburned. Sometimes, Terry showed up in a town exhausted, and no one was there to meet him. Other times, whole towns lined the streets to cheer him.



Terry studies a map while taking a break in the van.

Growing Support

Terry crossed **province** after province, running the distance of a **marathon** each day. Each week of running was draining. Terry's spirits were lifted when his younger brother, Darrell, joined him on the trip. Growing crowds also made him happy. By late June, dozens of television stations and newspapers were covering his run.

The entire country began to follow his journey. In Toronto, Ontario, thousands of people lined the streets as he ran through the city. Money for cancer research was streaming in.



Terry was given a hero's welcome at the Toronto City Hall on July 11, 1980.



Terrible News

Then, on September 1, after 5,300 kilometers (3,300 mi.), the Marathon of Hope came to a sudden end. Terry had been feeling sick, and in Thunder Bay, Ontario, he stopped to visit doctors. They made an awful discovery. The cancer was back. Terry wanted to keep running, but it was impossible. He had to fly home to get care.



Terry's death shocked and saddened many people across Canada and the world. A large crowd gathered for his funeral in Vancouver.

Terry's Race Goes On

In the end, Terry wasn't able to beat the disease, and on June 28, 1981, he passed away. Although Terry never finished the Marathon of Hope, the run met his goals, raising an amazing \$24 million. Millions of people learned about the need to find cures for different types of cancer.

Terry's fight against cancer didn't end with his death. Today, the Terry Fox Foundation continues to raise money. Terry's story still moves people to support the cause.

Many people take part in yearly Terry Fox runs—one-day events that raise money for cancer research. These runs have taken place in Canada and countries all over the world. So far, the foundation has raised more than half a billion dollars to fund cancer research.

The battle against the disease still isn't won, but huge progress has been made. Terry's run helped people see the difference a single person can make in the world.



Runners take part in a Terry Fox run in Stanley Park, Vancouver, to honor Terry's memory and raise money for cancer research.

Glossary

- athlete** (*n.*) a person trained in sports, games, or other activities that require strength, speed, and skill (p. 5)
- challenge** (*n.*) a test of one's ability to do something (p. 5)
- disease** (*n.*) a condition, other than one caused by injury, that changes the way a body normally functions; an illness (p. 10)
- limping** (*v.*) walking in an uneven manner, often because of a leg or foot injury (p. 6)
- marathon** (*n.*) a long-distance running race that is 26 miles (about 42 km) long (p. 12)
- prosthetic** (*adj.*) of or relating to an artificial replacement of a body part that is missing (p. 8)
- province** (*n.*) any one of the largest areas that some countries are divided into (p. 12)
- research** (*n.*) a detailed study of a subject, especially to discover new information or to find facts (p. 10)
- treatments** (*n.*) medical care given for illnesses, injuries, or conditions (p. 8)