

the ARTICLE (for instructors)

The Tallest Basketball Player Ever

Almost everywhere that Kenny George goes, someone stops him for an autograph or a picture. At airports and restaurants, passersby stare and point, too. His athletic ability on the college basketball court is one reason he stands out. In twenty minutes of play time in each game, he averages 12.4 points, 8.8 rebounds, and 4.6 blocks. However, George primarily gets noticed in any crowd because he's 7 feet 7 inches (or 234 centimeters) and 360 pounds (or 163 kilograms). That makes him the tallest player ever.

It may seem very cool to slam dunk without jumping, but George faces a number of unusual difficulties. For starters, he's never learned to drive because he can't fit behind the steering wheel of a car. And whenever the team goes on a road trip, the bus company has to remove two seats so George can comfortably sit. Moreover, he sits on the floor of many of his class lectures because the desks are far too small.

George's pituitary gland releases too much growth hormone, which is a condition known as gigantism. Andre the Giant, who was one of the top pro-wrestlers in the 1980s, is likely the most notable athlete in recent years with the same condition. Gigantism has made the twenty-two year old George very self-conscious. He hates giving interviews to reporters, where he often gets asked about his health, his size, and his condition. (He didn't play much in his sophomore year because of knee problems.) George's teammates have become protective of him as a result, and they often tell people to back off and leave their friend alone.

In addition to his passion for basketball, George also has a keen interest in graphic design and animation. He has wished he weren't so tall, and he eventually hopes for a career in comics or animation. But first he wants to play pro-basketball for the NBA.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.

the ARTICLE (for students)

The Tallest Basketball Player Ever

Almost everywhere that Kenny George goes, someone stops him for an autograph or a picture. At airports and restaurants, passersby stare and point, too. a) _____.

In twenty minutes of play time in each game, he averages 12.4 points, 8.8 rebounds, and 4.6 blocks. However, George primarily gets noticed in any crowd because he's 7 feet 7 inches (or 234 centimeters) and 360 pounds (or 163 kilograms). That makes him the tallest player ever.

b) _____, but George faces a number of unusual difficulties. For starters, he's never learned to drive because he can't fit behind the steering wheel of a car. And whenever the team goes on a road trip, the bus company has to remove two seats so George can comfortably sit. Moreover,

c) _____.

George's pituitary gland releases too much growth hormone, which is a condition known as gigantism. Andre the Giant, who was one of the top pro-wrestlers in the 1980s, is likely the most notable athlete in recent years with the same condition. d) _____. He hates giving interviews to reporters, where he often gets asked about his health, his size, and his condition. (He didn't play much in his sophomore year because of knee problems.) George's teammates have become protective of him as a result, and they often tell people to back off and leave their friend alone.

In addition to his passion for basketball, George also has a keen interest in graphic design and animation. He has wished he weren't so tall, and he eventually hopes for a career in comics or animation. e) _____.

_____.

Notes:

STEP ONE

Define: What does "gigantism" mean? Can you use it in a sentence? Can you give examples?

STEP TWO

Questions: Read as much of the article as you can in two minutes. Guess the answers to the questions below, then listen to your teacher read the article. Try to confirm your answers.

a.	Which is Kenny George most famous for, his basketball skill or his size?
b.	How tall is Kenny? How much does he weigh?
c.	What are some of the problems he faces?
d.	Why is he so large?
e.	What does Kenny want to do in the future?

STEP THREE

Fill in the Blanks: Listen to your teacher read the article again. Fill in the blanks with the missing words.

STEP FOUR

Summarize: Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

STEP FIVE

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a.	How would you feel if you were Kenny? Please explain.
b.	If you were able to interview Kenny George, what three questions would you ask?
c.	Would you want an extraordinary life if you also had an unusual physical condition that made life difficult?
d.	Some people believe that celebrities, sports stars, politicians, etc. lose their right to privacy. Do you agree?