

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)

steering	moreover	self-conscious	keen	road trip
notable	back off	gigantism	passersby	teammates
averages	interviews	crowd	lectures	sophomore

The Tallest Basketball Player Ever

Almost everywhere that Kenny George goes, someone stops him for an autograph or a picture. At airports and restaurants, (a. _____) 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 (b. _____) 12.4 points, 8.8 rebounds, and 4.6 blocks. However, George primarily gets noticed in any (c. _____) 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 (d. _____) wheel of a car. And whenever the team goes on a (e. _____), the bus company has to remove two seats so George can comfortably sit. (f. _____), he sits on the floor of many of his class (g. _____) because the desks are far too small.

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

In addition to his passion for basketball, George also has a (o. _____) 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.

The Tallest Basketball Player Ever – January 27, 2008

Upper-Intermediate - Vocabulary

STEP ONE

Brainstorm: Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "basketball" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

STEP TWO

Target Word Pool: Find the target words (in bold) with their exact match. How long did it take to find all the words?

moreover	keen	notable	back off	road trip
averages	lectures	sophomore	passersby	self-conscious
back up	unselfconscious avenger	passersby	self-consciously lecherous	backed off
	caned	road trip	lecturing	averaged sophomoric
	mourn over	notable	unnoticed	moreover
passing by		backing off	passed by	roadblock
	sophistry	keenly	bypassed	kenned
self-conscious	moribund			soporific
	sophomores	averages		lectures
keening	road rage	outback	sophomore	noteworthy
	more or less	lectured	self-consciousness	avenge
	road test	lecture	morning	back off
notableness	keen	notably	passerby	road trips
				unselfconsciousness

STEP THREE

Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word. Use a dictionary for any words you don't know, but be sure to check your English-English dictionary, too.

moreover	keen	notable	back off	road trip
averages	lectures	sophomore	passersby	self-conscious
a.	At airports and restaurants, () stare and point at Kenny George.			
b.	In twenty minutes of each basketball game, he () 12.4 points, 8.8 rebounds, and 4.6 blocks.			
c.	Whenever the team goes on a (), the bus company has to remove two seats so George can sit.			
d.	(), he sits on the floor of many of his classes.			
e.	In the (), the desks are far too small.			
f.	Andre the Giant is likely the most () athlete in recent years with the same condition, gigantism.			
g.	Gigantism has made the twenty-two year old George very ().			
h.	He didn't play much in his () year because of knee problems.			
i.	George's teammates often tell people to () and leave their friend alone.			
j.	George also has a () interest in graphic design and animation.			

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STEP FOUR

The Article: 1) Read the article, but don't worry about the missing words. 2) Fill in the blanks with today's vocabulary, followed by all the other words. 3) Read the article again, and circle any unknown words/phrases. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the words or phrases your circled. 4) Answer the questions to check your comprehension.

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 FIVE

Discuss: Write down five vocabulary words from today's article that you want to use.

a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

Now talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Every time you use a vocabulary word, place a check next to it.

a.	Did you like this article?
b.	In addition to the problems listed in the article, what other difficulties do you think Kenny faces?
c.	Do you think Kenny faces discrimination of any kind? How about ridicule?
d.	If you saw a very unusual or different person on the train or in a restaurant, what would you do?

Score yourself:

10 or more times: Fantastic! Be sure to review the words at home.

6-9 times: Pretty good! You're on your way to acquiring today's vocabulary. Try writing your own sentences at home.

5 or less times: Try harder next time! To acquire new vocabulary, you need to use the new words as much as possible.