

Note: The transactional processes suggested in CISCE curriculum are highlighted in grey.

Learning Outcomes

- To visualise the scene described
- To note skillful use of vocabulary to express speed, fearlessness and confidence
- To note the rhyme scheme

Summary: 'When Tillie Rides Her Wheel' is about a young girl who was awarded the best woman cyclist in the world. The vocabulary in the poem plays an important role and helps to portray a fearless, confident, focused cyclist speeding towards victory. The reader is able to visualise a woman cyclist who concentrates only on winning the race. With the skillful use of vocabulary, the reader can almost hear the 'whir' of the bicycle as it speeds past and accelerates towards its goal.

Pre-reading

Ask students:

1. How do you feel when you ride a bicycle?
(Guide them to express their experience and feelings while riding a bicycle.)
2. What do you see along the way when you ride fast?

Tell students that they are going to listen to a poem about a youth who was awarded 'the best woman cyclist in the world'. She was also selected as an undisputed champion and a true pioneer in women's athletics.

READING

Students read to comprehend, and infer the deeper meaning in the poem

Read the first stanza. / Play the audio track and pause after the first stanza.

Tell students

- to underline the words that express speed.
- to circle the words that describes the rider.

Ask students:

What was the colour of the young girl's hair? Is the wheel really able to 'slit' the air? Pick out the word in this stanza that expresses

determination. Why does the poet say that our eyes are 'too slow'? When does the cyclist take 'a dizzying slant'? (When she takes a turn at full speed)

Read the second stanza. / Play the audio track and pause after the first stanza.

Ask students;

Pick out the words that express that the cyclist is confident. Which line shows that the cyclist has accelerated speed? (She swings into the lead.) Why is she able to hold the lead position till the end? (She is highly focused and does

not feel tired while riding.) *Pick out lines to show that this is a close race. What are the senses evoked in the reader? (Sense of sight and sound) Why do the senses of readers "reel"?* (She travels at such speed that keeping pace

with her when in a race is difficult.) *Why do you think there is a 'hush' as the cyclist rides 'her wheel'?* (Spectators are filled with awe while watching this skilful cyclist.)

Post reading

Discuss:

1. What qualities should an athlete possess to be successful? (List these qualities on the board.)

2. Does the cyclist have any of these qualities?

STUDENTS' BOOK ANSWER KEY

When Tillie Rides Her Wheel

Comprehension

- A.**
1. It is a cycling race that takes place on a cycling track.
 2. Her expression is firm which tells us that she is very determined.
 3. She is riding so fast that it appears that the wheel of the cycle is cutting through the wind.
 4. "How cool her nerve!"
 5. Yes. The line, "a maddest race" tells us that the race is a close one.
 6. The speaker feels a sense of awe, wonder and thrill when they see Tillie ride.
- B.**
1. a. The spectacle of Tillie riding a bicycle in a race is being described here.
b. These lines reveal that the speaker feels awe and shock at Tillie's speed and ability.
 2. a. Our eyes are too slow to take in the speed at which she rides.
b. Tillie rides so fast that it seems like she is flying—this prompts the speaker to say these words.
 3. a. The word hush denotes a sudden silence.
b. *Free response*
- C.**
1. "So fast she flies"; "How wild her flight"
The first line reveals Tillie's speed or her ability to cycle so fast.
The second line describes her action as a cyclist—it tells us that in order to ride like that, Tillie must be extraordinary, bold and daring.
 2. The goal is not to just win the event. The larger goal is for her to achieve great things in a field dominated by men. It also refers to winning more freedom for women and encouraging and inspiring them to achieve as much and more than their male counterparts.
Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

Appreciating the Poem

1. A whiz, a whir,
A firm-set face,

So fast she flies
swooping swerve!
Hear the hush

Effects of alliteration—makes certain words stand out, adds rhythm, makes the reader focus on the mood and emotion in the poem and so on

Suggested Answer. Accept any logical answer.

2. The poet uses single words and short phrases and describes the action as it happens. The use of these words and phrases make us understand that she rides so quickly that one can hardly process or fully take in the speed at which she rides. The speaker describes the whole race in this manner, keeping the reader waiting for what comes next. This gives the reader a very clear picture of what is happening, and also gives the feeling that the reader too is in the stands watching the race live.

Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

Vocabulary

1. a mixture of happiness and sadness
2. to be forced to make a certain decision because there are no other choices or possibilities
3. something that should be a secret and yet a lot of people know about it
4. a striking absence of noise or sound that is very noticeable
5. when someone smiles even though they are unhappy

Going further

Free response

QUESTION BANK

When Tillie Rides Her Wheel

A. Answer in brief.

Why is Tillie able to hold the lead position?

Ans: She is highly focused and does not feel tired while riding.

B. Answer in detail.

How does the poet make the readers feel as though they are watching the race?

Ans: The poem, 'Tillie Rides Her Wheel' is about a young girl who was awarded the best woman cyclist in the world. The vocabulary in the poem plays an important role and helps to portray a fearless, confident, focused cyclist speeding towards victory. The reader is able to visualise a woman cyclist who concentrates only on winning the race. With the skillful use of vocabulary, the reader can almost hear the 'whir' of the bicycle as it speeds past and accelerates towards its goal.

C. Choose the correct answer.

And how our senses reel

To see the rush

Hear the hush

When Tillie rides her wheel

Why do you think there is a 'hush' as the cyclist rides 'her wheel'?

- The spectators wait in hushed silence for the victor of this highly competitive race.
- The 'hush' is the sound from the wheels as it rushes past towards the finish line.
- The spectators are filled with awe while watching this skilful cyclist.

Ans: c

D. Read the lines and answer the questions.

A whiz, a whir,

A dazzling blur,

A flash of yellow hair,

A firm-set face,

- What senses are evoked in the reader, in these lines?
- From these lines, what do we get to know about how the cyclist looks?
- Pick out a phrase that indicates that she is determined.

Ans: a. A sense of sight and sound.

b. We get to know that her hair is yellow.

c. 'A firm-set face'

E. Answer in brief. (Think and answer)

1. *How wild her flight,*

And how our senses reel

To see the rush

Why do the spectators' senses reel'?

Ans: She travels at such high speed that keeping pace with her, even when watching the race, is difficult.

2. What qualities of the cyclist does the writer bring out in the poem?

Ans: The cyclist is fearless, confident, focused and speeds towards victory.