

Simone Biles leads U.S. women gymnasts to another world gold

Required Annotations		Student-Created Annotations		Summary / Questions / Reflection	
----------------------	--	-----------------------------	--	----------------------------------	--

Student-created	Required (bold)
-----------------	-----------------

From the moment they arrived in Stuttgart, Germany, the U.S. women's gymnasts, led by the incomparable Simone Biles, made clear they're not letting anything stand in their way of history.

Not the bankruptcy proceedings or general instability of their sport's national governing body, USA Gymnastics. Not even a scoring **snub** from the sport's international governing body itself.

True to form, following a world-best performance in qualifying, Biles and her teammates defied controversy as effortlessly as they defied gravity at the 2019 World Gymnastics Championships Tuesday, October 8 routing the field to claim a fifth consecutive team gold medal and seventh overall.

In the process, Biles, the reigning Olympic and world all-around champion, became the most decorated female gymnast in history, collecting her 21st world championship medal to move past Russia's Svetlana Khorkina. Her haul of gold medals at world championships — which stood at 15 — was already a record. She was expected to add to her tally over the next five days, when she **vied** for her seventh world all-around title and contest medals in all four event finals.

Russia took silver, lagging 5.801 points behind the United States, and Italy was the surprise bronze medalist.

While Biles shouldered the scoring load, it was a four-gymnast effort to claim the team gold. Under the format, each of the eight countries that advanced to the Tuesday team final chose three gymnasts to compete on each of the four events, and all three scores counted, so any athlete's misstep was costly to the group.

Like Biles, 16-year-old Sunisa Lee, the youngest on the squad, competed in all four events for the United States. Just one year removed from junior competition, she finished second to Biles in qualifying to advance to Thursday's all-around competition. With a team gold at stake, she led the Americans on uneven bars but fell and wobbled twice on beam.

Rounding out the U.S. team were Jade Carey, age 19, of Phoenix, who scored well on vault and floor; Kara Eaker, age 16, of Grain Valley, Missouri; and Grace McCallum, age 16, of Isanti, Michigan.

Despite battling her customary nerves at the **outset**, Biles was deservedly proud of her performance, posting the top marks on three of the four events: vault, beam and floor. Yet she gave herself "probably an 8 out of 10," when asked to rank her showing.

As for moving past the long-since retired Khorkina to claim a female-record 21 world championship medals, Biles called it "kind of crazy."

"I think that's really impressive for someone to be able to do that; I guess that's me," Biles said with a smile. "I haven't got a chance to process it yet, but I think we'll do some celebrating tonight for all of it — for the team, for the medal count, for the fifth year in a row."

In her case, she is pursuing a standard that she alone can reach.

Biles made history in Stuttgart on Day 2 of qualifications, having two new skills named for her by becoming the first to successfully land them on the world or Olympic stage: the Biles II on floor, a triple twisting double somersault; and the Biles dismount on beam, a double-twisting, double somersault.

But instead of celebrating Biles' innovation and risk-taking, the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG), in effect, penalized her by deliberately **devaluing** her **unprecedented** beam dismount. Biles made her displeasure clear on social media; USA Gymnastics "respectfully disagreed" via a formal letter.

The federation responded that it didn't want to give lesser gymnasts an incentive for attempting such a difficult, hazardous skill.

"Am I in a league of my own?" Biles said afterward when asked about the snub. "Yes, but that doesn't mean you can't credit me for what I'm doing."

On Tuesday, October 8, Biles chose a slightly safer dismount, with one twist in her double somersault.

Despite McCallum's hiccup on uneven bars and Lee's fall on beam, the Americans extended their lead after each rotation on a day littered with tumbles. They closed the competition with another strength, floor exercise, sending out Lee, Carey and Biles.

By the time Biles closed the competition, the United States had such a hefty lead that she could have taken a nap after her first two tumbling passes and still clinched the team gold. Nonetheless, she dazzled, hitting impossible heights with her triple-double and sticking the landing. Wearing an enormous smile, she tumbled on to her sassy music, as the crowd clapped along.

Biles and Lee return to the competition floor Thursday to contest the prestigious all-around, which consists of the 24 top-scoring gymnasts from qualifications, with a maximum of two per country.

On Wednesday, October 9, the U.S. men contested the team event after an error-strewn qualifying effort, barely making the eight-country cut. They're not expected to medal, lagging well behind top qualifiers Russia, China and Japan.

Questions

1. Read the following two summaries of the article.

Option 1: The U.S. women's team claimed team gold at the 2019 World Gymnastics Championships. Simone Biles led the team at the championships and became the most decorated female gymnast in history. After introducing two new skills, Biles was penalized by the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG) on Day 2 of qualifications. Nevertheless, Simone Biles and Sunisa Lee qualified to move on to the all-around.

Option 2: The U.S. women's team made history at the 2019 World Gymnastics Championships with their fifth consecutive team gold medal. Simone Biles led the group and shattered Svetlana Khorkina's gold medal record. After performing the Biles II on floor and the Biles dismount on beam, Biles was given a controversial penalty, which she hotly contested. Nevertheless, Simone Biles and Sunisa Lee will move on to perform in the all-around.

Which option provides an objective, accurate summary of the article, and why?

- a) Option 1; it faithfully recounts what happened at the world championships and how the U.S. women's team reacted to their win.
 - b) Option 1; it succinctly describes the U.S. women's team and Simone Biles' performance at the world championships without judgment.
 - c) Option 2; it faithfully recounts what happened at the world championships and how the U.S. women's team reacted to their win.
 - d) Option 2; it succinctly describes the U.S. women's team and Simone Biles' performance at the world championships without judgment.
2. Read the following two details from the article.

In the process, Biles, the reigning Olympic and world all-around champion, became the most decorated female gymnast in history, collecting her 21st world championship medal to move past Russia's Svetlana Khorkina.

Biles made history in Stuttgart on Day 2 of qualifications, having two new skills named for her by becoming the first to successfully land them on the world or Olympic stage: the Biles II on floor, a triple twisting double somersault; and the Biles dismount on beam, a double-twisting, double somersault.

Select the option that BEST explains how these details develop a central idea of the article.

- a) They both support the idea that Simone Biles had to overcome controversy at the championships.
 - b) They both support the idea that Simone Biles believes that she is in a league of her own.
 - c) They both contribute to the idea that Simone Biles showed that she is a gymnast without parallel.
 - d) They both contribute to the idea that Simone Biles took on most of the team's scoring load.
3. Which of the following accurately summarizes HOW different groups and individuals feel about the penalty given to Simone Biles?
 - a) The FIG felt hesitant to penalize Simone Biles but felt that they had no choice when she revealed the new dismounts. While Simone Biles was angry with their decision at first, she later came to understand why they did it and chose a simpler routine the next time.
 - b) The FIG felt justified in their decision to give Simone Biles a penalty because they believe that safety and tradition are critical in world championships. While Simone Biles concedes that her new dismounts are dangerous, she still plans to fight the FIG in the near future.
 - c) The FIG felt that the penalty would help to level the playing field for other lesser gymnasts who would otherwise not have a shot against Simone Biles. While Simone Biles agrees that the difficulty level is high, she feels hurt that she is being singled out by the FIG for trying to introduce new dismounts.
 - d) The FIG felt that the penalty was necessary in order to send the message that her new dismounts were dangerous and should not be attempted by other gymnasts. While Simone Biles recognizes that she is likely the only one who can do the dismounts, she feels that she is being unfairly punished.
 4. Which of the following ideas did the author develop the LEAST in this article about the 2019 World Gymnastics Championships?
 - a) the obstacles that the U.S. women's team faced before and during the championship
 - b) the performances by the U.S. women's competitors at the championships
 - c) the records that Simone Biles broke during the championships this year
 - d) the efforts by made the U.S. women's gymnasts other than Simone Biles