

Reading

1 Read the text and decide if each sentence is T (true) or F (false).

- 1 At one stage, Natalia was one of the top 50 players in the world.
- 2 Her first goal in table tennis was to become better than her sister.
- 3 She won her first world title when she was 10 years old.
- 4 She became the youngest ever Paralympic medalist in 2000.
- 5 She has won the Paralympic gold medal four times in a row.
- 6 Nobody else has appeared in both the Paralympics and the Olympics.
- 7 In the London Olympics, she finished in last place.
- 8 She never uses her disability as an excuse when she plays.
- 9 When serving, she throws the ball up using her bat hand.
- 10 She gets upset when people don't talk about her achievements.

(10x2=20)

Listening

2 Listen to these five conversations and choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

- 1 Where does the mini-marathon start?
A at the park C at the football stadium
B at the town hall D at the mall
- 2 What is Pam doing tomorrow evening?
A studying history C playing tennis
B making dinner D practising the violin
- 3 Why does Helen ride her bike to work?
A She isn't able to drive.
B She doesn't own a car.
C She wants to exercise.
D She wants to help the environment.
- 4 What has Kate stopped eating?
A dairy products C meat
B fried food D vegetables
- 5 Why was the football match cancelled?
A The weather was bad.
B Some players were ill.
C One team didn't arrive.
D A referee wasn't available.

(5x3=15)

NATALIA PARTYKA

An Inspirational Athlete



Natalia Partyka is a Polish table tennis player who was born in 1989. So far in her career, she has competed in three Olympic games and reached a world ranking of 48. But what makes Natalia's achievements so incredible is that she was born without a right hand.

Natalia started playing table tennis aged seven, when she followed her older sister to a sports hall in Gdansk. At first, Natalia's motivation was to beat her sister - and that didn't take very long! In fact, just three years after she started playing, aged just 10, she won the World Championship for disabled players! Then, a year later, she competed in her first Paralympics in Sydney in 2000 - becoming the youngest ever Paralympic athlete. She didn't win a medal on that occasion, but at the next Paralympics in Athens in 2004, she won the gold medal in the Class 10 category (for disabled athletes who don't use a wheelchair). Since then, she has won gold in every Paralympics since - in 2008, 2012 and 2016.

But that's not all. Natalia is one of very few athletes who have competed in both the Paralympic Games and the Olympic Games. She has done this three times - in 2008, 2012 and 2016 - and the London Olympics in 2012 was the highlight of her career so far. There, competing against the best able-bodied players in the world, she reached the last 32 of the women's singles competition.

Natalia never expects special treatment because of her disability - and always claims that she doesn't have any disadvantages against able-bodied players. She does have to do some things differently, though. To start a point in table tennis, players must serve by throwing the ball up from the palm of their free hand. Instead, Natalia has to balance the ball at the end of her elbow and throw it up before hitting it with her bat.

All in all, Natalia is a modest person who doesn't look for attention - but she realises how important her success is to athletes with disabilities. "If I'm an inspiration, I can't complain," she said.