

Meet Ntando Mahlangu, PARALYMPIAN

In 2016, aged 14, Ntando Mahlangu, an amputee runner, did what many people his age would love to do: he became a silver medallist at the Paralympics in Rio. Ntando is from South Africa, where, in 2012, he received his first blades - the equipment he wears which helps him run - from Jumping Kids. This organisation gives young people like Ntando the chance to do something they were unable to do before.

In an interview Ntando says his disability has never been a problem for him: 'I was always active.' But before he got his running blades, Ntando couldn't walk for long distances. He played football with his friends, but he was shorter than them 'and sometimes there were disadvantages,' he says. Just four years after getting his blades, however, Ntando was one of the youngest competitors at the Rio Paralympics and he now often takes part in competitions for para-athletes.

Ntando has been very successful. He's won several medals and has broken a world record in his sport. Although he's making excellent progress at the moment, Ntando doesn't like to say much about his talent. 'If I achieve my goals, I always say that I am honoured to do that,' he says. Ntando knows that some sportspeople would love to reach their goals but aren't able to. Ntando could do even better in future Paralympics in Tokyo and Paris. He would love to get there and win more medals but is realistic. He understands that there is always the possibility of injuring himself beforehand, like there is for any athlete. Some athletes say they're definitely running at the next Paralympics, but this is something Ntando doesn't say: he knows he can't be sure of that.

For Ntando, it's people who are more important than medals. He wants to show people that he respects others. If he can respect the person he's running next to, he says, then everyone watching him on TV at home can respect each other, too. Ntando believes anyone can make a change in society and that it isn't necessary to be the president of a country. At the time of writing, Ntando is planning to compete at another important para-athletics competition.

Good luck, Ntando

1 Read the paragraph 1. What is the sport Ntando practices?

- a) Running b) Cycling c) Swimming

2 Write true (T) or false (F) for the following statements.

- a) For Ntando, his disability has never been a problem. _____
b) Ntando was one of the oldest competitors at the Rio Paralympics. _____
c) Ntando hasn't won any medals so far _____.
d) Injuring themselves is always a possibility for any athlete. _____

3 Read the article again and the questions below. For each question, choose the correct answer.

1.- What do we find out about Ntando in the first two paragraphs?

- A** He feels upset that he can't do some activities.
- B** He does not let challenges worry him.
- C** He feels grateful for opportunities he is given.
- D** He would prefer to enter big competitions than small ones.

2.- What does Ntando say about his success?

- A** He prefers not to talk about it.
- B** He likes to share it with other athletes.
- C** He never expects to win a competition.
- D** He wants to encourage other people to do well, too.

3.- What is Ntando's attitude towards competing at future Paralympics?

- A** He hopes that he will not hurt himself there.
- B** He is unsure whether he wants to compete there.
- C** He wants to beat his last achievement there.
- D** He accepts that he may not get there.

4.- In the final paragraph, Ntando says he hopes

- A** to have an important role in his country one day.
- B** other people will follow his good behaviour.
- C** to run in as many competitions as he can.
- D** his fans will support his plans for the future.

5 What would another athlete say about Ntando?

- A** He's good at all kinds of sports.
- B** He is disappointed when he doesn't win.
- C** He's a talented guy and nice, too.
- D** He'll improve even more with new blades.

SUFFIXES -ist, -er, -or

4 Read the sentences and complete the words.

1 Ntando runs. He is a runn_____.

2 He competes in the Paralympics. He's a competit_____.

5 Write the nouns for people in front of each normal noun by adding the correct suffix.
Sometimes the spelling of the word changes when the suffix is added.

-er

-ist

-or

canoe →

canoeist

climb →

football →

sail →

spectate →

surf →

swim →

win →

6 Complete the words with the correct suffix.

- 1 My sister is a soccer play_____.
- 2 My dad was the oldest competit_____ in the swimming race.
- 3 Every Sunday a group of cycl_____ ride past our house.
- 4 We didn't win the game. We were the los_____.
- 5 Thousands of football support_____ travelled to London last week for the cup final.

PREFIXES -un, -dis

7 Read the following examples. Observe how -un, and -dis change the meaning to the opposite of the words.

- 1 Talking about friends is really **interesting**!
We'll probably **agree** about a lot of things.
- 2 Talking about friends is really **uninteresting**!
We'll probably **disagree** about a lot of things.

8 Write the correct negative form of the words. Use -dis or -un.

pleasant →

unpleasant

like →

kind →

appear →

lucky →

reliable →

happy →

do →

break →

9 Match the words to the meanings.

find out

friend

unfriend

movements of your hands, arms or head to show a feeling

gestures

remove someone from your social media account

hugging

when you put your arms around someone because you like them

pal

getting more information about something