12 READING

An interview with Shawn Johnson

How often do you think professional athletes practice?



Get a sneak peek inside the life of this U.S. gold medal–winning Olympic gymnast!



Where are you from?

Des Moines, Iowa. I live there now.

Who do you train with?

A lot of people think I have a private coach. But I train with 13 other girls at the gym!

How often do you practice?

Most athletes train about 45 hours a week. But my parents want me to have a "normal life." I train about 25 hours a week. I usually work out four hours a day during the week, and five to six hours on Saturdays. I don't practice on Sundays.

What do you eat to stay healthy?

I have to watch my diet to be a healthy gymnast. But I don't get stressed about it.

What are your favorite foods?

Chicken and steak kebabs, peaches and cream, and corn on the cob.

What do you do when you're not training?

I love to ride horses and spend time with my friends.

What do you do for good luck?

I always travel with my blankets. But I don't believe in good-luck charms!

Who are your biggest fans?

My mom, dad, and of course my coach!

A Read the interview. Then check (✓) the correct answers to the questions.

1. Who does Shawn train with?
   a. ☐ just her coach b. ☐ other gymnasts
2. How often does she practice?
   a. ☐ 25 hours a week b. ☐ 45 hours a week
3. How much does she train on Saturdays?
   a. ☐ four hours b. ☐ five to six hours
4. What does she like to do in her free time?
   a. ☐ eat in restaurants b. ☐ ride horses and be with friends
5. What does she travel with?
   a. ☐ a good-luck charm b. ☐ her blankets

B GROUP WORK Do you think athletes have an easy life? Is playing a sport fun, or hard work? Discuss your reasons with your classmates.

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