

Reading Comprehension — Terry Fox's Marathon of Hope

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Terry Fox's Marathon of Hope

In 1980, a young Canadian named Terry Fox set out to do something almost unimaginable. He planned to run all the way across Canada — one of the largest countries on Earth — on one real leg and one artificial one.

A few years earlier, when Terry was just eighteen, he had been diagnosed with cancer, and doctors had to remove one of his legs. While in hospital, he saw how much other cancer patients suffered. He decided he wanted to help. His plan was bold: he would run a marathon — about 42 kilometres — every single day, right across the country, to raise money for cancer research. He called it the Marathon of Hope.

Terry began on the east coast in April. Day after day, in rain, wind and heat, he ran the distance of a marathon, his unusual running style hopping along on his artificial leg. People lined the streets to cheer him on, and donations poured in.

Sadly, after 143 days and over 5,000 kilometres, Terry had to stop. The cancer had returned, this time in his lungs. He died the following year, aged just twenty-two.

But Terry Fox was not forgotten. Every year, millions of people around the world take part in Terry Fox Runs to raise money for cancer research, just as he had hoped. A boy who could not finish his own run inspired a movement that has raised hundreds of millions of dollars — and continues to this day.

Questions

1. In what year did Terry Fox begin his run? (1 mark)
2. What did Terry call his run? (1 mark)
3. Roughly how far is a marathon? (1 mark)
4. Find and copy a word in paragraph 2 meaning "brave or daring." (1 mark)
5. Why did Terry decide he wanted to help cancer patients? (2 marks)
6. Why did Terry have to stop after 143 days? (2 marks)
7. The writer says Terry was "not forgotten." How do we know this is true? (2 marks)
8. Why do you think the writer calls it the "Marathon of Hope"? (2 marks)
9. Summarise Terry's story in order: before the run, the run, and his legacy. (3 marks)

Answer Key / Mark Scheme

1. 1980.

2. The Marathon of Hope.
3. About 42 kilometres.
4. "bold."
5. While in hospital with cancer, he saw how much other patients suffered and wanted to help.
6. The cancer had returned, this time in his lungs.
7. Every year millions take part in Terry Fox Runs, raising hundreds of millions for cancer research.
8. Because he ran to give hope and raise money to fight cancer, even though he was ill himself.
9. Before: diagnosed with cancer at 18, lost a leg, wanted to help. The run: ran a marathon a day across Canada for 143 days and 5,000+ km before cancer returned. Legacy: died at 22 but inspired worldwide Terry Fox Runs raising millions.