

Franklin Jr./Sr High School Reading Article

Jennie Finch Makes Case for Olympic Softball

Reading Strategy for the Article: Students will take turns reading aloud. Mark the text and write in the margins.

1200L

Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND WRITE NOTES in the margin box. This requires reading of the article more than once.

Step 1: Skim the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

Step 2: Number the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

Step 3: A final quick read noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

Your margin notes will be assessed by your teacher along with your answers to the questions.

Jennie Finch is a two-time Olympic medalist in softball, which was dropped from the Olympic program after the 2008 Games. The sport is now part of a joint bid with baseball competing for a spot in the Olympics beginning with the 2020 Games. The International Olympic Committee will vote Sunday on the sport for 2020. Squash and wrestling also are in contention.

Finch, a former pitcher who once had a record 60-game winning streak at the University of Arizona, won a gold medal with the U.S. at the 2004 Games and added silver four years later. In an essay for USA TODAY Sports, she explains why softball should be included in the Olympics:

The recent 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's historic and society-changing "I Have A Dream" speech is a timely reminder to all of us about the power of dreams – dreams of a personal nature as well as dreams of a better world. A world which, for me, would enable more women to participate in the greatest celebration of sport and humanity on our planet, the Olympic Games.

Like King's dream, my dream is also shared by millions of people from all backgrounds and cultures, but it has not yet been fully realized.

This is a situation that can be corrected if the IOC votes to add softball and baseball to the 2020 Olympic Games. The IOC's decision also could be historic and society changing.

Softball is one of the world's most popular sports for girls and women, and the IOC's vote will be a fundamental test of its commitment to women and its own core Olympic

Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as I read.

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values, particularly equality. It will impact the lives of millions of girls and young women on softball teams as well as those in schools, businesses, neighborhood and community sports clubs and in backyards across the planet.

While the 2012 Games in London marked the first time every country had at least one female athlete, I believe we can and must do better. The Olympics is the pinnacle of sport for women and men, and including softball in the Games as a team sport would significantly boost places for women at the Games.

Softball connects with women of all ages and backgrounds and has huge sponsorship and broadcast appeal; the recent World Cup of Softball was broadcast in 140 countries.

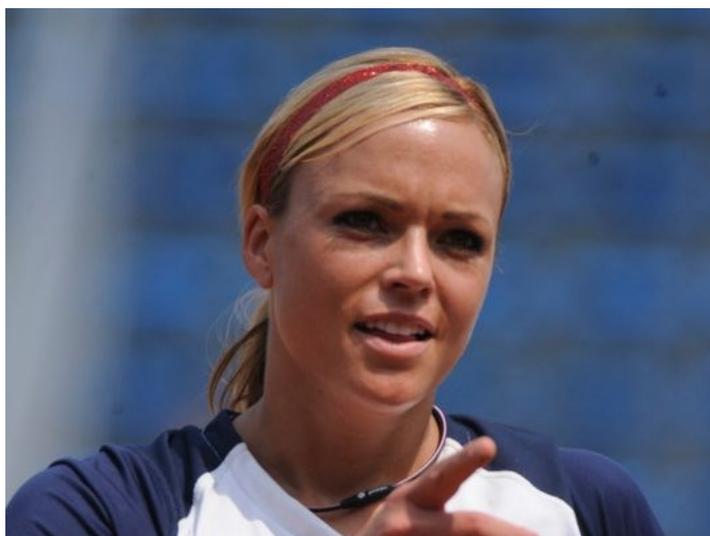
If the IOC decides to bring women back into the Olympics through softball, it would pass on what I like to call "the special, magical gift of sport" to girls everywhere.

Adding a sport women enjoy playing, like softball, would further encourage and promote women's participation in sport at all levels and give women more opportunities to be empowered through sport.

Softball would provide pathways for more women to participate in sport, including those in Muslim countries and cultures, where softball is increasingly popular. It has a dress code and rules that easily can be adapted for women from all backgrounds and faiths.

As I did in my speech at the IOC's Women in Sport conference last year, I ask the members of the IOC, on behalf of the women of the world, to please find a way to give girls their dreams back and put softball in the Olympic Games.

This would provide a new vision for girls of how they can fashion their lives through



sport, and leave a legacy – another core pillar of the Olympic movement – that will change lives and change the world, like Olympic dreams should.

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Comprehension Questions— you may answer in phrases.

1. What issue is the Olympics Committee discussing, and what role does Jennie Finch play in this discussion?
2. List at least four facts to illustrate how good Finch is.
3. How did Jennie use the Martin Luther King speech to make her case?
4. List three reasons why she believes the sport should be added.
5. Do a web search to find out what the Olympic Committee's decision was.

Answer the following questions in one or more complete sentences.

1. Do you believe the sport should be added to the Olympics? In the space below, create a cartoon to illustrate your opinion. Be sure to put a title on your cartoon.