

## Luetunymmärtämisen tehtävä

### Cheerleading is serious fun

January last year I flew to Australia as an exchange student. I went in January because that's when their school year starts. It was a long flight, but it was definitely worth it. The weather was incredible, so hot and sunny, after the freezing -25 degrees we had in Jyväskylä when I left. My host family met me at the airport. Then we drove to my new home. (1, 2)

My host family was absolutely wonderful. I had a sister, Melissa, 16 like me, and a little brother Keith, 12. I liked my new home, I even got my own room. School seemed nice, too. The trouble was I had ended up in a very small town basically in the middle of nowhere. I have done gymnastics since I was in the fourth grade. I have competed in local and national competitions. So obviously I wanted to continue with it. But in my new home town it wasn't possible to practise gymnastics anywhere. The nearest possible place was about 300 miles away. I was really disappointed and didn't know what to do. (3, 4)

Then my host sister Melissa suggested that I would go to cheerleading practise with her. I said yes, of course, because I didn't want to hurt her feelings. I couldn't tell her that in my opinion cheerleaders were just pretty girls in short skirts jumping up and down during the breaks of football matches shouting out silly things and shaking their pompoms. After all that's the picture you get from movies. I really didn't see cheerleading as a sport. How wrong I was... (5)

At the first practise I was surprised to see boys there. First I thought they were someone's boyfriends or something. Soon I realised they were part of the team or squad as they call it. I soon realised that there's much more to cheerleading than just dancing a little. The programmes have different parts and there are different roles in the team. Melissa was a flyer. The flyers are the ones who stand on the top of the pyramids and are thrown in the air in the stunts. It really looks like flying. Then there are the bases who lift or throw the flyers up. They have to be strong. In our team most of the bases were boys. The spotters are the most important people when we do stunts. They are the ones who help the flyers go up. If something goes wrong it's their job to catch the flyer so she doesn't get hurt. I heard some horror stories about broken arms and legs and even about a broken nose. (6, 7)

I had always thought that cheerleaders only perform in games but I found out that it's a sport in itself. There are cheerleading competitions, too. Our team had taken part in the national competition the previous year, just like my gymnastics team. (8)

When I returned to Finland I was so into cheerleading that I didn't want to give up my new hobby. Luckily, I found a squad in Jyväskylä. Now we are preparing for the Finnish championships in cheerleading. I think we have good chances to make it to the top three. (9)

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Vastaa kysymyksiin suomeksi.

1. Miksi kertoja lähti vaihto-oppilaaksi tammikuussa?

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2. Mitä hän sanoo säästä Australiassa ja Suomessa?

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3. Mitä isäntäperheestä kerrotaan? (Mainitse 2 asiaa.)

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4. Mikä ongelma kertojalla oli?

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5. Miksi kertoja suostui lähtemään cheerleading-harjoituksiin?

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6. Minkä yllätti kertojan harjoituksissa?

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7. Tekstissä mainitaan kolme eri roolia joukkueessa (flyer, base, spotter).  
Valitse niistä kaksi ja kerro heidän tehtävänsä.

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8. Mitä yhteistä cheerleadingillä ja kertojan vanhalla harrastuksella oli?

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9. Miten uuden harrastuksen kävi, kun kertoja palasi Suomeen?

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