

February 5, 2018

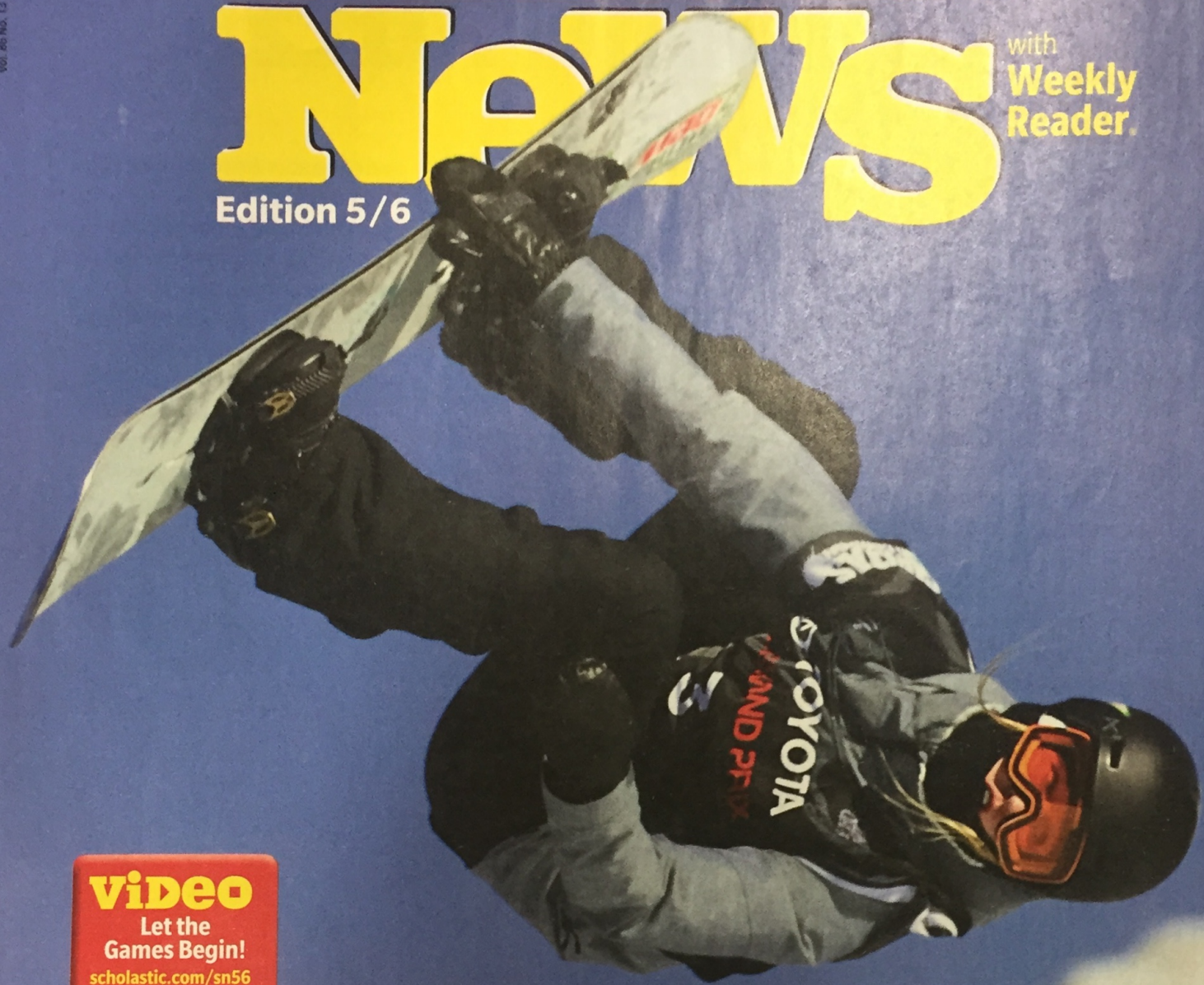


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Edition 5/6



video

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Soaring Over South Korea

Snowboarder Julia Marino is one of dozens of American athletes hoping to win gold at the Winter Olympics in South Korea. **Page 4**

A Pyramid Puzzle

A new discovery could shed light on how the Great Pyramid in Egypt was built.

The Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt is one of the most mysterious structures in the world. People have been studying it for centuries, largely to figure out how it was built. Recently, researchers discovered a large void, or empty space, inside the pyramid. They think it could hold clues about how the pyramid was constructed 4,500 years ago.

The pyramid was created as a burial site for a **pharaoh** named Khufu. The 451-foot-tall structure is made up of more than 2 million stone blocks. Each weighs, on average, more than 2 tons. Based on drawings and writings on the walls of the pyramid, experts

know it took thousands of workers more than 20 years to get the job done. But no one knows how they built such a complex structure in ancient times.

A team of archaeologists and other scientists from a project called ScanPyramids has been trying to solve that mystery. Using special 3-D imaging technology, the team has scanned parts of the pyramid that people can't physically reach.

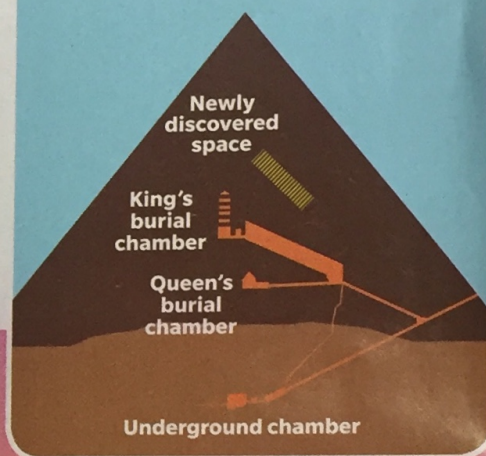
In November 2017, the team announced that it had discovered an empty space near the center of the pyramid. Some experts say this void might have been used as a ramp for carrying the giant stone blocks during construction.

Archaeologists plan to investigate the void further by

sending small robots through cracks in the walls. ScanPyramids founder Mehdi Tayoubi says this discovery could provide answers to an ancient puzzle.

He says, "The Great Pyramid construction is still a mystery, and it can only be solved by the finding of new structures and evidence."

This drawing shows some of the known rooms and the newly discovered space in the pyramid.



Word to Know

pharaoh *noun*. a ruler of ancient Egypt



The Great Pyramid was the first, and largest, of three pyramids built near Cairo, Egypt.

The Great Pyramid was originally about 30 feet taller. Over the centuries, thieves took the white limestone blocks that had made up its outer layer.

Khufu is believed to have had three wives. Some experts think they were buried in these smaller pyramids.

Testing the Waters

A 12-year-old inventor is named America's Top Young Scientist.

Not many kids can say they're award-winning inventors—but Gitanjali Rao can. The seventh-grader from Lone Tree, Colorado, created a device that detects a poisonous chemical called lead in water. Last fall, she earned the top prize in the Discovery Education 3M Young Scientist Challenge. She won \$25,000—and was named America's Top Young Scientist.

"It was a dream coming true," Gitanjali says.

She was inspired by a health crisis in Flint, Michigan. In 2014, its water system was **contaminated** with lead from city water pipes. Lead can cause health issues ranging from rashes to brain damage. Many people in Flint got sick after drinking the water or bathing in it without knowing

Word to Know

contaminated *verb, past tense.*
made dirty or unfit for use



Gitanjali Rao beat out nine other finalists to win her award.

it was unsafe. Most people in Flint have been using bottled water while they wait for their lead water pipes to be replaced.

Right now, the most accurate method to test for lead in water is to send water samples to a lab. But the test requires expensive

equipment, and getting results can take more than a week. For faster results, people can buy test strips for use at home, but they aren't always accurate. Gitanjali wanted to come up with a better test that is cheap, quick, and reliable.

She named her device Tethys, after the Greek goddess of fresh water. Tethys has a special sensor that can detect lead when the device is dipped in water. Within seconds, Tethys sends a reading to a smartphone app, which Gitanjali wrote the code for.

Gitanjali says she will use some of her prize money to further develop Tethys. She hopes to start selling it within the next year. She also has some advice for other young inventors.

"Just keep trying and do not be afraid of failure," she says.

To learn more about how Tethys works, go to www.scholastic.com/sn56.

Ready, Set, Sneeze

Achoo! When African wild dogs sneeze, it doesn't mean they have a cold coming on. A new study suggests these wild dogs vote on group decisions by sneezing!

Researchers studied five packs of wild dogs in Botswana, a country in Africa. African wild dogs usually hunt as a group for antelope and other prey. The scientists noticed that before a pack headed out to hunt, one dog would sneeze. If most of the other dogs followed with sneezes of their own, the pack would begin its hunt. Scientists believe sneezing is



A pack of African wild dogs can have up to 15 animals.

the dogs' way of saying they are ready to go. This marks the first time an animal has been found to use this unusual way of voting.

"[It] opened up a new door into our understanding of different ways animals may communicate," says Reena Walker, one of the authors of the study.

Golden Goals



The countdown to the Winter Olympics has begun. From February 9 to 25, athletes from about 90 countries will compete in downhill skiing, figure skating, snowboarding, and a dozen other sports. This year's Games will take place in a mountainous region of South Korea called Pyeongchang (pyung-chang). *(Learn more about South Korea on page 6 of this issue.)*

Here are some of the stories to follow at this winter's biggest sporting event.



Hannah Brandt



Marissa Brandt

All in the Family

Marissa Brandt and her sister, Hannah, both dream of winning gold in South Korea. The siblings from Minnesota both play hockey, but they won't be competing for the same country. Hannah will skate for Team USA, while Marissa will play for the host country.

Marissa was born in South Korea but was adopted by her American parents when she was 4 months old. Hannah was born seven months later. Hannah began playing hockey when she was 5 years old. Marissa was into figure skating at the time, but she switched to hockey when she was 8 to be closer to her sister.

"I knew nothing about the game or anything, but I just wanted to be with her," says Marissa.

The sisters always played on the same teams until they went to different colleges. In 2015, Marissa got an opportunity she couldn't pass up: One of South Korea's hockey coaches asked her to try out for the national team. Training with the Korean team, learning the language, and exploring the country have made her feel more connected to her roots.

"I'm proud to be Korean and to be able to represent my birth country," she says.

The sisters will be cheering for each other—unless their teams end up facing off on the ice.

"I'm going to just treat it like any other game," Hannah says.



The Brandt sisters say they're best friends.

An Unlikely Journey

The African country of Nigeria will send athletes to the Winter Olympics for the first time. Its team will include three female bobsledders. Bobsledding involves racing down an icy track at speeds of about 90 miles per hour.

The three bobsledders were born and raised in the U.S., but their parents are from Nigeria. All three women ran track in college. In fact, Seun Adigun, who drives the bobsled, represented Nigeria in track at the 2012 Summer Olympics. The team started training using a wooden sled that Adigun built in the garage of her home in Houston, Texas.

She later created an online fund-raiser to buy a real bobsled and equipment, and to pay for the team's travel and training. In November, they qualified for the Olympics.

"This is a huge milestone for sports in Nigeria," Adigun told ESPN.



The Nigerian bobsled team (from left to right): Seun Adigun, Ngozi Onwumere, and Akuoma Omeoga

Getting Some Air

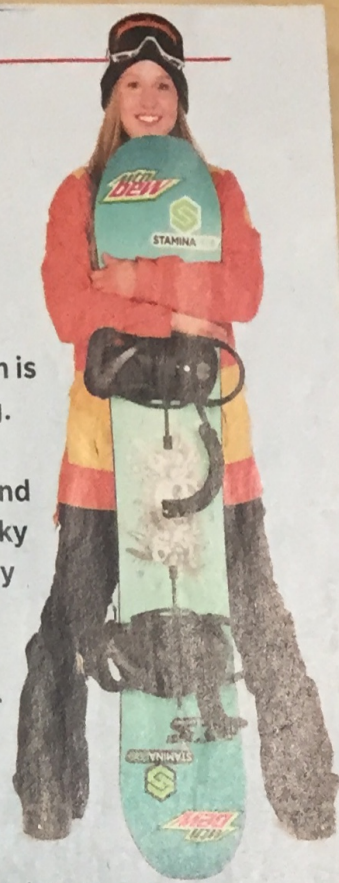
One new Olympic event that's sure to draw a lot of attention is big air snowboarding. Competitors zoom down a steep ramp and then shoot into the sky from a big jump. They do flips, spins, and other tricks as they soar through the air. Judges give each athlete a score based on the height of the jump, the difficulty of the trick, and the smoothness of the landing.

"There's stress and pressure to do one big trick on a huge jump," says Julia Marino. The 20-year-old from Westport, Connecticut, is one of America's top **contenders** in big air. "It's just about trusting yourself, knowing you've had years of training."

Words to Know

contenders *noun, plural.* people competing for a championship or high honor

scandal *noun.* a shameful act that shocks the public



Russian cross-country skier Alexander Legkov had two Olympic medals taken away for cheating.

Where's the Russian Team?

The last Winter Olympics were held in Sochi, Russia, where the host country won the most medals. But Russia won't have a team at this year's Games. The nation is barred because of a **scandal** involving performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs).

PEDs help build strength and speed. The use of PEDs, called doping, is banned in the Olympics because it gives athletes an unfair advantage. Olympians are tested for PEDs to make sure they aren't cheating. The International Olympic Committee found that for years Russian officials had secretly provided hundreds of athletes with PEDs. The officials had also changed the results of drug tests so the athletes wouldn't be caught.

As a result, Russia was stripped of 13 medals won at Sochi. It's also the first country to be banned from the Olympics for doping. Russian athletes who've never been caught using PEDs will be allowed to compete in South Korea. But any medals they win won't count for Russia.



PAGE 5: COURTESY OF VAUGHAN BROSCHFIELD/USA IBC; UNCLEBUBBA BOBSLEDDING TEAM; COURTESY OF VAUGHAN BROSCHFIELD/USA IBC



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un waves to the crowd during a military parade.



People walk along a busy street in Seoul, the capital of South Korea.

A Tale of Two Koreas

The Winter Olympics put the spotlight on South Korea's troubled neighbor.

All eyes will be on South Korea when it hosts the Winter Olympics. But the world will also be paying close attention to its neighboring country, North Korea. The troubled nation has been in the news a lot lately because of its increasing tensions with the United States, South Korea, and many other countries.

North vs. South

Though they share a border, the two Koreas couldn't be more different. South Korea has a democratic government similar to ours. It is also a thriving and wealthy nation. Meanwhile, North Korea has a Communist government led by a **dictator**, Kim Jong Un. Under Communism, the government owns all land and businesses and limits the freedoms of its citizens. North Korea has never held fair elections. It is also one of the world's poorest nations, and it

Word to Know

dictator *noun*. a ruler who has total control of a country, often using force to stay in power

spends much of its money on building up its military.

North Korea has a long history of being hostile to its southern neighbor. In 1950, North Korean troops invaded South Korea, starting the Korean War. A group of countries led by the U.S. came to South Korea's defense. The war ended in 1953, but the two Koreas never officially made peace. The U.S. has remained one of South Korea's most important allies.

Nuclear Threat?

Tension with North Korea has grown in recent months as the nation has ramped up its development of nuclear weapons. Just one of these powerful weapons could wipe out an entire city and possibly kill millions of people. Last year, North Korea conducted several successful missile tests, showing that it is capable of launching nuclear weapons over long distances.

The U.S. is working with other countries, including South Korea, to come up with a plan to pressure North Korea to end its

nuclear weapons program. Many U.S. and world leaders want to find a peaceful solution rather than risk starting a nuclear war. But U.S. President Donald Trump hasn't ruled out launching military attacks against North Korea if it continues the program.

How do the Olympics fit into all this? At a meeting with South Korean officials on January 9, North Korean leaders agreed to send athletes to the Olympics. It was the first face-to-face discussion between the two Koreas in more than two years. Some experts see that as a hopeful sign that their rocky relationship could be improving.



PAGE 6: JIM McMANIS/MANIS WORLD; MAP: XINHUA NEWS AGENCY/VICMA VIA GETTY IMAGES; (NORTH KOREA); TAWATCHAI PRANOBKIT/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (SOUTH KOREA)

Should Kids Have Assigned Seats in the Cafeteria?



For a lot of kids, lunchtime is a chance to hang out with friends and take a break from schoolwork. But for others, the cafeteria can be a lonely place.

“If you’re a new kid at school, the scariest part of your day is finding a place to sit at lunch,” says John Novick. He’s an official at Francis W. Parker School in Chicago, Illinois.

To make sure that no one eats alone, school officials randomly assign students seats in the cafeteria on certain days. Novick says assigned seating gives kids the chance to get to know more of their classmates.

Many schools across the United States have similar seating policies. Some school officials say it can prevent bullying by breaking up cliques who exclude their classmates. Others point out that assigned seating also makes for a more organized lunchroom, since students aren’t racing in to grab the best seats.

But some people say assigned seating doesn’t solve any problems. They argue that forcing kids to sit together won’t make them become friends—and

it could actually create more problems if students assigned to sit near each other don’t get along. Plus, many people point out that lunch is one of the few times during the structured school day when kids can have some freedom.

At Pride Academy Charter School in East Orange, New Jersey, kids can sit wherever they want at lunch.

“Letting students have a choice is important,” says Colleen White, a fifth-grade teacher at the school. “It keeps students motivated to learn.”

Here’s what two of our readers think.

Yes! Assigned seating can help kids make new friends.

I go to the Francis W. Parker School. On the days when I get to choose my own seat in the cafeteria, I always sit with the same friends—other boys who like sports as much as I do. But on the days we have assigned seating, I sit with kids outside my usual group. I like the change because it enables me to get to know kids who have different interests than I do. I probably wouldn’t do that otherwise.

Also, some kids have a hard time making friends. They might walk into the cafeteria and feel awkward. With assigned seating, these students would always have a place to sit and could get to know the kids they’re assigned to sit with.



Gannon Holt-Hall, Illinois

No! Assigned seating takes the fun out of lunchtime.

Like most kids, I look forward to lunchtime. At my school, we’re free to sit with anyone in our grade. I get to chat with my friends without worrying about getting in trouble.

Plus, you can still meet new people without assigned seating. Last year, a girl I didn’t know very well sat next to me in the cafeteria. We talked about adopting dogs. Before I knew it, we became best friends! If we’d had assigned seats, our friendship might not have happened.

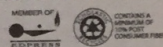
Adults are always telling kids what to do. Lunchtime is the one time during the school day when kids have freedom. As long as they behave, kids should be able to choose their own seats.



Katie Hardwick, Virginia

What’s Your OPINION? Go online to cast your vote and download an opinion-writing skills sheet: www.scholastic.com/sn56

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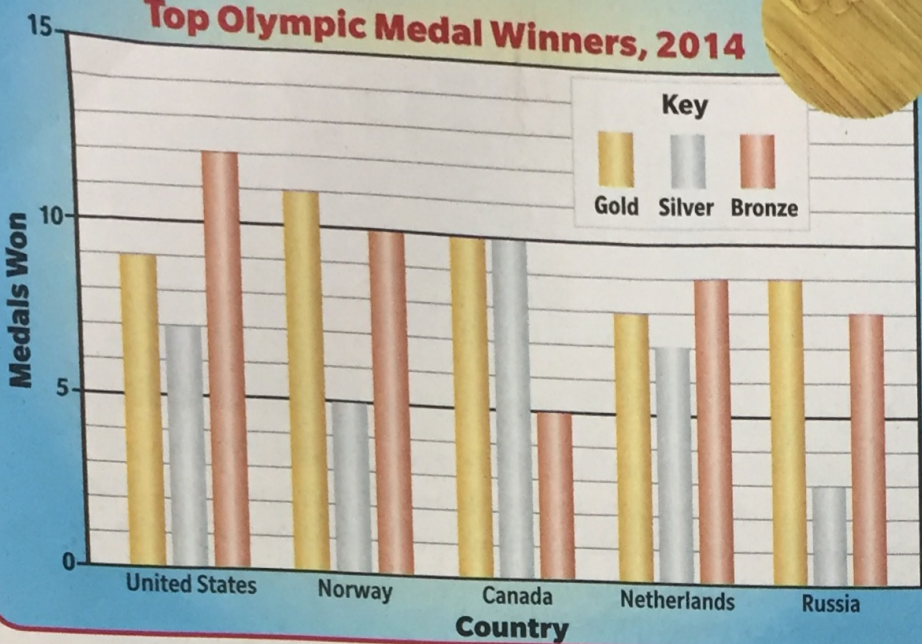


DEBATE PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FAMILIES; HIRONO MASSUME/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REXUS (CAFETERIA)

Russia won the most medals at the last Winter Olympics, but many of them were taken away because of cheating. This graph shows the five countries that now have the most medals from 2014.



Top Olympic Medal Winners, 2014



1. How many medals did the U.S. win at the 2014 Olympics?

2. Which country won the most gold medals? How many did it win?

3. Based on the information on page 5 and in this graph, how many medals did Russia originally win? Explain your answer.

News Review

A Pyramid Puzzle page 2

4. Which question do researchers think the newly discovered void inside the Great Pyramid of Giza could answer?
- (A) Why was the pyramid built?
 - (B) How was the pyramid built?
 - (C) How long did it take to build the pyramid?
 - (D) Who is buried inside the pyramid?

Testing the Waters page 3

5. Unlike current methods for testing for lead in water, Gitanjali Rao's invention ____.
- (A) is cheap, quick, and reliable
 - (B) must be sent to a lab
 - (C) takes more than a week to give results
 - (D) requires expensive equipment
6. Which word means nearly the opposite of contaminated?
- (A) soiled
 - (B) cleansed
 - (C) used
 - (D) emptied

Golden Goals pages 4-5

7. ____ is a new Olympic sport this year.
- (A) Big air snowboarding
 - (B) Bobsledding
 - (C) Cross-country skiing
 - (D) Women's ice hockey
8. Which statement about Hannah Brandt is true?
- (A) She will play on the same hockey team as her sister, Marissa, at the Olympics.
 - (B) She and her sister were college teammates.
 - (C) She was born in South Korea.
 - (D) She is younger than her sister.
9. Based on her quotes in the article, you can infer that Julia Marino ____.
- (A) is afraid of heights
 - (B) thinks she will win a gold medal
 - (C) can't handle the pressure of being in the Olympics
 - (D) trusts that her training will help her do her best
10. Which of the following is a cause of the others?
- (A) Alexander Legkov had two Olympic medals taken away for cheating.
 - (B) Russia is banned from the 2018 Olympics.
 - (C) Russian officials provided hundreds of athletes with performance-enhancing drugs.
 - (D) Any medals won by Russian athletes at this year's Olympics won't count for Russia.

