

The **Tendon** of **Achilles**

by John Savage

Lime 1c
Power Builder

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- 1 Look at the back of your ankle. Look just above the heel.
You have a big tendon there. It is like a strong cord, or rope. It connects your heel bone to your calf muscles at the back of each of your legs. The name of this tendon comes from ancient Greece. It comes from a story about a hero named Achilles.
- 2 When Achilles was a baby, his mother wanted to keep him safe from harm. She took him to an enchanted river called the Styx. She dipped him into its water.
- 3 She knew that Achilles could not be hurt where the water of this river touched him. No harm would come to him throughout his life. She dipped Achilles into the river headfirst. But she held him by one heel. That heel stayed dry.
- 4 Achilles grew up and became a great warrior. Nothing could hurt him. The enchanted water had touched him. Well, it touched *most* of him.
- 5 Then there was a war. A soldier named Paris shot an arrow at Achilles. The arrow hit Achilles in the heel. It was the heel that hadn't been touched by the river Styx. Achilles died of the wound.
- 6 This is just an old myth. However, the tendon from the heel to the calf muscles has been called the Achilles tendon for hundreds of years.

COMPREHENSION

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a* or *b*.

- 1 The myth of Achilles is about
 - a** tendons and heels.
 - b** enchanted rivers and heroes.
- 2 You know this story did not really happen because
 - a** rivers are not really enchanted.
 - b** arrows were not used in wars.
- 3 The tendon of the heel is named for Achilles because
 - a** it is big and strong like Achilles.
 - b** his mother held him by his heel.

- 4 Achilles would have lived longer if
 - a** his mother had never put him in the river.
 - b** the river had touched his entire body.
- 5 Saying that someone has an "Achilles heel" means
 - a** that person has a weakness.
 - b** he or she has a tendon named for Achilles.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1 ties; joins one to another (1)
- 2 old-time; of long ago (1)
- 3 fighter; someone who fights a war (4)
- 4 injury; bodily hurt (5)
- 5 made-up story; legend (6)

C Read the words you wrote. Which one best fits in each sentence? Write the word.

- 6 The Achilles story was told in _____ times.
- 7 An old story that is not true is called a _____.
- 8 Paris was the only _____ who hurt Achilles.
- 9 The _____ in Achilles's heel was made by an arrow.
- 10 A tendon _____ the heel to the calf muscles.

THINK ABOUT IT

D A fact is something that is true. An opinion is what someone thinks.

Fact: Mrs. Lopez is a teacher.

Opinion: I think she is nice.

Read each sentence. Is it a fact or an opinion? Write *F* if it is a fact. Write *O* if it is an opinion.

- 1 I believe that Achilles was the best warrior.
- 2 The story of Achilles is an ancient Greek myth.
- 3 I think his mother should have dipped his heel too.
- 4 Arrows can hurt anybody.
- 5 There are many other stories about Achilles and his times.

E sun + light = sunlight

The word *sunlight* means "the light of the sun." *Sunlight* is a compound word. A compound word is made by putting two or more words together.

Look at the two words in **bold type**. Put the two words together to complete the second sentence. Write the compound word.

- 6 A good **time** for a story is at **night**. It was _____ when the story about Achilles was told.
- 7 The **bed** of the **river** was sandy. Achilles's mother stood in the _____.
- 8 She decided that Achilles's **head** should go **first**. She dipped him _____.
- 9 When he became a **man**, Achilles learned to ride a **horse**. He became a great _____.
- 10 At that **time** there was a great **war**. Achilles was killed in _____.