

# Yusra Mardini

by ReadWorks



*Photograph of Yusra Mardini*

One of the most inspiring athletes of the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio, Brazil was Yusra Mardini. Mardini grew up in Syria. She swam for this country in many swimming competitions. She was going to swim in the Olympics for Syria, but then she had to flee from her home country in 2015. Syria was in the middle of a war, and it became dangerous for people to live there. She was only seventeen years old at this time.

After Mardini and her sister left Syria, they needed to get to Greece. In order to do that, they had to cross the Aegean Sea by boat. This boat was only supposed to hold six people. However, twenty passengers were on the boat. The engine broke down in the middle of the Aegean Sea, but only three passengers knew how to swim. One of them was Mardini. The three swimmers wanted to keep everyone alive, and they knew what they needed to do. The three girls dragged the boat across the sea for hours. After swimming for more than three hours, they brought the boat to land.

Over the next year, Mardini trained in Berlin, Germany. In 2016, she swam in the Olympics. She was on the Refugee team. While she did not win a medal, she wants to compete in the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. People around the world think that Yusra Mardini is a hero. When she is not training in the pool, she works as an ambassador for refugees.



Photo Credit: United Nations, CC BY-SA 4.0

*Photograph of Yusra Mardini floating in a pool*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why did Yusra Mardini have to leave Syria?

- A. She left because there was a war and it was dangerous.
- B. She left because she wanted to travel the world.
- C. She left because she needed to help steer a boat across the Aegean Sea.
- D. She left to train and compete for Syria in the Olympics.

2. The author describes how Mardini escaped from Syria. What is one thing she had to do to escape?

- A. She had to swim in a competition.
- B. She had to fix the broken engine of a boat.
- C. She had to teach twenty people to swim.
- D. She had to pull a boat with twenty people in it.

3. The text says that the boat's engine broke down. What evidence from the text best explains why this may have happened?

- A. "The three girls dragged the boat across the sea for hours."
- B. "Syria was in the middle of a war, and it became dangerous for people to live there."
- C. "This boat was only supposed to hold six people. However, twenty passengers were on the boat."
- D. "The three swimmers wanted to keep everyone alive, and they know what they needed to do."

4. After the boat's engine broke down, Mardini and two other passengers pulled the boat across the Aegean Sea. How can their actions best be described?

- A. confusing
- B. selfish
- C. soothing
- D. brave

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. Yusra Mardini is a refugee who escaped war in Syria and sought safety in Greece.
- B. Yusra Mardini escaped war in Syria and helped others on her way to becoming an inspiring Olympic athlete.
- C. Yusra Mardini is an Olympic swimmer and an ambassador for refugees who originally came from Syria.
- D. Yusra Mardini trained for the Olympics by pulling a boat with 20 people in it across the Aegean Sea.

6. Please read the following sentences from the text.

"She was going to swim in the Olympics for Syria, but then she had to **flee** from her home country in 2015. Syria was in the middle of a war, and it became dangerous for people to live there."

As used in the passage, what does the word **flee** mean?

- A. free
- B. jump
- C. train
- D. escape

7. Please choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

\_\_\_ Yusra Mardini and her sister left Syria, Mardini trained in Berlin.

- A. after
- B. soon
- C. so
- D. ultimately

8. Why was Yusra Mardini unable to swim for Syria in the Olympics?

9. Yusra Mardini is a determined person who does not give up. What evidence from the text supports this statement?

10. Why do people think that Yusra Mardini is a hero? Support your answer with evidence from the text.