**A.O.W. #1 Due: Monday! Name: Hour:**

1. Chunk the article into manageable (2 paragraphs max.) pieces. Number them. Don’t forget the title/opening!
2. Highlight at least three words you are not familiar with or that are important and define them on the graphic organizer.
3. Show evidence of a close reading. Mark up the left side of the text with questions and/or comments that demonstrate interacting with the text. You may also include any confusion you have.
4. Complete the attached graphic organizer to analyze author’s craft.

**The Olympic Gymnast Who Overcame a Drug-Addicted Mother** Ali.

Author: Alice Park Photo reference: David J. Phillip—AP

**Simone Biles will go for gold in gymnastics at Rio—her way**

Gymnastics is not a sport that favors longevity. It rewards the fleeting energy and vitality of youth, the flash of a brightly igniting star over the steadiness of a consistent and long-burning talent, and even then, it’s still stingy, rarely allowing even the most gifted athletes to repeat as champions. It’s also not a sport that nurtures free spirits who veer from the Spartan tradition of training, skills and rules that define it.

That’s why Simone Biles is such an anomaly. The 19-year-old Texan is the three-time world champion in the women’s all-around event, and hasn’t lost a competition since 2013, which makes her the odds-on favorite to continue that streak at the Olympics in Rio this summer.

If she does, it will be all the more remarkable for what it took for her to get there, both at the gym and at home. Born to a mother addicted to drugs and alcohol, Biles, along with her younger sister Adria, was adopted by her maternal grandfather Ron and his wife Nellie when she was three. “The social worker called and said the kids were in foster care,” says Ron. “I said, send them to me.”

**Read More:** [America’s Great Gymnasts on What Separates Simone Biles From Others](http://time.com/4427223/simone-biles-gymnast/)

The girls, along with their two older siblings, came to live with the Biles and their two teenage sons for nearly two years. It was a temporary arrangement, since their mother still had parental rights, but soon after they sent the children back, the social worker called again with the news that their grandchildren were up for adoption; their mother wasn’t deemed fit to care for them.

Ron wanted to adopt Adria, then only 14 months old, but Nellie insisted on taking both girls, so they could keep each other company. On Christmas Eve in 2002, the Biles became parents to their grandchildren. From the first day, Biles asked her grandmother if she could call her mom. “When I was younger, I thought every kid was adopted,” she says. “I didn’t understand why people made it such a big deal. To me it’s just normal.”

Biles talks to her birth mother when she calls on birthdays and holidays, and has met her a few times at Nellie’s suggestion, but chooses to focus her energy on just one family, the one she’s part of with Nellie and Ron. “I wonder what my life would be like if none of this happened,” she says. “I want to know why my mother did what she did. But those aren’t questions for me because that was her lifestyle when I wasn’t even born. I have everything I need so there are no blanks left unfilled. I never felt I had questions or needed answers or had a part of me that was missing.”

Gymnastics may have a lot to do with that attitude, since it quickly consumed most of Biles’ time and interest after a day care field trip to a gymnastics center. Simone was immediately hooked, especially by the fact that it involved scrambling around four different pieces of equipment, and Nellie welcomed the opportunity to have her hyperactive daughter flipping and tumbling somewhere other than on her furniture. The showmanship didn’t hurt either. “I love competing,” she says. “Most athletes get intimidated once they see how many fans are out there, but it almost calms me down in a way because I think of it as a fun way to show off what I’ve been working on.”

That relaxed approach took the U.S. women’s national team coordinator Martha Karolyi by surprise, since most girls perfect a poker face of determination and concentration that serves the dual purpose of keeping them focused and intimidating their competitors. After one meet, Karolyi told Biles she was getting distracted and enjoying herself too much. “She was like, tone it down a bit,” says Biles. “I don’t think she knew that was me in my zone.”

Which could explain why, when she thinks about her influence on the sport, Biles doesn’t focus on her remarkable record. She’s more interested in making sure future gymnasts aren’t intimidated by the sport and the pressures that can come with being an elite competitor. “I think I’m teaching my teammates that they can still be successful while having fun, and enjoying the moment rather than being a stone cold brick. You *can*have fun and do well. Just let loose a bit.”

1. Author’s claim (what he/she wants us to believe—OPINION + REASON)):
2. . Text Evidence *with MLA*: \*\*TE= proof: stats, facts, examples

\*\*MLA= author’s last name in parenthesis at the end of each piece of TE: “Blah-blah-blah” (Author’s LAST name).

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 (inform, persuade, give opinion, etc.)

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 (Be specific)

1. The author’s main audience is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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.The author establishes a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tone (look at word choice) through the following techniques (refer to technique list, but make it **specific**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. 3 words I didn’t know (or are ESSENTIAL words) WITH DEFINITIONS

a.

b.

c.