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

**AoW #1-3 7th Grade Chess Champion**

* **Read** and **thoroughly connect to the entire** article by generating connections, questions, inferences, and visuals in the margin.
* **Answer** the **4 questions**.
* **Complete the GIST activity.**
* **Write** a **two paragraph reflection** following the following guidelines:

**First paragraph** – Objective summary

**Second paragraph** – Connect the article to our unit

***Check for spelling and grammar!***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Requirement** | **Points** | **Student Evaluation** | **Teacher Evaluation** |
| I have provided a **variety of thoughtful annotations** for the entire article. | 20 |  |  |
| I have answered the **4 comprehension questions** using textual evidence if applicable. | 20 |  |  |
| My **first paragraph is an objective summary**. It is evident that I followed the 6 steps for writing an objective summary. | 25 |  |  |
| My **second paragraph connects the article to our EitO unit**. I cited specific evidence from the text that I feel relates to our unit. | 25 |  |  |
| I have **minimal grammatical and spelling mistakes**. | 5 |  |  |
| **Gist** of article | **5** |  |  |
| Total |  |  |  |

# **Tested in a barbershop, seventh-grader becomes national chess champion**

By Luke Broadwater, The Baltimore Sun

08/07/2017

A skilled chess player, Osagie easily beats most of the customers who challenge him at his shop. But this is no ordinary challenger. This 12-year-old boy is Cahree Myrick, who has just been crowned the first individual national youth chess champion in the history of Baltimore. "This is the chess champion of the country right here," Osagie brags to customers, as the two players trade pawns.

Though Cahree learned to play in a formal chess league, his mother, Yuana Spears, brings her oldest son here to the barbershop — amid the buzz cuts, jazz music and history books — to test his skills.

"It's a different style," Cahree says. "When I play people in **standard** tournaments, I know what to expect. Here, they play more freestyle."

Cahree went a remarkable 7-0 in Nashville to win his division at the United States Chess Federation SuperNationals, and Osagie and others have been bragging about his **achievements** ever since.

**City Of Baltimore Is Proud**

In the game against Osagie, Cahree focuses on his next move. Photo: Amy Davis/Baltimore Sun/TNS.

The Baltimore Kids Chess League, in which he plays, touted his victory as perfection. Mayor Catherine Pugh honored Cahree and his teammates at City Hall. And the Baltimore Orioles invited him to Camden Yards.

"The City of Baltimore wants you to know we are really proud of your accomplishments," Pugh told Cahree before hanging a medal around his neck.

To be sure, Cahree's victory did not come in the event's highest division, but the commissioner of the Baltimore Kids Chess League says it's a standout achievement nonetheless.

"This is a big deal," Commissioner Steve Alpern said. "To win it with a perfect score is pretty incredible."

"People don't think Baltimore City is producing these kind of achievements, but we are."

**Individual Title Is A Big Deal**

The Baltimore Kids Chess League is open only to the city's public school students. Launched in 2003, the program has produced three national championship teams. But Cahree is the first player to win an individual title.

To do so, he had to outscore 249 players from 28 states in his division. Eighty-nine players from Maryland competed in more than 20 divisions. Cahree was the only player to finish in the top five in his division.

"I don't brag about it as much as my relatives will," Cahree says. "I only talk about it if someone asks about it."

Alpern said the city's chess league is gaining attention thanks in part to victories such as Cahree's. He said he often gets calls from parents of students at private schools or county schools asking to join. He tells them they have to **enroll** in the city's school system.

"I tell them, 'Sorry, you can transfer to the public schools' — and some of them do," he says.

**Chess Teams Draw Attention To Public Schools**

Lesa Horne coaches the chess team at Roland Park Elementary and Middle School, where Cahree plays. For the students on her squad, she said, she sees immediate benefits.

"They have to learn a lot of focus," she said. "It teaches them to plan ahead and learn from their mistakes."

"I'd rather them learn from mistakes on the chess board than on the streets."

Going into the tournament, Cahree said, he didn't believe he would leave with the championship. Having finished 24th last year, he knew how tough the competition was.

But then he started to win. And win. And win.

"Everyone has a chance to win against whoever they play," Cahree says. "I knew if I stick to my plan, and tried my best, that I would be fine."

His mother, Spears, traveled to Tennessee with the team over Mother's Day weekend. She waited nervously outside the competition room for the results after each round. When Cahree emerged, she couldn't tell from his face whether or not he had won.

"They call him the poker-face player," she said. "You don't know whether he's winning or losing when he's playing. Cahree's facial expression never changes."

Cahree's final game was against an opponent from Texas. Cahree was dressed casually in Nike shorts and an Under Armour shirt. Opponents from other states often dressed formally with dress shirts and bow ties.

Cahree drew the black pieces, and played one of his favorite openings: The Scandinavian defense, a counter move that often results in his queen taking center control of the board.

**With Preparation Comes Success**

As the game went on, his confidence grew.

"It was my toughest game yet," he said. "The key to winning is not giving up. Keep thinking and pushing until you get there. And that's what I did."

Spears, waiting on the results, was anxious.

"It was nerve-racking. You're waiting. You're **anticipating**," she said. "It was very intense. He did not show he was stressed at all. He was very confident about the whole game.

"Afterward, the whole team got up and celebrated."

Cahree started playing chess in first grade at The Green School. He transferred to Roland Park for middle school. Now in seventh grade, he splits his time between his twin passions: chess and track. He runs the hurdles.

He says he plays about five games of chess per day.

"Whenever I have time alone, I play as many games as I can," he said.

Spears said she saw how hard he was working going into the tournament.

"On the weekends he put in a full day's work, easily eight hours a day, getting ready for this tournament," she said. "He showed the dedication; he showed the drive; he showed the hunger for getting ready for this tournament, and he was successful."

Cahree shows his younger brother, Lohgan, some basics about chess. Lohgan is 4 years old. Photo: Amy Davis/Baltimore Sun/TNS.

Home from Tennessee, Cahree was greeted to a warm welcome when he returned to the barbershop, where the men posed for pictures with him and boasted of his victory.

"Playing chess in this shop is a staple. It's what we push," Osagie says. "We call it **mental**calisthenics. A lot of older guys love it. They swear by the game. They were happy that a young kid from Baltimore won."

**Culture Of Chess In Baltimore Is Bigger Than People Know**

Osagie said Cahree isn't the only chess standout to stop by the barbershop. Internationally ranked chess master William Morrison, nicknamed "The Exterminator," is known to bring his grandsons in for games.

"The culture of chess in Baltimore is bigger than people know. It flies under the radar," Osagie said. "Cahree's victory and his performance in the national tournament prove that guys have been putting in work, 24-7."

As the two play, Osagie captures Cahree's queen, and he's closing in on victory. The room grows quiet. But the middle-schooler stays calm, strikes back and tips the game in his favor.

"He made a good move. I gotta give him credit," Osagie says. "In chess you can't give up. You're never out of it."

**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Which sentence from the article would be MOST important to include in a summary of the article?

**A** A skilled chess player, Osagie easily beats most of the customers who challenge him at his shop.

**B** Alpern said the city's chess league is gaining attention thanks in part to victories such as Cahree's.

**C** When Cahree emerged, she couldn't tell from his face whether or not he had won.

**D** Spears said she saw how hard he was working going into the tournament.

2. One MAIN idea of the article is that Cahree Myrick is the first individual national youth chess champion from Baltimore.

What is another MAIN idea of the article?

**A** Cahree improved his chess skills by practicing in Osagie's barbersop.

**B** The city of Baltimore gave Cahree a medal at city hall to celebrate his win.

**C** The Baltimore Kids Chess League has produced many winning chess teams.

**D** Cahree's teachers believe chess helps students develop important skills.

3. Which answer choice accurately characterizes Osagie's reaction to Cahree's success?

**A** He is eager to beat Cahree in a chess match.

**B** He is proud of Cahree’s win at the tournament.

**C.** He is worried about Cahree’s future in chess.

**D** He is jealous of Cahree’s championship win.

4. What is the MOST likely reason the author included information about the Baltimore Kids Chess League?

**A** to persuade people to go to public schools in Baltimore

**B** to tell people how to get involved in playing chess

**C** to persuade kids that they should learn how to play chess

**D** to tell people about an important program for kids in Baltimore

**Get the GIST**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Read the article or section of text.
2. Fill in the 5 Ws and H.

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

3. Write a 20-word GIST summary.

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