

Michelle Kwan: Heart of a Champion

(Grade 5 Theme 2 Selection1 Summary)

<i>Michelle Kwan: Heart of a Champion</i> is the autobiography of Michelle Kwan. At the age of twelve, hoping to enter the Olympics, Kwan decides to move from skating at the Junior level to the Senior level. It is a big change, and she needs to pass a skating test to do it. Her coach, Frank Carroll, doesn't think she is ready. But Kwan doesn't want to wait. While Carroll is away, she takes the skating test and passes.	10 22 35 52 63 75 78
When Carroll comes back, Kwan tells him what she has done. He is furious at first. Then he tells her that she is going to have to work harder than ever to make her skating artistic.	90 106 114
Kwan's parents are worried that there will be too much pressure at the next level, but they support her decision. Kwan feels ready for the challenge. She knows she will be compared to the best skaters in the world. She is a good jumper, but she is young, and her programs have been easy.	126 138 151 165 168
Each skater has two programs to skate: the <i>technical</i> or <i>short program</i> and the <i>freeskate</i> or <i>long program</i> , which counts for more of the score. Skaters must perform certain moves in each program: spirals, spins, and jumps. If a skater doesn't do some of them or makes a mistake, the judges take away points.	179 190 201 214 222
A skater needs to be strong in body and mind. There is at least one big competition every month. Practicing takes a lot of hard work, and skaters spend a lot of time in the gym, on the ice, and traveling. They are very sore at the end of the day. Kwan also has to go to school and do her homework.	237 249 263 279 284
Kwan tries hard to remember that skating isn't the only important part of her life. School is very important and so are family and friends. The real challenge is to keep in mind both the skater and the person she wants to be.	295 308 322 327