

Anglais langue seconde Voie B

Lecture – 8e année

Go-Kart and Ostrich Face Off in Do or Die Race

A few weeks before the opening of the Riverboat Hills go-kart track and his usual racing season, Alex Thibodeau got a very bizarre request from the owner of the track. He was asked if he was up for a rather unique and unusual challenge - would he be interested in taking on a race against a very fast pet ostrich that was making the rounds throughout the Maritimes with its owners. The August event would raise money for the local SPCA and the Wildlife Conservation Clinic. The experienced 18-year-old racer thought about it and then decided to test his driving skills against one of the tallest and heaviest birds in the world – an ostrich named Fast-Footed Freddy.

Even though it may sound mean or ridiculous to race a go-kart against an ostrich, this particular bird was internationally known for two things: its love of racing and its amazing ability to run at minimum speeds of 60 kilometers per hour. So how can an ostrich run so fast without taking off or toppling over? It uses its short wings for balance, holding them outstretched while it runs like the wind, leaving many of its competitors in the dust.

Since this was a once in a lifetime event being held at the raceway, local go-kart enthusiasts, wildlife conservation experts, the SPCA and other like-minded members of the local community banded together to help raise more than eighteen thousand dollars in a single day. Numerous video enthusiasts also jumped at the chance to film the event. Uploaded videos of the race went viral within a few days and two young videographers in particular got the chance to talk about their experience on the local news at 6:00.

It goes without saying that it is not every day that an ostrich can outrun a motorized vehicle, but Alex knew there was a chance this would happen as the engine he and his grandfather had pieced together had come from the junkyard (from an old sit-down lawnmower, a snow-blower and a scooter from the 80's, to be exact). Although he had started out ahead, in the end his beloved kart was no match for the fast feet of Freddy.

Following this unique race, Alex decided to commemorate the event by renaming and customizing his go-kart after this exceptional bird that had left him in the dust. Maybe someday soon he'll get another unique and unusual race request, but this time Fast-Footed Freddy would be by his side.

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1. In your own words, when and where did the story take place? Be specific.

2. What benefit came out of having the ostrich race against the go-kart?

3. What clues let us know that Alex had probably raced before?

4. Why do you think wildlife conservation experts and the SPCA were present at the race?

5. Who was interviewed by the local media?

6. Why did Alex suspect he might not win?

7. Why will Fast-Footed Freddy be racing near Alex in future races?

8. If you could organize a race between two animals, which ones would you choose and why? Which animal would probably win?

9. Alex's hobby is racing go-karts. Share a few things about a hobby that interests you (either one that you have or one that you'd like to have).
