

3.5 Unbeatable Super Mom – Mary Kom

Warming Up!

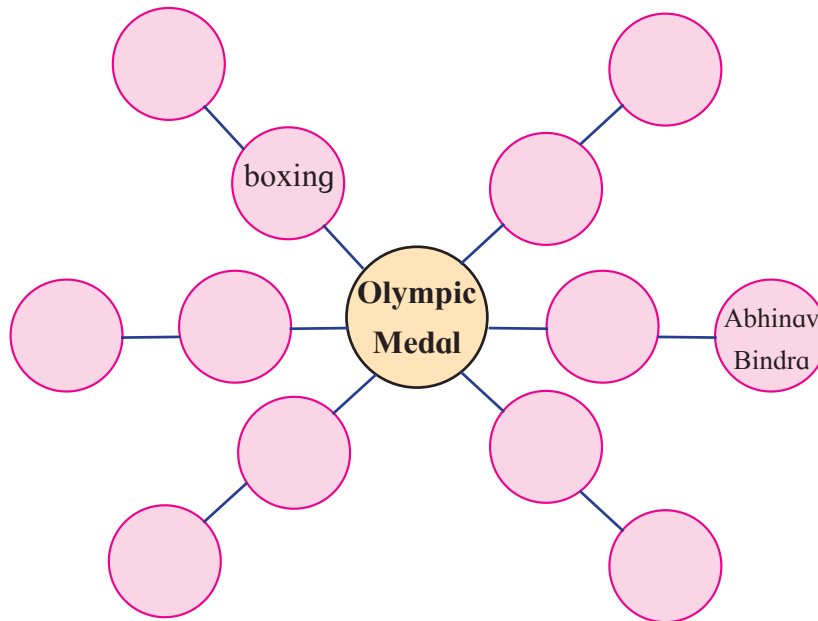
- Discuss and find out the jobs which were done only by men in the past but nowadays women too have started doing them.

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- Complete the following web of India’s winning medals in Olympics.



The text is about a famous female boxer, Mary Kom, who has brought laurels to our country by winning many national and international boxing championships. Make a list of famous men and women boxers across the world. You can take help of internet or your school library to get this information to complete the table.

Name of boxer	Gender	Country
1. Mary Kom	Female	India
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Unbeatable Super Mom – Mary Kom

Mary Kom : Chungneijang Mary Kom was born on 24th November, 1982. Better known as Mary Kom, she is an Olympic Indian boxer hailing from the Kom tribe in Manipur. She is a six time World Amateur Boxing Champion, and the only woman boxer to have won a medal in each one of the six world championships.

Nicknamed ‘Magnificent Mary’, she is the only Indian woman boxer to have qualified for the summer 2012 Olympics competing in the flyweight (51 Kg) category and winning the bronze medal.

There had to be one successful story if Indians were to survive in sports and we have that story now. Enough has been said about this great warrior who conquered the world. This warrior is none other than Mary Mangte Kom – the Komqueror and the Komrade. She is famed as a five times World Boxing Champion and the only boxer to win a medal in every one of the six world championships. In the 2012 Olympics, she became the first Indian woman boxer to qualify and win a bronze medal in the 51 Kg flyweight category of Boxing.

Kom was born in Kangthei village, Moirang Lamkhai in Churachandpur district of rural Manipur in eastern India. She came from a poor family. Her parents, Mangte Tonpa Kom and Mangte Akham Kom were tenant farmers who worked in **jhum** fields. Kom grew up in **humble surroundings**, helping her parents with farm related chores, going to school and learning athletics initially and later boxing simultaneously. Her father was a keen wrestler in his younger age.

She had an eager interest in athletics since childhood and the success of Dingko Singh a fellow Manipuri, who returned from the 1998 Bangkok Asian games with a gold medal, Kom recollects, had inspired many youngsters in Manipur to try boxing and she too thought of giving it a try.

Mary Kom’s career started in 2000 after her victory in the Manipur State Women’s Boxing Championship and the regional championship in West Bengal. In 2001, she started competing at international

♦ *What was Mary Kom’s exceptional achievement?*

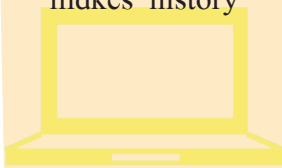
♦ *What has added to her greatness as a boxing champion?*

♦ *How did Kom’s parents make a living?*

• **jhum** : farming, shifting cultivation

• **humble surroundings** : simple and poor conditions

- **debut** : first public appearance or performance
- **reinforced** : strengthened
- **a legend** : one who makes history

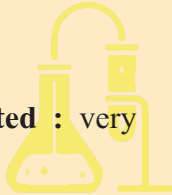


- **elation** : great joy



- **sunk in** : realize and accept

- **exhilarated** : very thrilled



◆ *What failed to pressurize Mary Kom during the Olympics?*

- **sparring** : motions of boxing during training, without landing actual blows

level. She was only 18 years old when she made her international **debut** at the first AIBA Women's World Boxing Championship in United States, winning a silver medal in the 48 kg weight category. Her greatness is **reinforced** by the way she apologised to the whole nation for not being able to win the Gold. She is **a legend** for sure and an idol for all the sportswomen to look up to.

AN INTERVIEW

In an exclusive interview with Sportskeeda correspondent Taruka Srivastava, Olympic Bronze medalist Mary Kom talked about her preparation for the Olympics and her **elation** at winning a medal.

Interviewer : First things first-you're the first Indian female boxer to win an Olympics medal for India. Has the feeling completely **sunk in**?

Mary Kom : I am really happy with my achievement and yes it is yet to sink in. I am just so **exhilarated**.

Interviewer : You were the only female representative from India in boxing. Did that put additional pressure on you?

Mary Kom : No, not at all. I was pretty confident about myself. I knew.

Interviewer : Your coach Charles Atkinson was not allowed to accompany you to the Olympics. How did that affect your preparations?

Mary Kom : Well, I did miss him there but thankfully, we had already done our homework and I was well prepared.

Interviewer : During your preparations for the Olympics, you sparred with the male boxers of the Indian contingent. Who was your favourite **sparring** partner?

Mary Kom : (Laughs) Well, I trained hard in Pune and the male boxers were kind enough to practise with me whenever I required them. To name a favourite would be unfair.

Interviewer : You were quoted saying "Adams was very clever, a counter-puncher but, although she

carried power, she wasn't very **tactical**. I was scoring but the judges were not pressing the buttons." Do you think **dodgy** judging was part of the reason for your loss in the semi-finals?

Mary Kom : Yes, I think some of the decisions were unfortunate and did not work to my benefit.

Interviewer : India managed just 6 medals in the 2012 Olympics even though we are a nation of 1:3 billion people. Where do you think a change is required to help us win medals that are proportionate with our population?

Mary Kom : I think more and more people should take up sports as a full-time career if we want more gold medals. More **corporates** should come in and **sponsor** players so that the players don't have any financial pressure and can just focus on their games.

Interviewer : Do you think interest in boxing in India will ever go beyond the Olympics?

Mary Kom : Yes, I am sure that in a few years boxing will be very popular among everyone in India, all the year round.

Interviewer : How aware are Indian women of their nutritional requirements? Diet and nutrition must've been a key factor in your **conditioning** for the Olympics. Do you think nutrition is a neglected area in Indian sports?

Mary Kom : The awareness is growing now among the female athletes when it comes to nutritional requirements. Nutrition has definitely been a neglected area in Indian sports. I had to gain 3 kgs since I had to fight in the 51kg event instead of the usual 48kgs that I fight in. So I had to focus on what to eat. I gained weight by eating the right kind of healthy food rather than bad **saturated fats**.

Interviewer : How big a role did **OGQ** play in shaping the boxing scene in India for the better?

Mary Kom : OGQ really played an important part in my success. They helped me out whenever I needed something. They took care of everything, which helped me focus on my boxing and kept me stress-free.

Interviewer : What's your opinion on the future of Indian boxing?

- **tactical** : planned actions to gain victory
- **dodgy** : unjust/partial

- **corporates** : companies or industries
- **sponsor** : organization that pays or aids sportsmen or a sports event

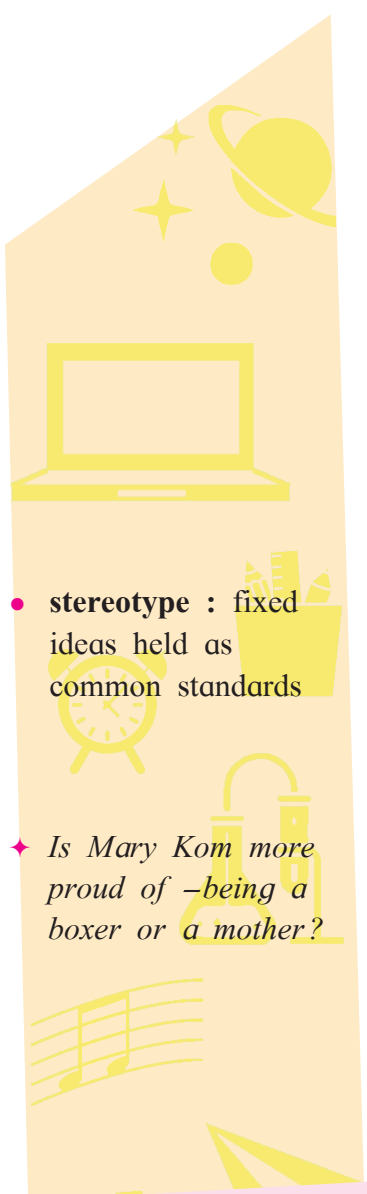
♦ *What can help Indian Sportsmen to win more Olympic Medals?*

- **conditioning** : becoming fit

♦ *How did Mary Kom increase her weight?*

- **saturated fats** : unhealthy fats
- **OGQ** : Olympic Gold Quest

♦ *What did OGQ do for Mary Kom?*



• **stereotype** : fixed ideas held as common standards

♦ *Is Mary Kom more proud of –being a boxer or a mother?*

Mary Kom : The future is very bright and I am sure many more boxers will get medals for us.

Interviewer : Do you find it difficult to convince your children not to fight when they watch you go out and do it in style all the time?

Mary Kom : Well, I have twins and yes, sometimes it becomes really difficult to keep them under control.

Interviewer : Will you train your kids to become boxers as well?

Mary Kom : I haven't really thought about it. As of now, just let their mother box!

Interviewer : You have broken several **stereotypes** about the women in India by showing that women can compete with men in any field. But how good are you at the 'traditional' feminine activities like cooking?

Mary Kom : Well, I am good at cooking and other household work too.

Interviewer : Would you be interested in coaching Indian women in boxing one day?

Mary Kom : Let's see. In the future, may be yes.

Interviewer : What do you prefer being called – Super Mom or Super Boxer?

Mary Kom : I love being a mom. That's the best thing that has ever happened to me.

Awards and recognitions

- Arjuna Award (Boxing) in 2003
- Padma Shree (Sports) in 2006
- Contender for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in 2007
- People of the Year – Limca Book of Records in 2007
- CNN-IBN and Reliance Industries Real Heroes Award in 2008
- Pepsi MTV Youth, AIBA in 2008
- 'Magnificent Mary', AIBA in 2008
- Felicitation by Zomi Student's Federation (ZSF) at New Lamka YPA Hall in 2008
- Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award in 2009
- International Boxing Association's Ambassador for Women's Boxing in 2009
- Sportswoman of the year, Sahara Sports Award in 2010
- The first Indian Woman Boxer to win Gold at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

ENGLISH WORKSHOP

1. Choose the correct alternative and underline it.

- (a) What is included in the text?
(i) story (ii) speech (iii) interview (iv) poem
- (b) Which State does Mary Kom belong to?
(i) Maharashtra (ii) Tamil Nadu (iii) Kerala (iv) Manipur
- (c) Who inspired Mary Kom and other youngsters in Manipur to choose boxing as a career?
(i) Dingko Singh (ii) Charles Atkinson (iii) Mangte Tonpa Kom (iv) Adams
- (d) What does Mary Kom prefer being called?
(i) Super mom (ii) Super boxer (iii) Super woman (iv) Super being

2. Go through the text again and find out the name of cities and their importance in Mary Kom's life. One is given for you.

- (a) Kangthei – Mary Kom's birth place
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)

3. Go through the text again and complete the following sentences.

1. Mary Kom helped her parents with
2. The success of Dingko Singh inspired
3. Mary Kom made her debut at
4. We can get more gold medals if
5. Mary Kom was able to increase her weight by
6. Mary Kom is good at
7. Mary Kom loves to be
8. Mary Kom apologised the nation for
9. Kom's parents were Her father was
10. Kom was the first woman boxer to

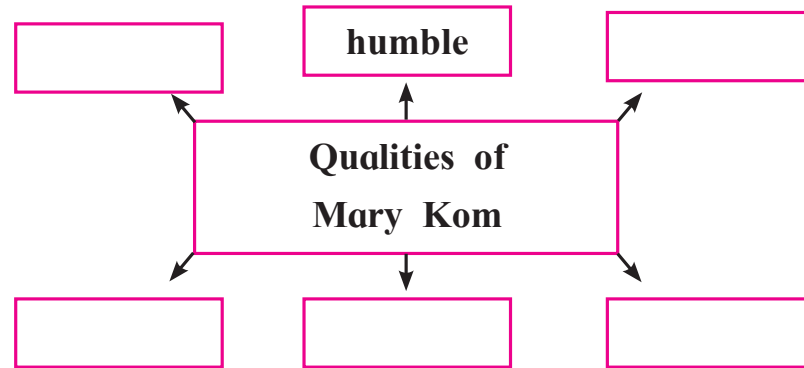
4. You will find some Acronyms (short forms) in the text. Go to the library or search the internet to find their full forms. Discuss with your partner. One is given for you.

- (a) OGQ - Olympic Gold Quest
- (b) IBN -
- (c) MTV -
- (d) YPA -
- (e) AIBA -
- (f) CNN -

5. Fill in the factfile of Mary Kom.

- (a) Full name : (f) Coach :
(b) Native of : (g) Early achievements :
(c) Early life and interests : (h) International achievements :
(d) Special sports taken up : (i) Her passion :
(e) Inspired by : (j) Future plans :

6. Glance through the text and find the special qualities of Mary Kom. Complete the web by putting different qualities of Mary Kom in the boxes.



7. ‘Super Mom’ refers to an excellent mother. Give three reasons why ‘super’ has been added to the word ‘mom’ as in the title.

1.
2.
3.

8. Answer the following questions in your own words.

- (a) What makes the writer call Mary Kom ‘a legend’?
(b) What prime quality did Mary Kom display during her first attempt in Olympic games? What was her bad luck?
(c) What does Mary Kom suggest, for India to win more Olympic Gold Medals?

9. Rearrange the facts below in their proper order, as per the text.

- (a) Mary Kom made her first appearance at international level.
(b) She sparred with male boxers in Pune.
(c) Mary Kom won the Manipur State’s Women’s Boxing Championship.
(d) She won a bronze medal in the 2012 Olympics.
(e) Mary Kom decided to take up boxing.

10. Mary Kom prepared rigorously to win many championships. Read the text again and make a list of various things done by Kom regarding her preparations.

- Variety of preparations
- Diet
- Focus

11. Make sentences of your own using the following words.

- (a) debut ●
●
- (b) elation ●
●
- (c) sponsor ●
●
- (d) reinforced ●
●
- (e) humble surroundings ●
●

12. Find antonyms of the following words from the text.

- (a) Arrogant ×
- (b) Finally ×
- (c) Depressed ×
- (d) Disqualify ×
- (e) Diffident ×
- (f) Float ×

13. Underline the subordinate clauses and state their kind.

- (a) Enough has been said about this great warrior, who conquered the world.
(Subordinate clause)
- (b) The male boxers kindly practised with me whenever I required them.
- (c) I think that more people should take up sports as a full-time career
- (d) Do you think nutrition is a neglected area in Indian sports?
- (e) That's the best thing, that has happened to me.
- (f) India managed just 6 medals in 2012 Olympics even though we are a nation of 1.3 billion people.

14. (A) Pick out from the lesson the Verb forms of :

- (a) qualification
- (d) decisions
- (b) negligence
- (e) practice
- (c) company
- (f) birth

(B) Pick out the Noun forms of :

- (a) represent
- (d) achieve
- (b) change
- (e) aware
- (c) prepare
- (f) succeed

(C) Pick out the Adjective forms of :

- (a) favour
- (d) nutrition
- (b) proportion
- (e) female
- (c) finance
- (f) addition

15. Imagine that you are the Captain of your team. A famous cricketer is going to visit your school. You are assigned the task to conduct an interview of that famous cricketer. Frame a set of 10 questions that you will ask the cricketer. Take help of the points given below.

- (a) Early life
- (b) Interest in this field
- (c) Inspiration
- (d) Coaching and guidance
- (e) Achievements/ Records
- (f) Future plans
- (g) Advice to youngsters

16. Write a short paragraph describing the life and work of Mary Kom. Take help of the points given below. You can take help of the factfile that you have prepared earlier (Activity 5).

- (a) Early life
- (b) Training
- (c) Achievements
- (d) Future Plans

17. ‘What men can do, women can do better.’

Divide your class in 2 groups. Let one group offer points ‘For the topic’ and the other, ‘Against the topic.’ Note down the points in your notebooks and expand the points in two separate write-ups, as views and counterviews. Suggest suitable titles for each.

18. Two famous proverbs – ‘Actions speak louder than words’ and ‘Fortune favours the brave’ are best suited to the personality of Mary Kom. Form two groups in the class. Each group should write a paragraph on one proverb with reference to the life and achievements of Mary Kom.

