

Name: _____

The Champ

by Anita Nahta Amin

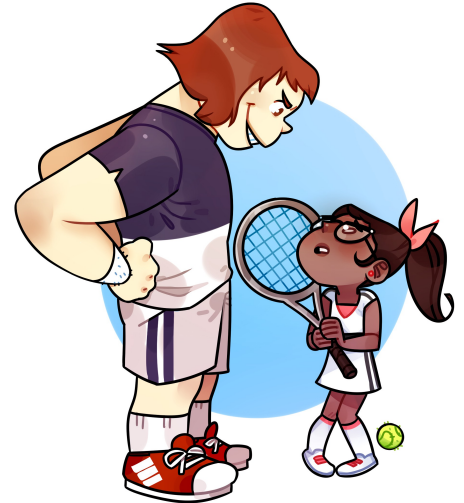
"Big Bertha," Emily mumbled under her breath as she jogged down the brick steps. She slashed the air with her tennis racket. Big Bertha always gave her trouble. But today, Emily planned to take Big Bertha down.

Suddenly, Emily heard giggles and stopped. She pulled back and lingered in the shadows, clutching her racket. A jabbering hullabaloo whirred in front of her. Would all of those people be watching her? Emily bit her lip and pushed up her glasses.

"It's time," someone shouted.

Emily blinked. She glanced around and shuffled to her spot.

Her opponent Big Bertha loomed on the other side of the net. Big Bertha's biceps bulged as she saluted the crowd with her racket.





~ PREVIEW ~

**Please log in or register to download
the printable version of this worksheet.**

rolled c

e and

"Fault," Emily mumbled. *Focus*, she told herself. She shook her legs and bounced her tennis ball. She inhaled deeply. Then as her breath rushed out like an ocean wave, she knocked her next serve over the net.

Big Bertha tapped the ball right back over to Emily's side.

Emily frowned and dashed left. "Oomph!" The ball zipped past her before she could hit it. The score ticked from love-all to love-15.

Emily clenched her teeth. What made Big Bertha so great anyway? Emily narrowed her eyes. She smacked another serve, then raced to mid-court.

Big Bertha hit the ball back.

Emily leaped right, her left leg flailing in the air. With a volley on the edge of her racket, she popped the ball back to Big Bertha.

Big Bertha's grin disappeared. She raced forward and tapped the ball to Emily's far left.

Emily stumbled as the ball dropped down for its second bounce. The score jumped to love-30.

"Yes!" Only two more rounds and Big Bertha would win.

Emily hung her head. What was she doing wrong? She dribbled the ball with her racket and replayed the last round in her mind.

A pattern began to emerge. Emily's mouth fell open. She looked up. Was that how Big Bertha always won?

Emily stared at Big Bertha. All of a sudden, Big Bertha didn't seem so formidable.

Emily smiled and straightened her glasses. "No, I'll keep playing."

Emily moved to the right side of the court and served. She watched her ball sail left. Would Big Bertha copy her and hit it back to Emily's left? On a hunch, Emily zoomed left.

So Emil

of bou



t.

“Out

A flurry of squeaking sneakers, whacking rackets, and cracking balls filled the next two rounds.

“Ooh!” and “Oh!” swelled through the crowd. The score surged to 40-30. Emily was finally leading.

The crowd chanted, “Eh-ma-lee! Eh-ma-lee!”

Emily smiled broadly. Her nerves crackled with power. Nothing could stop her now.

Slowly and deliberately, Emily began to bounce her ball. *Pop, pop* against the pavement it echoed.

The crowd hushed.

Big Bertha snarled and scuffed her feet like a charging bull. She jabbed the air with her racket.

Emily looked straight at Big Bertha. With a quick toss, Emily slammed her serve over the net.

The crowd leaped to their feet as the ball bounced and hurtled past Big Bertha before she could hit it.

They cheered. “Wow! Did you see that ace?”

Emily laughed. She'd won the game! She felt as light as a bubble lifting up through the sky.

“How are my champs doing?” a familiar voice sang.

Emily blinked. She found herself facing her brick chimney. She jerked her gaze to the top of her driveway, where her dad was climbing out of his car.

“Daddy's home!” Emily's sisters bicycled away from their neighborhood friends to greet him.

Emily beamed. She leaned her racket against the chimney and raced to hug Dad, too.

Name: _____

The Champ

by Anita Nahta Amin



1. Which sentence best describes Emily's attitude toward Big Bertha at the beginning of the story?
 - a. Emily is afraid that Big Bertha will cheat during the tennis match.
 - b. Emily is curious to see if Big Bertha will live up to her fierce reputation.
 - c. Emily is determined to defeat Big Bertha in the tennis match.
 - d. Emily is overconfident that the tennis match will be easy.

2. At what point in the story does Emily realize that Big Bertha isn't as unbeatable as she seems?
 - a. when the crowd cheers Big Bertha's name
 - b. when she discovers a pattern in Big Bertha's strategy
 - c. when the crowd cheers Emily's name
 - d. when the ball lands out of bounds

3.



~ PREVIEW ~

Please log in or register to download the printable version of this worksheet.

4.

Big Bertha's biceps **bulged** as she saluted the crowd with her racket.

- a. stood out in an unnatural way
 - b. became much smaller
 - c. twitched nervously
 - d. became less noticeable
-
5. Which character in the list below is not mentioned in the story?
 - a. Emily's dad
 - b. Emily's mom
 - c. Emily's sisters
 - d. Emily's neighborhood friends

Name: _____

The Champ

by Anita Nahta Amin



The words below are scrambled words from "The Champ," by Anita Nahta Amin. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Check back in the story to make sure each word is spelled correctly.

1.

n	a	l	l
i	g	f	i

Clue: swinging or waving wildly

2.

l	u	b	l	o
h	o	a	l	a

Clue: a big fuss; commotion

3.

Clue



~ PREVIEW ~

Please log in or register to download the printable version of this worksheet.

4.

l	l	e
---	---	---

Clue: laughed or snickered nervously

5.

g	n	l	i
e	e	d	r

Clue: stayed longer than necessary

6.

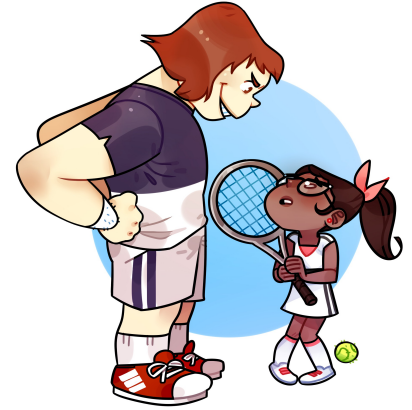
d	e	i	f
e	t	d	g

Clue: moved around restlessly

Name: _____

The Champ

by Anita Nahta Amin



In the story, "The Champ" by Anita Nahta Amin, Emily learned that by looking at a challenge in a new way, she could defeat her imaginary tennis rival, Big Bertha.

On the lines below, write a paragraph describing a challenge you faced. How did you first feel about the situation? Did you need to change your way of thinking in order to overcome your challenge? Finally, how did you feel after you overcame the challenge?



~ PREVIEW ~

Please log in or register to download the printable version of this worksheet.

ANSWER KEY

The Champ

by Anita Nahta Amin



1. Which sentence best describes Emily's attitude toward Big Bertha at the beginning of the story? **c.**
- a. Emily is afraid that Big Bertha will cheat during the tennis match. .
 - b. Emily is curious to see if Big Bertha will live up to her fierce reputation.
 - c. Emily is determined to defeat Big Bertha in the tennis match.**
 - d. Emily is overconfident that the tennis match will be easy.

2.



3.

4.

~ PREVIEW ~

Please log in or register to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

5.

- c. Emily's sisters
- d. Emily's neighborhood friends

ANSWER KEY

The Champ

by Anita Nahta Amin



The words below are scrambled words from "The Champ," by Anita Nahta Amin. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Check back in the story to make sure each word is spelled correctly.

1.

n	a	l	l
i	g	f	i

flailing

2.



3.

4.

~ **PREVIEW** ~

Please log in or register to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

6.

u	e	r	r
e	t	d	g

fidgeted

Clue: moved around restlessly