

GET READY

Of course, the greatest pre-game ritual employed by all professionals begins years before the kickoff, the tip off or the starting pistol fires. We see professional athletes enjoy the spotlight briefly. We miss the years of training leading up to that spotlight. Many consider that boring. That's why we don't have ESPN 4: The Twenty-Four Hour Practice Channel or Sports Illustrated 2: The Stretching Edition. You already know success follows hard work. Professional athletes know it, too. So, the pre-game ritual is not how athletes get ready. It is simply a strategy to help them remember how they got ready – through study, planning, careful decision-making and hard work.

Professional athletes aren't the only

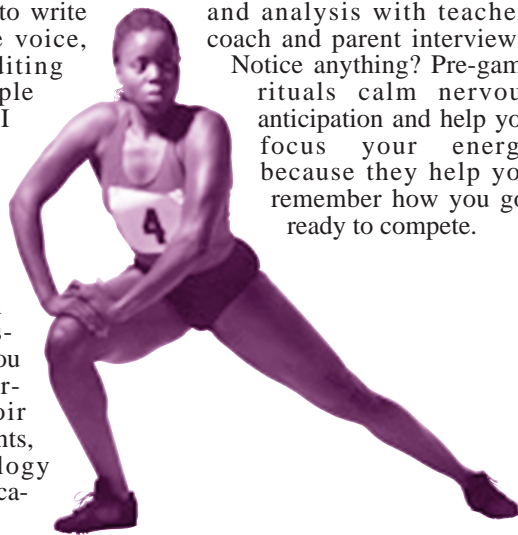
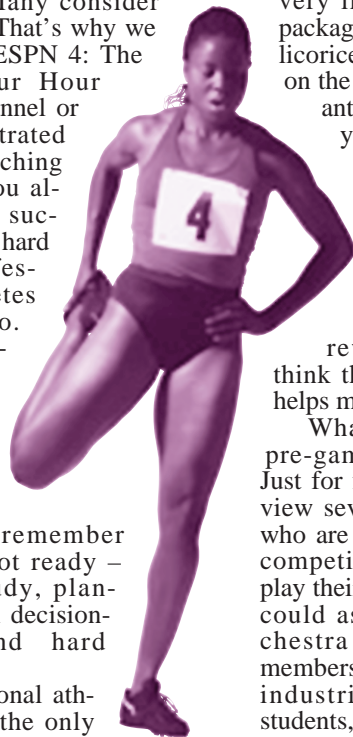
ones who participate in pre-game rituals. Artists, musicians, teachers as well as other professionals engage in pre-game rituals. Many writers engage in pre-writing rituals.

I try to visualize my work on the page and then (this is very important), get a fresh package of Twizzlers® cherry licorice. Visualizing my work on the page calms my nervous anticipation as I remember years of training, such as fourth grade and seventh grade English, Senior English, learning to write in active voice, peer editing and multiple rewrites. I think the licorice helps me focus.

What is your pre-game ritual? Just for fun, interview several peers who are engaged in competition or display their talents. You could ask band, orchestra and choir members, art students, industrial technology students, athletes, aca-

ademic decathletes, Texas Future Problem Solvers, Odyssey of Mind members and others if they participate in any pre-game rituals prior to competition or performance. Chart and analyze the results. Use the charts below or develop your own charts. Do you see any similarities among your peers? Do you see connections to the hard work it takes to prepare for any competition or performance? Do you see any rituals that are like yours?

To make this really interesting, follow the peer interviews and analysis with teacher, coach and parent interviews. Notice anything? Pre-game rituals calm nervous anticipation and help you focus your energy because they help you remember how you got ready to compete.



IN TWENTY-FIVE WORDS OR LESS...

JUST
Think about what your peers and the adults around you shared about getting ready to perform and accomplish tasks. What do you conclude?

Create a personal slogan based on your conclusions. Nike® came up with "Just Do It" based on their research of professionals. Professionals just do the work. They just do the training. They just do what they have trained themselves to do.

DO
Think about getting ready and how being ready impacts your ability to accomplish tasks. Create a personal slogan that reflects your thinking. Just do it.

Hours at the keyboard = minutes of fame

Study - Work - Win

Field	Peer (✓)	Adult (✓)	Years in Training (#)	Engage in Pre-Game Rituals (Y/N)	What I Find Interesting
Academic					Academic
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
Fine Arts					Fine Arts
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
Sports					Sports
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
Other					Other
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
SUMMARY	Number of peers interviewed _____	Number of adults interviewed _____	Average number of years in training _____	Percent who participate in pre-game rituals _____	Conclusions: