

Tanni Grey-Thompson

Name: Baroness Carys Davina 'Tanni' Grey-Thompson

Born: 26 July 1969 in Cardiff, Wales.

Childhood

Tanni was born with a medical condition called spina bifida that prevented her from being able to run or walk properly. Spina bifida is a birth defect meaning that a baby's spine does not form normally. As a result, the spinal cord and the nerves in the back are left damaged.

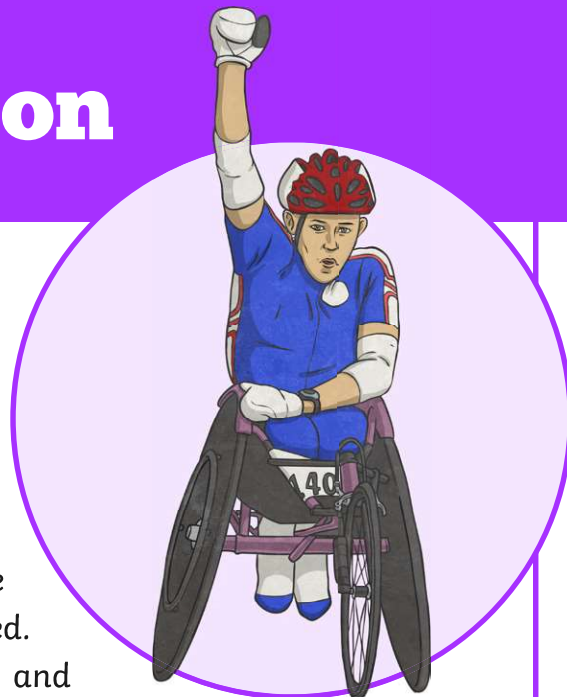
As a young child, she wore braces on her legs to try and strengthen them but when she was 7, it was decided that she

needed to use a wheelchair. Tanni's parents were determined to make her as outgoing and independent as possible. They encouraged her to take part in a number of sports, including archery, basketball, swimming and horse riding. However, it was when Tanni watched the

wheelchair athletes taking part in the London Marathon on TV that she first dreamed of a career in athletics. By the age of 15, she was racing for Wales in the Junior National Wheelchair Games and won the 100 metre race.

Achievements:

In 1988, Tanni was chosen to race for Great Britain at the Seoul Paralympic Games. She came home with a bronze medal in the 800m. Even after a year off after a back operation, Tanni still went to the Barcelona Paralympics in 1992, where she won four gold medals in the 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m and a silver in the 4x100m relay. It was at Barcelona that



Paralympic Games and Medals

1988 Seoul Games	1 bronze medal (400m)
1992 Barcelona Games	4 gold medals (100m, 200m, 400m and 800m) 1 silver medal (4 x 100m relay)
1996 Atlanta Games	1 gold medal (800m) 4 silver medals (100m, 200m, 400m and 4 x 100m relay)
2000 Sydney Games	4 gold medals (100m, 200m, 400m, 800m)
2004 Athens Games	2 gold medals (100m and 400m)

Tanni became the first woman to break the 60 second barrier in the 400m. Tanni was now Britain's most famous disabled athlete but she didn't stop there. Over 12 more years and three more Paralympic Games, Tanni won a further 7 gold and 4 silver medals. Over her career, Tanni also broke 30 World Records on the race track.

Life after the Paralympics

Tanni retired from racing in 2007 but she still spends a lot of time helping others to enjoy sport. She is a Board Member of the London Marathon and the Sportsaid Foundation, and has also presented some sports programmes for BBC Wales. She has received many accolades from The Queen, including an MBE in 1993 for 'services to sport', an OBE in 1997 and then in 2005, she was promoted to a Dame. Keen to fight for the rights of disabled people, in 2010 Tanni became a member of The House of Lords, taking the title of Baroness Grey-Thompson of Eaglescliffe. Tanni uses her experience and knowledge during debates in the House of Lords and she has spoken on a range of issues including disability rights, welfare reform for people with disabilities, and of course, funding for sports in schools and communities.

Amazing Fact!

When she was born, Tanni was actually given the name Carys Davina Grey. It was her two-year-old sister, Sian, who called the baby 'tanni' (when she was actually trying to say 'tiny'), and the name just stuck!

Tanni Grey-Thompson

Comprehension

Answer the following questions using full sentences that give as much detail as possible.

1. What prevents Tanni from being able to walk properly?

2. What did Tanni's parents encourage her to do as a child? Why?

3. How many Paralympic medals did Tanni win overall and over how many years?

4. Which two adjectives would you use to describe Tanni Grey-Thompson? Explain why.

I would describe Tanni as _____ because... _____

I would describe Tanni as _____ because... _____

5. In the final paragraph, it says Tanni was given many 'accolades' from The Queen.

Explain what this means. Use a dictionary if you need to.

6. Give two reasons why you think Tanni has become a member of The House of Lords.

7. Use the Internet to research another successful British Paralympian. Produce your own fact file.

Tanni Grey-Thompson

Comprehension

Answers

1. What prevents Tanni from being able to walk properly?

Tanni was born with a medical condition called spina bifida, which prevents her from being able to run or walk properly. Spina bifida is a birth defect that happens when a baby's spine does not form normally. As a result, the spinal cord and the nerves in the back are left damaged.

2. What did Tanni's parents encourage her to do as a child? Why?

Tanni's parents were determined to make her as outgoing and independent as possible. They encouraged her to take part in a number of sports, including archery, basketball, swimming and horse riding.

3. How many Paralympic medals did Tanni win overall and over how many years?

Over her 16 year Paralympic career, Tanni won a total of 16 medals - 11 golds, 5 silvers and 1 bronze.

4. Which two adjectives would you use to describe Tanni Grey-Thompson? Explain why.
I would describe Tanni as _____ because...
I would describe Tanni as _____ because...

Pupils' responses may include; hard-working, determined, courageous or inspirational, with appropriate reasoning relating to the text.

5. In the final paragraph, it says Tanni was given many 'accolades' from The Queen. Explain what this means. Use a dictionary if you need to.

An 'accolade' is a public recognition of somebody's achievements.

6. Give two reasons why you think Tanni has become a member of The House of Lords.

Pupils' responses may include; she is passionate about issues relating to people with disabilities and about sport, she is a very determined person or/and she wants to make a difference.

7. Use the Internet to research another successful British Paralympian. Produce your own fact file.

Pupil's own response.