

Name _____

Specialization and Decathlon Extension Activity

1. In the 2008 Summer Olympic Games Usain Bolt represented Jamaica, a nation with a population of less than 3 million and a per capita income less than one-fifth the per capita income of the United States. Athletes from the United States won a total of 110 medals (36 gold, 38 silver and 36 bronze). Athletes from Jamaica won 11 medals (6 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze), all of them in track and field. In addition to Usain Bolt's victories in the 100 meter and 200 meter races, Jamaican runners won gold medals in the women's 100 meter and 200 meter races and the men's and women's 4 x 100 relay races, defeating runners from the United States in each race. By specializing in the events for which they had an absolute advantage, Jamaican runners demonstrated that small nations can compete successfully with athletes from much larger countries in these events.

Use the CIA Factbook resource to identify the Jamaica's main exports, export partners, imports and import partners. Explain why Jamaica is able to export some of the goods it produces to larger, richer countries such as the United States.

Main Exports:

Export Partners:

Main Imports:

Import Partners:

Explanation:

2. A bobsled team from Jamaica competed in the 1988 Winter Olympic Games held in Alberta, Canada. Although the team did not come close to earning a medal in this event, the team garnered much media attention and sympathy from the general public as an underdog that exemplified the Olympic ideal.

The bobsled team even inspired a fictional film version of its story - *Cool Runnings* - that starred the late, great comic actor John Candy. Athletes from the U.S. won 37 medals in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver Canada, including a gold medal in the four-man bobsled. Jamaica has never won a medal in the Winter Olympic Games.

Why does Jamaica not have an absolute advantage in winter sports?

3. Over 500 athletes from the Dominican Republic, a country with fewer than 10 million people, have played Major League Baseball (MLB). Over 70 MLB players have come from just one city: San Pedro de Macoris, a municipality of only about 200,000 people located in the Dominican Republic. Few athletes from the Dominican Republic excel in other amateur and professional sports but many have competed at the highest level in MLB.

Explain how this demonstrates the benefits of specialization.