



Name: _____

The Iditarod

Have you ever heard about a thrilling race that takes place in the snowy wilderness of Alaska? It's called the Iditarod, and it's one of the most famous dog sled races in the world!

The Iditarod is a long-distance race where mushers and their teams of strong and smart sled dogs travel through the freezing cold Alaskan wilderness. The race covers over 1,000 miles, from Anchorage to Nome, and it takes about 8 to 15 days to complete, depending on the weather and trail conditions.

But why do people participate in such a challenging race? The Iditarod has a fascinating history that goes back to the early 1900s when dog sleds were the main mode of transportation in Alaska. The race is named after the small town of Iditarod, which was a hub for gold miners and settlers.



Musher (driver) behind the dog sled.

Today, the Iditarod is not just a race; it's a celebration of the strong bond between mushers and their sled dogs. The teams consist of 14 to 16 dogs that work together to pull the sled through the snowy terrain. Mushers rely on their dogs' strength, agility, and intelligence to navigate the challenging course.

The race begins with an exciting ceremony in downtown Anchorage, where mushers wave to the cheering crowd. After the ceremonial start, the real race kicks off in Willow, and the teams head into the wilderness, facing freezing temperatures, strong winds, and deep snow.

The Iditarod is not just about speed; it's also about strategy and teamwork. Mushers need to plan when to rest their dogs, feed them, and navigate through checkpoints along the trail. They must take good care of their furry teammates to ensure they stay healthy and energized throughout the race.

The Iditarod has become a symbol of courage, determination, and the spirit of adventure. It represents Alaska's rugged wilderness and the unique partnership between humans and dogs. Every year, people from around the world tune in to follow the race, cheering on their favorite mushers and their incredible canine companions.

1. What does the picture help you understand about the text? _____

2. What is the Iditarod? _____

3. What is the distance of the race? How long does it take to finish the race? _____
