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Though she didn't write the book herself, Olympian gymnast Gabrielle Douglas tells the remarkable story of her journey through faith and determination toward advancing in the sport she fell in love with at only 6 years old in her memoir *Grace, Gold, and Glory: My Leap of Faith.* The book begins with her birth in 1995 with her family struggling financially. As the story progresses, Gabrielle tells the reader of every bump in the road in her path toward victory as well as many childhood stories every kid can relate to, such as falling off her bike or being chased by a dog. However with the help of the unconditional support from her family, her Christian faith, and of course her natural talent, Gabby achieved what she had dreamed of since watching the 2008 Olympic Games from her television in Virginia at only 13 years old; winning gold for her country at the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

As Gabrielle’s book stole hearts within the first year of being published, readers all over the nation admit they got what they expected; an inspirational story. As it may not be a surprise, this was exactly what Gabby wanted to do. With her memoir she seeks “to inspire others just as others have inspired [her].”(5) She looks beyond the lessons she learned at the gym and intends to share the leaps of faith she needed to make throughout her life. While her purpose is almost solely to inspire her readers, her suggested audience is “anyone with a dream”. She does not limit her readers by eluding the book with overwhelming gymnastics terminology, but rather opens her book to anyone who understands faith and wants to learn determination from one who has succeeded. With her unique writing style in which she includes more than one “LOL”, the story is targeted at teenagers.

Through the facts the Gabby incorporates from her life, the interpreted message I have found in her book is how inner strength is far more important that outer strength. As she most definitely does not admit that her 36 hours of training a week are useless in gaining muscle and endurance, she purposefully puts much more of an emphasis on her mental energy than her physical durability. When Gabby was born, Gabby’s mother relied heavily on her faith in Christ to guide her out of debt and insubstantial living. In consequence, her mother's faith carried over to Gabby as she matured and understood the power of scripture and verses. Before every international meet or important event in her life, Gabby admits that she prayed to God day after day to put strength in her to not be physically prepared, but instead help her keep her “head held high and keep [her] humble and grounded” regardless of what happens. She emphasizes putting unconditional trust in God, for he will guide his people in the right direction. Different from many other sports related books that emphasize how training has carried them in the direction of their success, Gabby writes truthfully how “faith stands as the most important figure in [her] gymnastics dream”(54) not her coach. She gives “all her glory to God. It’s kind of a win-win situation. The glory goes up to Him and the blessings fall down on [her].”(61)

Written by co-author Michelle Burford, the writing style of Gabrielle Douglas’s memoir is rather casual. However personally, this is what set me and this book apart. While I marvel at the inspiring and truly unique message the story reveals, I found the writing style to be immature. The constant comments incorporated in the book such as “How sweet is *that*?(45), “*Are you kidding me?*”(93), and the common “LOL”, made me feel as if the book wasn’t quite age appropriate for me. However, my interest in the energizing story kept me reading regardless of the occasional lines I disliked. In other situations, Gabby would emphasize certain words such as “*gliiiiiiiiiiiiiide*”(44) as they would be if she was saying the story out loud. In contrast to the casual LOL’s, I didn’t mind this aspect in her writing style and actually found it made the story more engaging and easier to understand. In general, I would recommend this book to anyone who isn’t solely athletic or a gymnast, but to anyone who is interesting in learning how to make a dream become reality, for Gabrielle Douglas’s memoir is truly an inspiring story that proved anything is possible with a little faith.