

The origins of sport

Language

Vocabulary connected with sport, prepositions, linkers

Level

Elementary to pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A1/A2–B1 and above)

Comment

This eLesson looks at the origins of the three of the most popular sports worldwide.

How to use the lesson

- 1 You could start the lesson with pictures of different sports and sports equipment if appropriate. Ask students to think of as many different sports as they can. One way to do this is by clapping three times to set up a rhythm. After the third clap the first student says the name of a sport, clap three times and then the next student has to say the name of a sport. Continue round the class. If a student repeats the name of a sport or can't think of one, they're out of the game. The winner is the last student left in the game. You could then pre-teach / check some of the vocabulary for games, eg *net*, *court* (for *tennis* / *basketball*), *pitch* (for *football*), *racquet*, *team*, *match*. Then ask students in pairs to guess which sport is oldest and in which country they started. Take feedback.
- 2 Set exercise 1 and give a brief time limit, eg 1–2 minutes depending on students' level, to encourage fast reading. When the time limit is up, students can discuss their answers in pairs if appropriate. Take feedback.
- 3 Exercise 2 gives students practice in reading for specific information. If you feel your students might have problems with any of the words, you can refer them to the Glossary. Set exercise 2. Students could compare their answers in pairs. Take class feedback.
- 4 Exercise 3 focuses on vocabulary. Students choose the correct word. Weaker students could look back at the text to find the correct words. Students could compare their answers in pairs. Take class feedback. You could highlight the stress on the first syllable of *leather*, *matches*, *racquet*, *basket* and the second syllable of *equipment*.
- 5 Exercise 4 focuses on prepositions. Stronger students could try and guess which preposition and then look back at the text to check their answers. Weaker students could complete the sentences by finding the correct preposition in the text. If necessary, check the past simple of *hit* (*hit*). You could encourage students to make a note of larger chunks of language, eg *there is evidence of something*, *kick a ball into the goal* / *through a hole*, *(no) limit on something*, *the rules for something date back to*, *to talk about something*, *to start as*, *to hit something with your hand* / *a racquet*, *to be popular in a country* / *a century*, *the name comes from ...* If appropriate, you could ask students to write examples using these patterns about other sports or games.
- 6 Exercise 5 focuses on linkers for the order in which things happen. You could highlight the order if necessary. Focus on the example and highlight the use of past simple for the verb. Students write the sentences, choosing the correct order. They could look back at the text if necessary to check. Take feedback.
- 7 Exercise 6 gives students personalised speaking practice about sport. Set the discussion task for small groups if appropriate. Take class feedback.

Answer key

1

Football is the oldest (a game in China in the 2nd / 3rd centuries BC)
basketball: USA; football: China; tennis: France

2

- 1 30–40
- 2 30; 1314; 1667
- 3 14
- 4 2; 10
- 5 1906
- 6 3

3

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1 leather | 5 racquet |
| 2 kick / goal | 6 basket |
| 3 rules | 7 metal |
| 4 matches | 8 equipment |

4

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| 1 of | 6 with |
| 2 through | 7 in |
| 3 on | 8 to |
| 4 about | 9 from |
| 5 as | 10 for |

5 Suggested answers

- 1 At first players kicked the ball through a small hole in a net. Then / Later they kicked the ball into a goal
- 2 At first players hit the ball with their hands. Then / Later they hit the ball with a glove. Finally, they hit the ball with a racquet.
- 3 At first players used fruit baskets. Then / Later they used a net with a metal ring. Finally, they used a net with a hole for the ball to fall through.
- 6 Students' own answers / ideas.

Related websites

The following websites might be useful for either you or your students.

- <http://www.history-of-basketball.com/history.htm>
- <http://www.kidzworld.com/article/1967-sports-origins>
- <http://www.fifa.com/classicfootball/history/game/historygame1.html>
- <http://www.fifa.com/classicfootball/history/game/historygame4.html>
- http://www.historyoftennis.net/history_of_tennis.html
- http://news.bbc.co.uk/sportacademy/hi/sa/tennis/rules/history/newsid_3575000/3575083.stm
- http://www.talkfootball.co.uk/guides/history_of_football.html
- <http://www.soccer-fans-info.com/international-soccer.html>