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Each story explains the basic concepts behind many popular sports, while comparing them to other sports. Each one is explained from the perspective of a boy or a girl who plays the sport, explaining not only the rules but also what they enjoy about the game.

Sports Time!

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Baseball Time!

Robbie played baseball. It was his favorite sport. Sure, the other ones were fun, but there was something special about baseball. Baseball was a series of slow, tense moments waiting for something to happen. When something did happen, it was exciting and sudden. You always had to be ready for it!



Baseball isn't too expensive to play. There are cheap, safe versions of the game like wiffle ball, which is all played with a plastic ball and bat. You can use your hands to catch the ball. It's very fun! Softball is pretty similar, too. To play baseball or softball, you need a uniform, which is a jersey, athletic pants, socks, cleats, and a hat. You also need a glove to play in the field or a helmet and a bat to hit the ball. Batting gloves are nice, too, because they minimize the stinging if you hit a fast ball.

Baseball usually has 9 players per team. That's a pitcher, a catcher, four infielders, and three outfielders. Outfielders are named by where they stand: left, right, and center fielders. Infielders are the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd basemen, along with the shortstop, who helps out between 2nd and 3rd base. The pitcher stands at the middle of the infield, throwing the ball toward home plate, where the catcher must catch the ball. He needs special equipment to protect his legs, chest, and face, because he can catch a baseball in the body pretty easily if the ball comes off the ground or off a bat wrong!

Baseball has 9 innings, which seems like a weird number compared to sports with halves, periods, or quarters, right? Each inning has a top and a bottom, where either the home team is trying to hit the ball or the away team is. That means each team has 9 chances to score and 9 chances to defend. A special break is taken after the 7th inning, called the "7th inning stretch."

Baseball Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Robbie play?
 - A. Softball
 - B. Wiffle Ball
 - C. Kickball
 - D. Baseball

2. How many innings are in a baseball game?
 - A. 4
 - B. 6
 - C. 9
 - D. 12

3. What position does Robbie play?
 - A. Catcher
 - B. Pitcher
 - C. 1st Base
 - D. Shortstop

4. TRUE OR FALSE: Baseball is nicknamed 'America's Game.'
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. TRUE OR FALSE: Batters get 5 balls before they get a walk.
 - A. True
 - B. False

Football Time! Soccer Time!

Bo played soccer. It was his favorite sport. Sure, the other ones were fun, but there was something very fun about soccer. It was competitive, but so were other sports. It was fast, and some sports were fast, but this was like a race. Maybe that's what he liked best about it: the running. It was like a zigzagging race while kicking a ball and that made it fun.



Basic soccer equipment is not expensive, which makes it an easy game to play. It can also be played casually among friends anywhere that you have a nice stretch of grass. Pro players wear a jersey, shorts, socks, cleats, and shin guards. At home, you can get away without the shin guards and probably wear tennis shoes. Cleats, however, help you grip the grass so you can run and turn more quickly. This is important for protecting your ankles and legs as you spin, turn, kick, and change directions often.

Soccer usually has 11 players per team, including a goalkeeper. Players are usually broken up into four groups: goalkeepers, defense, midfielders, and forwards. There are different kinds of defense, midfielders, and forwards, each with a slightly different job, but each team only has one goalkeeper. He or she is important, because the goalkeeper is the only one that can handle the ball with their hands. All other players must only use their feet, along with any part of their legs, chests, or heads.

Soccer is a 90 minute game split into two 45 minute halves. This is different than games like baseball, with its nine innings; basketball and football, which each have four quarters; or hockey with its three periods. Unlike football, there isn't a lot of stopping in soccer. While the game is playing, the clock keeps running. When it stops, it is only for a few seconds to set up for a kick or to give the other team the ball. Because of that, it is a fun sport to watch, too, because you don't have a lot of down time or breaks.

Bo liked playing as a midfielder. It was a fun position, probably with the most running involved. He not only had to help the defense fight off the other team's offense, he also had to help move the ball down the field to help his own team score. This meant that sometimes he would even take shots on the opponent's goal or set up a play for another one of his teammates. He loved getting assists on scores, because if he played just right, he knew he could help his team score and win.

Football Time! Soccer Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Bo play?

- A. Soccer
- B. Baseball
- C. Basketball
- D. Football

2. How many minutes is a soccer game?

- A. 60
- B. 45
- C. 90
- D. 120

3. What sport is the scoring in soccer most like?

- A. Ice Hockey
- B. Baseball
- C. Basketball
- D. Football

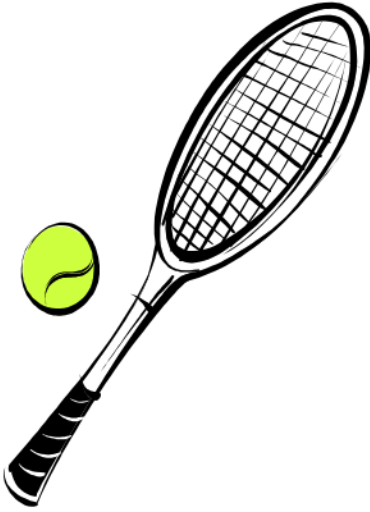
4. TRUE OR FALSE: Soccer is the most popular sport to watch in most countries.

- A. True
- B. False

5. TRUE OR FALSE: Soccer is a very high scoring game.

- A. True
- B. False

Tennis Time!



Cara played tennis. It was her favorite sport. She really enjoyed all kinds of similar sports, like ping pong, volleyball, and badminton, but she really liked tennis the most. There was something about running back and forth on that green court and delivered a great backhanded return that really made her smile.

Tennis requires only a net, a racket, and some tennis balls. Tennis is played in singles or doubles. It is very much like badminton that way. If you have a wall, you can practice against yourself, returning the bouncing balls. You can also practice in an empty court, just serving a bucket of balls, or practicing against a machine that launches tennis balls your way (sort of like a batting machine for baseball).

Tennis is about serving and returning. Someone serves the ball, and the other player(s) have to return it from the other side of the net. The object is to get the ball to touch the ground in the other team's side twice, or to touch once and bounce out of bounds. If you do that, you either get the serve from the other team if they had it, or you score points.

When you serve, you have to serve from a certain area on the court. You have to hit the ball over the net and into a specific area of the court marked by white lines. If you hit the net on the way over, you get a redo. If you hit the net and it stops, your serve is done. If you hit the ball out of bounds, your turn is also done. The receiving team or player gets to stand wherever they want, and they're supposed to hit it back toward the serving player's side of the court. They want to get it to touch once and skip out of bounds so the other player can't send it back their way again. They can also try to get two bounces in on the other person's side, but that can be hard. These volleys can go back and forth pretty quickly, and they might go for several strokes before one player is put in a position where they can't return the ball, giving their opponent a point.

Scoring is strange in tennis. You need to get to 4 points to win, and you have to win by 2 points. However, they call the points strange thing. Instead of saying 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 points, they say: love, 15, 30, 40, game. A lot of games get stuck at 3-4 or 4-4, and they have to keep playing to get a 2 point win. So even though it seems easy to score 4 points and beat someone by 2, strong players can go back and forth a long time. Usually you play a set of several games.

After one player wins so many games, they get credit for winning the set and a new set is started. A match is won when you win enough sets, usually 3 or 5 sets. So, to win an entire match of tennis, you might have played several games in several sets! That's complicated, right?



Cara liked playing doubles games. She had a really good partner, and they worked well as a team. She was best at returning, while her teammate was great at serving. They worked well together. Still, Cara knew that her game wasn't as popular in America as some other sports. In Europe it was a big deal, and there were some very famous tennis players and matches you might have even heard of.

Are you going to try to watch or play tennis?

Tennis Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Cara play?
 - A. Pickle ball
 - B. Tennis
 - C. Badminton
 - D. Ping Pong

2. What is it called when you have 0 points in tennis?
 - A. love
 - B. 15
 - C. 30
 - D. 40

3. Usually there are how many players on a tennis team?
 - A. 1 or 2
 - B. 2 or 3
 - C. Always 2
 - D. Always only 1

4. TRUE OR FALSE: According to the story, tennis is similar to ping pong, volleyball, and badminton.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. TRUE OR FALSE: You have to win just one set to win a match in tennis.
 - A. True
 - B. False

ENGLISH TENSES

TENSES		FORMS (Affirmative - A/Negative - N Question - Q)	USE	TIME PHRASES
INDEFINITE (SIMPLE)	PRESENT	<p>A: I work. He/she/it works. You/we/they work.</p> <p>N: I do not (don't) work. He/she/it does not (doesn't) work. You/we/they do not (don't) work.</p> <p>Q: Do I work? Does he/she/it work? Do you/we/they work?</p>	<p>1-to talk about general truth and permanent actions(facts): <i>The Earth rotates round its axis. It rains a lot in autumn. I speak English and French.</i></p> <p>2-to talk about repeated, customary actions: <i>He gets up at 8 o'clock every morning. They never listen to their teacher.</i></p> <p>3-to talk about a planned future action (a timetable or schedule) <i>The train leaves at 3 tomorrow.</i></p>	<p><i>always, every day/month/year never, often, normally, seldom, sometimes, usually, twice a week/day..., all the time</i></p>
	PAST	<p>Regular verbs + ed : worked, played, Irregular verbs – II column: went, ate</p> <p>A: I worked /went. He/she/it worked/went. You/we/they worked/went .</p> <p>N: I did not (didn't) work_/go. He/she/it did not (didn't) work_/go. You/we/they did not (didn't) work_/go.</p> <p>Q: Did I work_/go? Did he/she/it work_/go? Did you/we/they work_/go?</p>	<p>1-to talk about actions performed in the past (with finished time expressions): <i>I met my friend <u>yesterday</u>. Did you go to the seaside <u>last summer</u>?</i></p> <p>2-to talk about a succession of past actions (stories): <i>He opened the door, switched on the light and fed his cat.</i></p> <p>3- to talk about an action taking place in the middle of another action: <i>He fell asleep while the <u>teacher was explaining</u> new grammar rules.</i></p>	<p><i>yesterday, 2 minutes/hours/ days/years ago, in 1970, the other day, last month/year/ week/ Sunday</i></p>
	FUTURE	<p>A: I/we shall / will work. He/she/it will work. You/they will work.</p> <p>N: I/we shall not (shan't) / will not (won't) work. He/she/it will not (won't) work. You/they will not (won't) work.</p> <p>Q: Shall/will I/we work? Will he/she/it work? Will you/they work?</p> <p>◆ NOTE!!! Shall is used mostly <u>in the questions shall I...?/shall we...?</u> <u>In spoken</u> English we normally use I'll and we'll.</p>	<p>1-to talk about future actions: <i>I'll call you <u>tomorrow</u>. Mary will get a present <u>next month</u>.</i></p> <p>2-to predict the future (with probably, I expect..., I'm sure..., (I) think..., don't think, I wonder..., perhaps) <i>I think it will rain tomorrow. Perhaps she'll be late. I don't think the exam will be very difficult.</i></p> <p>3- to express intention at the moment of decision: <i>Do you like these shoes? - Yes, I'll buy them.</i></p> <p>4-in the 1st type of conditional sentences <i>If the weather is fine, we'll go to the country.</i></p>	<p><i>tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, one of these days, next week/month/ year etc., soon, in the near future, some day, in two days/five minutes/a month etc.</i></p>

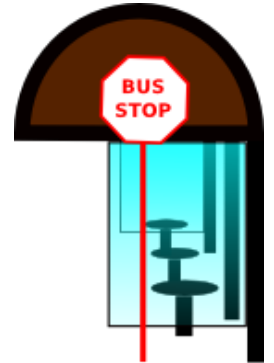
Fill in the correct verb forms!

I love travelling in the country, but I _____ (NOT LIKE) losing my way. I _____ (GO) on a trip the other day, but my trip took me longer than I _____ (EXPECT).

'I'm going to Woodford Green', I _____ (SAY) to the conductor as I _____ (GET) on the bus, 'but I _____ (NOT KNOW) where it is.' - 'I _____ (TELL) you where to get off,' _____ (ANSWER) the conductor.

I _____ (SIT) in front of the bus to get a good view of the countryside. After some time, the bus _____ (STOP). I realized with a shock that I _____ (BE) the only passenger left on the bus.

'You _____ (MUST, GET) off here', the conductor said, 'This is as far as we go.' We _____ (GO) back now,' _____ (SAY) the conductor.

Fill in the correct verb forms

My friend, Herbert, has always been fat, but things _____ (GET) so bad recently that he decided to go on a diet. He _____ (BEGIN) his diet a week ago. First of all, he _____ (WRITE) out a long list of all the foods which were forbidden. The list included most of the food he _____ (LOVE) : butter, potato es, rice, beer milk , chocolate, sweets and so on. Yesterday, I _____ (PAY) him a visit.

I _____ (RING) the bell and was not surprised to see Herbert as fat as ever. He _____ (LEAD) me to his room and hurriedly _____ (HIDE) a large parcel under his desk. He was very embarrassed. When I _____ (ASK) him what he _____ (DO) he _____ (SMILE) guiltily and then _____ (PUT) the parcel on the desk. He _____ (SHOW) me the contents of the parcel. It contained five large bars of chocolate and three bags of sweets!



Fill in the correct verb forms!

I love travelling in the country, but I **DON'T LIKE** (**NOT LIKE**) losing my way. I **WENT** (**GO**) on a trip the other day, but my trip took me longer than I **EXPECTED** (**EXPECT**).

'I'm going to Woodford Green', I **SAID** (**SAY**) to the conductor as I **GOT** (**GET**) on the bus, 'but I **DON'T KNOW** (**NOT KNOW**) where it is.' - 'I **WILL TELL** (**TELL**) you where to get off,' **ANSWERED** (**ANSWER**) the conductor.

I **SAT** (**SIT**) in front of the bus to get a good view of the countryside. After some time, the bus **STOPPED** (**STOP**). I realized with a shock that I **WAS** (**BE**) the only passenger left on the bus.

'You **MUST GET** (**MUST, GET**) off here', the conductor said, 'This is as far as we go.' We **ARE GOING** (**GO**) back now,' **SAID** (**SAY**) the conductor.

Fill in the correct verb forms

My friend, Herbert, has always been fat, but things **HAVE GOT** (**GET**) so bad recently that he decided to go on a diet. He **BEGAN** (**BEGIN**) his diet a week ago. First of all, he **WROTE** (**WRITE**) out a long list of all the foods which were forbidden. The list included most of the food he **LOVED** (**LOVE**) : butter, potatoes, rice, beer milk , chocolate, sweets and so on. Yesterday, I **PAID** (**PAY**) him a visit. I **RANG** (**RING**) the bell and was not surprised to see Herbert as fat as ever. He **LED** (**LEAD**) me to his room and hurriedly **HID** (**HIDE**) a large parcel under his desk. He was very embarrassed. When I **ASKED** (**ASK**) him what he **WAS DOING** (**DO**) he **SMILED** (**SMILE**) guiltily and then **PUT** (**PUT**) the parcel on the desk. He **SHOWED** (**SHOW**) me the contents of the parcel. It contained five large bars of chocolate and three bags of sweets!

Soccer Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Bo play?
A. Soccer
B. Baseball
C. Basketball
D. Football
2. How many minutes is a soccer game?
A. 60
B. 45
C. 90
D. 120
3. What sport is the scoring in soccer most like?
A. Ice Hockey
B. Baseball
C. Basketball
D. Football
4. TRUE OR FALSE: Soccer is the most popular sport to watch in most countries.
A. True
B. False
5. TRUE OR FALSE: Soccer is a very high scoring game.
A. True
B. False

Baseball Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Jake play?
A. Roller Hockey
B. Ice Hockey
C. Field Hockey
D. Football
2. How many minutes is a hockey game?
A. 60
B. 45
C. 90
D. 120
3. What sport is never compared to hockey in this story?
A. Soccer
B. Baseball
C. Basketball
D. Football
4. TRUE OR FALSE: Ice Hockey is the most popular sport to watch in most countries of the world.
A. True
B. False
5. TRUE OR FALSE: Hockey players wear a lot of padding and equipment.
A. True
B. False

Tennis Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Cara play?
A. Pickle ball
B. Tennis
C. Badminton
D. Ping Pong
2. What is it called when you have 0 points in tennis?
A. love
B. 15
C. 30
D. 40
3. Usually there are how many players on a tennis team?
A. 1 or 2
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4. TRUE OR FALSE: According to the story, tennis is similar to ping pong, volleyball, and badminton.
A. True
B. False
5. TRUE OR FALSE: You have to win just one set to win a match in tennis.
A. True
B. False

Basketball Time!

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Jordan play?
A. Baseball
B. Basketball
C. Soccer
D. Football
2. What kind of parts is a basketball game divided into?
A. Halves
B. Quarters
C. Periods
D. Innings
3. What position does Robbie play?
A. Center
B. Power Forward
C. Point Guard
D. Small Forward
4. TRUE OR FALSE: Basketball was invented in America.
A. True
B. False
5. TRUE OR FALSE: There are 5 players per team in basketball.
A. True
B. False