

## Activity 1

Read out your sentences. What is the sport?



1. A game is started with a jump ball or tip-off.



2. Blocking is not allowed.



3. Each player has a stick to hit the ball with.



4. If a player commits five fouls they are out of the game.



5. One of the ways of moving the ball is dribbling.



6. Points are scored by throwing the ball through a hoop.



7. Sometimes you get a free throw which is worth one point.



8. The teams try and get the ball over the net.



9. The game is divided into four ten-minute quarters.



10. The game is played on a court.



11. The game is played with an oval-shaped ball.



12. There are 12 players in a team, but only five on court at the same time.



13. You can score two points or three points depending on where you throw from.



## Activity 2

Read the text and answer these questions.

- a) When was basketball invented?
- b) Who were the Dream Team?
- c) What was the surprise in 2004?

What is the most popular sport in the world? The answer, of course, is football, or soccer, but what about the most popular indoor sport? The answer to that question is: basketball. Basketball was invented by a Canadian sports teacher, Dr James Naismith, in 1891. Dr Naismith was working in a college in Massachusetts in the USA and he wanted to find a way of keeping students fit during the winter – basketball was his solution.

A full-size basketball court is 28.7 metres long and 15.2 metres wide. At each end there is a hoop, or basket, three metres above the floor of the court. The game is played between two teams of 12 players, but only five players are allowed on the court at the same time for each team. The aim of the game is to score as many points as possible. Points are scored by throwing the ball through the hoop – scoring a basket. But the number of points for each 'basket' depends on where the player throws the ball from. So, if the ball is thrown from inside the three-point line then only two points are awarded, but if it is thrown from outside then it is worth three points. When a player gets a free throw, after a foul has been committed, then only one point is given for each 'basket'.

Basketball made its Olympic debut in 1936. At the Olympics, the USA has dominated the men's competition winning twelve out of sixteen gold medals. In the 1992 Olympics held in Barcelona the American Dream Team won the gold medal without losing a game. It was known as the Dream Team because it included some of the stars of the NBA, the professional basketball league in the United States. But, in 2004 the Americans were shocked when they only finished third after losing to the eventual winners, Argentina.

Basketball is now played in over 150 countries around the world and, in Europe, teams from countries such as Spain, Latvia, Greece and Serbia regularly play against each other in European competitions.

Read the text again and answer these questions.

1. Who invented basketball?
2. Why did he invent it?
3. What is three metres above the ground?
4. How many players are there in a team?
5. How many players are there on the court at any one time?
6. What happens if the ball goes through the hoop?
7. How many points does a player get for a free throw?
8. When did basketball become an Olympic sport?
9. Where did the US Dream Team compete?
10. Who beat the USA in the 2004 Olympic Games?

**Basketball**  
Adrian Tennant**Level**

Pre-intermediate/Intermediate

**Topic**

Basketball

**Subject(s)**

Sport

**Time (approx)**

Activity 1: 15 – 20 minutes

Activity 2: 10 – 15 minutes

Activity 3: 10 – 15 minutes

**Preparation**

Activity 1: Photocopy one set of sentences for each group & cut into strips.

Activities 2 & 3: One photocopy for each student.

**Activity 1**

- 1 Divide students into groups (can be up to 13 in a group).
- 2 On the board write up the question:  
*What sport is it?*
- 3 Explain that you will give each student a sentence or two about a sport. In their group they should take turns reading out their sentences and try to answer the question.
- 4 Hand out the sentences to one student in each group and ask them to share the sentences equally with the other students in their group (one or two students could have an extra sentence as there are 13 in total).
- 5 Before the students start reading out their sentences, tell them two things: firstly, there are three extra sentences that contain false information; secondly, students should read out their sentences, not show them to each other. However, they can read them as many times as needed.

- 6 Tell the groups to start.
- 7 Monitor and see which group comes up with the answer first. If one group is very quick, try and confuse them by focussing on one or two of the false sentences.

**Answer***Basketball***Note:** Sentences 3, 8 and 11 are false.**Activity 2**

- 1 Tell the students they are now going to read a text about basketball. To start with you want them to skim through the text quickly to find the answers to three questions (a, b & c).
- 2 Hand out the worksheet and get the students to read the three questions.
- 3 Now, give the students two or three minutes to read through the text quickly and find the answers to the questions.
- 4 Put the students in pairs and get them to check together.
- 5 Check the answers as a class.  
(see page 2)
- 6 Now ask the students to look at the ten questions.
- 7 Put them in pairs and ask them to see how many of the questions they can answer together.
- 8 Next, ask the students to read through the text and try to answer (or check their answers to) the ten questions.
- 9 Monitor and help where necessary.
- 10 Finally, check the answers as a class.

**Answers**

- a) 1891
  - b) *The USA Olympic team of 1992 (including some NBA stars)*
  - c) *That the USA lost to Argentina/That Argentina won the gold medal at the Olympics.*
- 1) *Dr James Naismith*
  - 2) *He wanted to find a way of keeping his students fit in winter*
  - 3) *The hoop (or basket)*
  - 4) *12*
  - 5) *10 (5 for each team)*
  - 6) *The team score a point*
  - 7) *One*
  - 8) *1936*
  - 9) *(The) Barcelona (Olympics)*
  - 10) *Argentina*

**Project work**

You could ask students to do research on various aspects of basketball, e.g. get one group to look at the Olympics, one to look at the different positions (e.g. centre), or look at famous teams such as the Dream Team or Harlem Globetrotters, or even to look at information about local teams.

**Useful websites**

The BBC website not only includes information on the NBA but also has a very good section (at the bottom right of the page) on the basics of basketball.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/other\\_sports/basketball/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/other_sports/basketball/default.stm)

Here's the wikipedia entry on the sport including the history, rules and regulations and some information on techniques.  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basketball>

The official website for the International Federation of Basketball.  
<http://www.fiba.com/>