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Teaching Notes



Sports Are Fantastic Fun!

By Ole Könnecke

Cycling, ice hockey, athletics, tennis, climbing ...
There are so many sports, and they're all
fantastic fun!

Football is fantastic fun, except when your team keeps missing goals: that can make you cry. Horse-riding is also fantastic—so long as the horse goes where the rider wants. Running, cycling and swimming require fantastic agility and endurance. Billiards is quieter, but still fantastic fun!

Sports lovers small and big will find the one they love best—and some surprises—in this witty picture book, with funny animal characters trying out all the sports and a laconic commentary.

The Author

Ole Könnecke was born in 1961 and spent his childhood in Sweden. He now lives in Germany and has produced over 30 books, several of which have won international awards.

Themes

This book celebrates all variety of sports in a humorous, surprising, and informative style. Even readers who might not identify as lovers of sport will enjoy the range of activities described here. In *Sports are Fantastic Fun!* there will be at least one – if not many more – sports that will appeal to readers of all ages in a new and fun way.

Activities

Level One – Text (Before and While Reading)

1. Before you read the book, look at the cover (front and back) of the book. What can you tell about the story from the title, font, illustrations, and blurb? Think about the colours and style of illustrations and what they might tell you about what sort of story this is.

2. Either on your own or in pairs find the definition of the following words that appear in the book and then use them in a new sentence: twirls (p. 5), harm (p. 7), obstacles (p. 12), opponents (p. 16), and flexible (p. 36),
3. Look at the page opposite the title page inside the book that reads: “In ancient times people were kept busy.” What does this page tell us about how life was different before the 21st century? Ask your teacher and/or parents/caregiver about what different activities they had to do when they were younger that they don’t anymore.
4. There are lots of different types of sports jargon in this book. Jargon are special words or expressions used by a group for a particular activity. For example, “forehand” and “backhand” (p. 51) are tennis jargon words. Aim to find five other examples of sports jargon as you read.

Level Two – Responding to the Text and Reading Between the Lines (While Reading)

1. In Sports are Fantastic Fun! we learn about different types of sports with horses (pp. 12-13). Do you know of other sports that involve animals? Do the animals require special training? How do you feel about animals participating in sports? Discuss as a class.
2. On page 17 we meet the boxing trainer, who shouts: “You can do better than that!” What qualities and characteristics do you think a person needs to be a good trainer or coach? What is some good and encouraging training advice? Discuss as a class.
3. On page 31 we read about different types of swimming including breaststroke, freestyle, and butterfly. Do you know how to do each of these? In small groups, see if you can demonstrate the different strokes to each other and help those who don’t know. It could come in handy one day!
4. Look at the picture of the two bicycles in the top right corner on page 40. Notice how one wheel is much larger than the other. Do you know what this bicycle is called and why it was given this name?

Level Three – Creating Based on the Text

1. Referees usually carry a whistle. Do you know how whistles work? Using the library or the Internet, find an explanation for how whistles work. Create a picture or diagram showing how whistles work. You could even try making your own.
2. Choose a sports star from any period of history. It could be the first woman to achieve recognition for her sport. Research their life and achievements. In pairs or small groups, create a short presentation (speech or skit) to share the athlete’s story with your class. Make sure to be careful if you include any athletic demonstrations!
3. Design a new uniform for any of the sports in the book. You could draw your design on paper or you could create (using fabric, glue, needle, thread, or other materials) a 3D model.
4. In small groups design a new sport that must include three of the following:

Level Four – Beyond the Text

1. A.K.A. (p. 2) is an acronym, which stands for “also known as”. Acronyms are abbreviations (shortened words) formed from the first letters of other words. What are other acronyms you know of? In pairs, try and come up with between 5–8 acronyms.
2. On pages 6-9 we learn about different types of skiing. As a class discuss where is the nearest place to you that you can ski and what equipment and preparations you need to make in order to ski. Next, find a video of ski jumping on the Internet. What do you learn about this sport? What are some of the rules and risks?
3. In pairs, see if you can find out what are the most popular sports in the following countries: Canada, Brazil, Russia, and Japan. What are these sports called in the local language? Who are their top teams and athletes? Are they celebrated in a particular way (such as tournaments and festivals)?

Puck	Racing Track	Falcon
Horse	Sand Pit	Flippers
Net	Lake	Golf Buggy
Bat or Racquet	Dog	Boat

