



World Kids

Fun for kids! true stories!



PAL Project

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Many of us around the world enjoy sports - either watching them and cheering for our favorite team, or playing them with our friends. Most of us love certain sports but find others boring - and we often can't understand why others enjoy them so much! Some people get so passionate about their favorite sport it almost becomes like a god to them - their whole life is focused on the sport and they may bet money on their team or a horse (or chicken!), or they may spend far too much money on tickets and sport souvenirs! Sadly it is not uncommon even for fights to break out among different supporters at some events, because of course nobody really likes to lose. But sports are good when we remember that the main purpose is the challenge to do well physically and to have fun with teammates. It is important to have exercise and keep our bodies fit - and sports can be a good way to do that!



Some sports involve racing or competing either with animals or different kinds of vehicles. Which kinds can YOU think of? Maybe you have seen horse or dog racing - or if you live near a desert, you might have seen CAMEL racing!! Maybe you've watched racecars or motorcycles; or yachts or speedboats on the water. Although banned in



the USA, many countries still allow cock-fighting or dog fighting and most people have heard of the famous bull fights in **Spain** and **Latin America**! Wrestling and boxing are common around the world, and there are many different types each with its own rules and prizes. This picture shows the famous "sumo wrestlers" in **Japan**. These fighters follow strict diet and training rules which are also strongly tied to the Shinto religion. Sumo is a type of martial art - you have probably heard of others such as judo, karate and Tae Kwon Do.

Probably the sports that you enjoy watching and playing the most, no matter where you live, involve ball games. There are many kinds of ball games played locally in different countries, but some games have become so popular that they are now played ALL AROUND THE WORLD! There are often professional national teams, and then as well, adults and children alike enjoy playing them close to their own home!

Look at the following pictures of balls and see if you can recognize in which game each is used:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.



Many of you outside the USA may not recognize some of these as they are played only by wealthier people in your country, so here are the names of the games to help you:
 bowling - soccer - tennis - golf - basketball - cricket - football - baseball

If I were to ask you which ball game is the most popular in the whole world, your answer would probably depend on where you live. Many children in the **USA** would say football (meaning American football) or baseball. But if we really look at the number of people who play or are fans of sports all around the world, the answer is clear.



Can you guess which ball game is most popular of all? The answer is **SOCCER!!** About 3.5 **BILLION** people all over the world enjoy soccer (also known as regular football) - that is more than **HALF** the population of the world! The World Cup is played every 4 years with teams from all around the globe and it is the **#1** sport in **Europe** and **Latin America**, and is rapidly becoming the most popular sport in **Africa**, **China** and even the **Middle East**! This is partly because people everywhere watch the games on television, but also because it can easily be played, even by a group of children, with a ball **ANYWHERE** - in the street, backyard or a local field! Our friend Mike sent this photo of some children enjoying soccer in rural Kenya.

Probably the second most popular sport in the world is **CRICKET** (as seen in the photo to the right). Many in the USA would argue this, but it is said that about 2.3 **BILLION** people are cricket fans worldwide and it is the **MOST** popular sport in countries like **India** and **Pakistan**, and is very popular in the **UK**, **Australia**, and some **African** and **Caribbean** countries. Others on the "worldwide top ten sports list" include **FIELD HOCKEY** (considered to be **India's** national sport, and also popular in **Europe** and **Asia** with a total of about 2 billion fans); **TENNIS** (mostly in **Europe**, **USA** and **Australia**) which is also the most popular women's sport worldwide; **VOLLEYBALL** (originally in the **USA** but now also popular in **Brazil**, **Europe**, **Russia** and **China**, with some 900 million fans); and finally **TABLE TENNIS**, which has nearly 900 million fans and is especially popular in **China**, needing only a small table and agile players!



Of course probably the most famous sports competition of all is the **OLYMPIC GAMES**, which occur every 4 years and include athletes from all over the world. Next year the Winter Olympics, with about 80 different events like skating and skiing, will be held in **Vancouver, Canada**. In 2012 the Summer Olympics will be held in **London, UK**, with about 300 events including running, swimming, jumping and many others. People in countries all around the



world excitedly support their national teams which include the very **BEST** of the nation's athletes. In some countries such as **China**, **Germany** and **Russia** many young people work very hard training, and there is fierce competition to pick those who will represent the nation. In other parts of the world, such as **Africa** and **India**, few young people get the chance to really train properly but watch to see if their country will win a gold medal.

The Olympic Games actually first were held in **Greece** in 776 B.C. though there was only **ONE** race - a 200 yd dash. More races were added and the games were held every four years for 1170 years until 393 A.D. In 1896 the modern international Olympic Games began, and this time they are held in a different country each time. So when the New Testament was written, most people were very aware of the Olympic Games, and Paul wrote several times using examples of "running the race" and "winning the prize". When he reached the end of his life and was imprisoned in Rome, he wrote an important statement to his friend, Timothy. It is one that, as a Christian, each one of us should hope to be able to say at the end of his or her life. See if you can figure out what he says:

IHAVEFOUGHTTHEGOODFIGHTIHAVEFINISHEDTHERACEIHAVEKEPTTHEFAITHNOWTHEREISINSTOREFOR
METHECROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH THE LORD THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE WILL AWARD TO ME ON THAT DAY
AND NOT ONLY TO ME BUT ALSO TO ALL WHO HAVE LONGED FOR HIS APPEARING

If you would like to try some special new bible quizzes, check out our website www.imofinc.org for the Bible Olympics pages to download. Have fun!

'Til next time,

Your friend, Shirley

You can find it in 2 Timothy 4:7-8



Facts from various websites including Google and Wikipedia.

Answers: 1-tennis; 2-basketball; 3-soccer; 4-football; 5-golf; 6-bowling; 7-cricket; 8-baseball

World Kids PAL Project is a ministry of IMOF Inc, 8069 FM 1251E, Henderson, TX, USA Tel: (903) 889-2233

E-mail: shirley@imofinc.org www.imofinc.org