

## SAMPLE INTEGRATED THEMATIC UNIT

### GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

An Integrated Unit for High School  
by Judy Schilling and Patsy Thompson

Students will share games from different countries and be introduced to the American sport of baseball through song, literature, skits, and writing. Try to teach the unit during spring training or the World Series. Many of the activities are suitable for beginning and intermediate students.

#### Activities

- ① **Take Me Out to the Ball Game.** Introduce the unit by teaching students the classic baseball song. Show a video of excerpts from a baseball game and encourage students to dictate hypotheses about the rules of the game and what is happening. Share peanuts and cracker jacks while you watch the game. Discuss baseball as an important part of American culture.
- ② **Sports Facts About Our Class.** Generate questions students want to answer about their participation and interest in sports, e.g., "What percentage of the class plays sports?" "What sport is most popular among girls?" "Boys?" Help students make up a set of items for a class survey about sports that will answer these questions. Include such items as name, gender, age, sport played, favorite sport to play, favorite sport to watch. When the survey is ready, make copies of the form and have students circulate to collect information from one another. As each student reports his/her data to class, help students fill in a data chart. Then decide on and perform calculations that will answer your original questions. Prepare a display of information and analyzed data. Vary questions and summary tasks according to student levels.

#### Materials

- ① Tape of "Take Me Out To The Ball Game," by J. Norworth, transparency or copies of the lyrics, video of excerpts from a baseball game, peanuts, crackerjacks.
- ② Sports magazines, e.g., *Sports Illustrated*, for ideas, writing and art supplies; chart paper and markers; calculator.



## Activities

- ③ **How to Play Baseball.** Read aloud to students a simple explanation of the game of baseball. Use a chart on the board, sports realia, and/or students acting out the various positions to illustrate the game. Go outside and play a game of kickball following basic baseball rules. Back in the classroom, give students a chance to reread and/or listen to the explanation on tape. Have students read and/or interpret the explanation, practicing expression and pronunciation. Encourage students to underline and discuss sports vocabulary found in the reading. Divide students into groups to prepare and present a skit about baseball. Encourage the audience to pantomime actions and emotions of fans at a ballgame. With students, refer back to the chart of hypothesized rules (Activity 1) and evaluate it for accuracy.
- ④ **Interview an Athlete.** Help students plan interviews of school athletes focusing on physical fitness routines. Questions might include: ① How many hours of sleep do you get each night? ② How often do you practice? ③ What do you usually eat? ④ What do you usually drink? ⑤ What do you do in your spare time? ⑥ Do you smoke? Why or why not? ⑦ When did you begin playing the sport? ⑧ Why do you play sports? ⑨ What is "being a good sport?" ⑩ Who is your favorite athlete and why? Help students compile, summarize, and report on the information from their interviews.
- ⑤ **Jigsaw Sports Poetry.** Divide into cooperative learning groups of four and have groups select poems about sports to study. Give each group member a literacy element or poetic device as a focus (plot, setting, character, theme, rhyme scheme, sound device, etc.). Using the jigsaw technique, have members with the same literary element meet to discuss its meaning and use in the chosen poem. Then have groups come back together and write up a short analysis of the poem(s). Encourage students to memorize their chosen poems.

## Materials

- ③ Short selection from library book or reference book explaining the rules of baseball, sports equipment; chart or "rules" from Activity 1; Related: *Turning Points 1* text, tape, and workbook (Addison-Wesley).
- ④ Writing materials.
- ⑤ Allen, "To Satch," p.302 and Kumin, "400-Meter Freestyle," p.356 in *Adventures in Reading*, 9 and p.591 in *Prentice Hall Literature: Silver*; Ostriker, "His Speed and Strength" in *American Literature*, p.777; Soupault, "Sporting Goods," p.102 in *Talking to the Sun*.

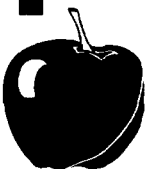


### Activities

- 6 **Sportswrite.** Encourage students to jot in their journals ideas about sports or games from their native countries. Have students share these ideas with families and request further information and clarification of the rules of the games. Using this information, students can write first drafts of short explanations of the rules for a chosen sport or game. Pairs can then share the drafts and students can revise drafts and enter them on the computer. Beginning students might provide illustrations for the writings, which can then be published in the school newspaper or bound and placed in the media center.
- 7 **Teaching Others.** Have students plan a "clinic" to teach classmates the basics of a chosen sport. They should distribute lists of rules and plan to use diagrams and demonstrations with real sports equipment in their presentations.
- 8 **Olympic Games.** Help students create a semantic map around the word "Olympics." Students may then choose a sport or aspect of the Olympics to research and report on to the class. Vary the requirements according to student levels. For example, advanced students can prepare a formal research assignment including endnotes and bibliography.
- 9 **Guest Speakers.** Invite local amateur or professional athletes, coaches, exercise instructors or physical therapists to speak to students about a sport, discussing skill development, sportsmanship, benefits of exercise, safety, and sports related careers. Have students prepare questions for their guests. Afterwards, compare responses of guests to those of peer athletes in the interviews in Activity #4.
- 10 **Sports Video Theater.** Show students a video with a sports theme and re-examine the literary elements discussed in Activity 5. As they view, have students make a jot list of visual impressions from the film. Stop videotape at intervals to have students predict actions.

### Materials

- 6 Writing materials, computers.
- 7 Game rules, equipment and materials.
- 8 Library resources such as: Winteroud and Murray, *English Writing and Skills*, Chandler, *The L.A. Times Book of the 1984 Olympic Games*.
- 9 Guests, writing materials.
- 10 Suggested videos: *Field of Dreams*, *Hoosiers*, *Breaking Away*, *Brian's Song*.



**Activities**

- ① **The Game.** Have the class, as a group, attend a high school, community or professional sports event. Before the game, role play with students important aspects the game, e.g., cheers, audience participation, school traditions, ticket purchase, and food choices.
- ② **Field Day.** Help students plan and participate in their own Olympic events. Invite other classes and include non-competitive games. Committees can select and schedule events, prepare awards, and choose judges. Videotape your field day for inclusion in the school video yearbook.

**Materials**

- ① None.
- ② Stopwatches, ribbons, sports equipment, video equipment.

**Source:**

McCloskey, M. L. (Ed.). (1990). *Integrated language teaching strategies and Integrated thematic units: A middle/high school ESOL curriculum guide*. Atlanta, GA: Educo Press, pp. 2.33-2.34. Reprinted with permission.

