

Choose the Sport That's Best for You

What sport would you like to play? There are many to choose from. You may think it's hard to decide on one, but maybe it isn't hard, after all. To begin with, think about the skills you have and what kind of **athlete** you want to be.

A good question to ask yourself is whether or not you like to work in groups. If you do like to work in groups, you might enjoy playing a team sport like soccer or baseball. During soccer games, players pass the ball to one another, and they work together to move the ball toward the net. During baseball games, players throw the ball to one another, and they work together to keep their **competitors**, or the people they are playing against, from getting to home base. It can be a great feeling to be part of a team. Everyone plays an important role.

However, if competing alone is more your **style**, you may want to try a sport like track, tennis, or golf. These sports focus on how well one person performs against another. You are your own team in sports like these.

Or do you enjoy nonstop **action**? Hockey and basketball provide plenty of that. During hockey games, the hockey puck whizzes over the ice. During basketball games, players race for the ball back and forth across the **court**.

Some people like sports where players **score** a lot of points. Basketball games usually end with high scores. Soccer matches are fast-moving, but usually not a lot of points are scored.

Over time, you'll find you have skills that can help you succeed in a sports game. Maybe you're great at throwing a ball or running for long periods of time. Maybe you have a positive attitude that will inspire your teammates to succeed. What you should remember is that there's a sport for you, whatever your size or skill. Find it, and have fun!

COMPREHENSION What words describe things you should think about when choosing a sport to play? What kinds of skills do you have that could help you choose a sport?



Thrills at the Game

It was a beautiful afternoon at the playing field. Everywhere Jack looked, there were noisy, excited people. He and his parents had come to see a soccer game between the best high school teams in the county. The game was the **championship**, and it would decide the best team in the **league**. Jack's big sister, Keri, played for one of the teams. Jack hoped her team would win.

Happy **fans** filled the **stands** on both sides of the field.

As Jack sat down, he saw many people around him wearing pink and white hats and jackets. Keri's team was wearing pink and white uniforms. On the other side of the field, people were **rooting** for the other team. Many of these fans wore red and gold clothes. Red and gold were the colors of the other team's uniforms.

Suddenly Jack's mother said, "There they are!" Keri's team ran onto the field at top **speed**. They ran so fast that everyone around Jack burst into cheers and applause. When the other team appeared, their fans cheered, too.

Jack saw Keri and her teammates listening to their coach. Then both teams stretched and got ready for the beginning of the game.

Jack cheered and clapped whenever Keri's team had the ball. Nobody scored for a long time. But just before the end of the half, the team in red and gold got a goal.

"Don't worry," said Jack's mother. "We can still win."

Early in the second half, Keri's team tied the score. Jack and his parents jumped up and clapped. A little while later, Keri kicked the ball past the other team's goalkeeper! The game ended, and Keri's team had won the championship.

Jack felt proud and happy. Maybe he would kick a winning goal himself, someday.

COMPREHENSION What words help you understand that the people watching the game are excited for their teams? Why does Jack feel proud at the end of the game?

