Building English Language Learners'/Multilingual Language Learners' Background Knowledge

Participant Activity Handout

Text

The Value of Sports in People's Lives

Whether you run a race, bounce a basketball, or hurl a baseball home, you do it because it's fun. Some scientists claim play is a natural instinct—just like sleep. That might explain why sports are likely to be as old as humanity.

Some claim sports began as a form of survival. Prehistoric man ran, jumped, and climbed for his life. Hunters separated themselves by skill, and competition flourished. Wall paintings dating from 1850 BC that depict wrestling, dancing, and acrobatics were discovered in an Egyptian tomb at Bani Hasan. The ancient Greeks revolutionized sports by holding the world's first Olympic games at Olympia in 776 BC. But it wasn't until the early nineteenth century that sports as we know them came into play. (Pardon the pun!) Modern sports such as cricket, golf, and horse racing began in England and spread to the United States, Western Europe, and the rest of the world. These sports were the models for the games we play today, including baseball and football.

All organized sports, from swimming to ice hockey, are considered serious play. There are rules to obey, skills and positions to learn, and strategies to carry out. But Peter Smith, a psychology professor at Goldsmiths, University of London, and author of *Understanding Children's Worlds: Children and Play* (Wiley, 2009), says, "Sport-like play is usually enjoyable, and done for its own sake."

Activity 1: Background Knowledge

Work with your partner to describe any additional background knowledge that might be important for understanding the passage. Identify methods for teaching it.

Topics	Methods for Teaching

Activity 2: Finding Resources to Develop Background Knowledge

Select one of your suggested background knowledge topics from Activity 1. Search online for simple descriptions, videos, native language resources (choose a language that is common among your ELLs/MLLs), or visuals that you could use to help students develop background knowledge.

Topic	Resources/Evidence

Activity 3: Scaffold Background Knowledge

Work with your partner to select vocabulary for one of your suggested background knowledge topics from Activity 1. Develop 1 to 2 questions and create Entering/Emerging-level scaffolding (i.e., sentence frames and a word bank) for the same background knowledge topic.

Topic:

Key Vocabulary

Word Bank

Questions	Response Frames