

TEAM SPIRIT

SPORT



‘Sport has the power to unite people in a way that little else can. It can create hope where once there was only despair. It breaks down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of discrimination. Sport speaks to people in a language they can understand.’

Nelson Mandela



'TEAM SPIRIT' IDEAS TO EXPLORE

COUNTIES OF IRELAND

In 'Team Spirit', it is mentioned that the Bashers are the best team in the county.

- What county do the children think the teams are playing in?
- How do the children know? What makes them say this?
- What are the names of the provinces/counties in Ireland? Carry out a class project on the county/province crests. Depending on the size of the class, children could research a county each, or could be grouped per province and research the associated crests.

Many counties have colours, songs and nicknames, for example:

Songs

Clare: 'Oh My Lovely Rose of Clare'

Galway: 'The Fields of Athenry'

Wexford: 'Boolavogue'

Colours

Dublin: navy and sky blue

Cork: red and white

Donegal: green and gold

Nicknames

Tipperary: The Premier County

Kerry: The Kingdom

Meath: The Royal County

Information on these can be found at:

www.dochara.com/play/sport/gaa-colours.php

- Carry out a class project to discover how much information children can find about their own county, or a county they have links with or where they have relations. The project could also include county names as *Gaeilge*, or car registration letters.
- Conduct a class survey to determine the favourite sports of the children in the class. Children might represent the data on a bar chart or line graph.

NATIONAL SPORTS

In 'Team Spirit' Coach had a number of different items of sports equipment in the boot of his car. What did the children spot? (footballs, hurls, rugby balls). Many countries have national sports, eg hurling is the national sport of

Ireland, baseball is the national sport of the USA, cricket is the national sport of Sri Lanka, boxing is the national sport of Thailand and rugby is the national sport of New Zealand. A country's natural environment can influence its sporting culture. Likewise, a country's colonial past can have an effect on the sports played there nowadays, eg cricket is the national sport of many ex-British colonies.

- Carry out a class project to determine how many countries have the same national sport.
- Research environmental or historical influences that may have led to a particular sport being played in particular countries.

SPORTS GROUNDS

The match between the Bashers and the Rockets takes place on Kilcloan grounds (a fictional location).

- Conduct a class community project locating the various sports grounds in the locality. Place these grounds on a grid map in relation to the school. Using scale, determine the distance to/from the grounds. Write out directions from the school to the grounds on foot/by car (key/grid/landmarks etc).

SCHOOL KIT

Hold a competition to design a school kit or school crest. Should there already be a kit/crest in existence, have the children reinvent a crest for their favourite team or player.

CLASS DEBATE

Often, competitive sports teams have different-coloured kits for matches at home and away. This may also be the case for school teams or local sports clubs. Should this be the case, an additional expense for children and/or their families could be the result. Conduct a class debate around the 'value' of home and away sports kits.

PLAYING FAIR

Fair play and following the rules: discuss the importance of fair play on and off the pitch.

- Why is it necessary for players to follow the rules?





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- Who is there to ensure that rules are followed?
- What are the consequences of breaking the rules of a game?
- Do children think that the referee in the 'Team Spirit' match was good at his job? Why/Why not?
- What might the children have done to ensure that the ref didn't behave like this at the next match?
- Ask the children for specific examples of rough play shown in 'Team Spirit' (Bashers player deliberately pushed Lucy and another Rockets player over. Referee just sprinting along sidelines while Coach points at game plan layout. Later, four players tackle one, literally running him into the ground.) What should the penalties have been for this behaviour?
- Develop a 'Fair Play Code/Charter'.

WORKING TOGETHER ROLE-PLAY

In 'Team Spirit', Lucy announces before the match begins, 'I knew this would happen.' It is clear she is not very hopeful about the Rockets' chance of winning. Nonetheless, the team does its best and works hard, despite the absence of Sadiq, their best player. In the 6th class 'Walk Tall' programme, Unit 1, Lesson 5 'I can do it' emphasises how we take small steps to achieving our goals and how we can work together to achieve our goals. Role-play some responses of encouragement the children might give to Lucy to inspire her to work with her fellow players in the absence of Sadiq in the first half of the match.

Working as part of a team has benefits, not just on the pitch to achieve goals (for example, where children play better together and gain confidence when Sadiq is also playing), but also off-pitch to lead to change in society. Team work is a life-skill as we must learn to communicate and cooperate together to collectively achieve a common goal.

- Can the children think of any examples of traits that may be needed to work as part of a team or a group? Carry out a number of cooperative games to build team work within the class. You can find some ideas for cooperative games in the September 2007 edition of InTouch – cooperative games in the primary school: www.into.ie/ROI/Interactive/ClassroomResources/InTouchTips/

INJURY

Before Sadiq comes on for the second half of the match, we see a girl with a head bandage and an arm sling, a boy with a broken arm, and another boy with a broken leg. These children have been looked after by the coach or a designated First Aid person.

- Discuss the importance of having a First Aid kit at all sporting activities.
- Can children think of what might be in a First Aid kit? Give children a chance to list the items (either individually or in groups). Then either distribute First Aid kits for examination (removing scissors where necessary!) or teacher could go through a kit, explaining and/or getting feedback from the children about the purposes the items have.
- Do the children know which adults to call upon should a First Aid emergency arise? The adults in the school could be invited to the classroom to speak to the children about the preparations/courses they took to receive their First Aid certificate (if they did).

TALENT

For some people, the ability to succeed at sports is a natural talent. For others, much commitment and determination is needed to improve and succeed.

- Can the children think of interests/areas in their life that require commitment or dedication in order to progress?
- What sacrifices do children make in their lives when they commit to a specific activity?
- What are the personal/team rewards they achieve as a result of their efforts?

ROLE MODELS

Sports players are positive role models for the children, showing commitment when playing.

Could the children think of other characteristics they feel role models should have? (eg making the right decisions, confident, hard-working)

- A role model could be someone the children know, eg a friend, teacher, coach, parent. Children to discuss who





they consider would be a role model from within their community.

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

We all know that exercise is good for us.

- What are the main benefits (short- and long-term) of being active or involved in sports for our health? (general sense of well-being, physical fitness, increased self esteem, stress relief, decrease in risk of heart disease/cholesterol/blood pressure/arthritis)
- What are the immediate effects on our bodies when we are playing sports or exercising? (increased heart rate/pulse/breathing rate)
- In order to determine the actual effect exercise has on our hearts, children could measure their pulse rate using a Discover Primary Science Gold Activity. You can access and download this activity at: www.primaryscience.ie/site/media/pdfs/col/pulse.pdf
- Discuss the importance of warming up before exercise and cooling down after exercise to prevent injury. PCSP (Primary Curriculum Support Programme) provides a selection of warm-ups at: [www.pcsp.ie/html/pe/Warm up/WARM UP ON THE MOVE.pdf](http://www.pcsp.ie/html/pe/Warm%20up/WARM%20UP%20ON%20THE%20MOVE.pdf) and cool-downs can be accessed at: www.pcsp.ie/html/pe/pssi/pdf/gen/gen_2_cooldown.pdf
- What other aspects of our lives might we adapt in order to have a healthy lifestyle? (regular exercise and a balanced diet)

ASIAN GAELIC GAMES

The Guinness Asian Gaelic Games was held in October 2008 in Penang, Malaysia. The Asian County Board represents all the Gaelic games with teams from a large number of countries such as China, Japan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Singapore, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Malaysia, with players from over 20 countries. The games were held in China in 2006 and in Singapore in 2007.

IRISH NATIONAL GAMES

HISTORY OF GAA – CUMANN NA MBUNSCOL



The GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) or the Gaelic Athletic Association for the Preservation and Cultivation of National Pastimes (GAAPCNP), as it was then known, was founded in 1884 from a desire to maintain and strengthen the sports and pastimes considered uniquely Irish. At this time, many Irish people were emigrating as a result of the Great Famine and the English presence in the country was having an influence on the cultural identity of Irish sports. Michael Cusack, a schoolteacher from Clare, and a number of others including Maurice Davin (the first president of the GAAPCNP), held a meeting in Thurles, Co. Tipperary, with the goal of strengthening the identity of Irish athletics and bringing uniformity to competitions held around the country.

Over the next few years, the organisation set down some national rules and guidelines for athletics, football, hurling and handball. In 1887, the first All-Ireland Gaelic football final took place in Clonskeagh, Dublin, between Limerick and Louth, with Limerick claiming the title. Croke Park stadium was the location for an All-Ireland football final for the first time in 1896, with all All-Ireland Gaelic football finals taking place in Croke Park from 1908 onwards.

The Official Launch of Camogie (Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael) took place in 1904, with the final being played in Croke Park for the first time in 1934. From 1925 onwards, the GAA no longer focused on athletics.

The GAA went from strength to strength, with teams forming in all Irish counties. Despite GAA games being banned in 1918 by the British, over a thousand club matches were organised on 4 August 1918 in defiance of this ban.

The Liam McCarthy Cup was presented to Limerick in 1923 as winners of the All-Ireland hurling final. The 1927 All-Ireland football final saw the Sam Maguire Cup first presented to Kildare when they defeated Cavan by one point. The McCarthy Cup and the Sam Maguire Cup are the most coveted prizes for GAA hurling and football county teams, with team captains and players striving to win, and proudly lift the cup. The camogie cup is the O'Duffy cup and also much sought after.

Cumann Peil Gael na mBan (the Ladies' Football Association of Ireland) was officially founded in 1974 approximately ten years after ladies' football club matches began. Over the years, the GAA has founded new clubs all





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over Ireland and in countries all over the world including America, Australia, Britain, New Zealand and some countries in Asia (See Asian Gaelic Games, above).

Cumann na mBunscol was set up in 1971 and is committed to promoting and organising Gaelic games such as boys' and girls' football, hurling and camogie, handball and rounders for children in primary schools around Ireland: www.scoilsport.org

References:

All About Gaelic Football, Grogan J, and Fitzpatrick T, O'Brien Press, ISBN 978-0-86278-892-6

All About Hurling, Barber I, O'Brien Press, ISBN 970-0-86278-808-7

(See: Relevant and Related Books in this pack for details)

www.camogie.ie/AboutCamogie/HistoryofCamogie/tabid/102/Default.aspx

www.ladiesgaelic.ie/histass.htm

CLASS DISCUSSION

Each year, All-Ireland ladies' finals are poorly attended in comparison with the sell-out matches of their male counterparts. Ladies' finals are televised on TG4, with their male counterparts securing a place on the national station RTÉ 1.

- Generate a class debate around equality in sport. Springboards for debate could include comments such as:

'Sporting rules should be different for boys and girls'

'Girls are better at sports than boys'.

The 'Equal Measures' pack has a selection of lessons aimed at challenging gender stereotyping and promoting gender equality. The pack is available for download in the Gender Equality – Reports and Publications section of the Department of Education and Science website:

www.education.ie

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Check out:

www.terracetalkireland.com/articles/gaa-history.htm

www.gaa.ie/page/general_history.html

www.cul4kidz.com/history/

- Downloadable lesson plans and worksheets on Gaelic football, hurling and the GAA are available at:
www.obrien.ie/book531.cfm
www.obrien.ie/titleinfo.cfm?bookID=488
- Research Gaelic games
- Story of Setanta (Cú Chulainn)
- Create a GAA history timeline
- How is a hurley (*camán*) and/or *sliotar* made?
- What are the differences between camogie and hurling? (eg size of *sliotar*, scoring/game rules)

ALL-STARS

Since 1971, All-Star Awards are given each year to the best player in each of the fifteen positions in Gaelic football, hurling, ladies' football and camogie.

- Research All-Star player profiles, eg Seán Óg Ó hAilpín (hurling, Cork), Pat Spillane (football, Kerry), DJ Carey (hurling, Kilkenny), Mary Jo Curran (football, Kerry) and 2006 All-Star nominee Jason 'Jayo' Sherlock (football, Dublin).

Check out: 'Céim ar Aghaidh' is an excellent resource published by the GAA catering for middle and senior classes. 'Céim ar Aghaidh' lessons are designed to use Gaelic games as a theme/topic for all subjects. Lessons and Teachers' Notes are also available for Special Educational Needs and ICT. All schools received a hard copy in 2006, and Teachers' Notes and Student Worksheets (photocopiable) for 5th and 6th classes are also available for download from www.ceim.gaa.ie/seniorcycle.html





FOOTBALL



The FAI is the Football Association of Ireland. The FAI run a number of programmes aimed at involving primary school children in football. The FAI schools website is www.fais.ie and the FAI Buntús Programme lessons are available for download: www.fai.ie/pdf/FAI-Bunt%C3%BAs-Cards.pdf as is the FAI Buntús Programme Handbook www.fai.ie/pdf/FAI-Buntus-Handbook.pdf

SOCCER SCOUTS



It is common practice for football scouts to travel across the world in search of young talented players whose skills are considered to have the potential to develop enough for possible inclusion on competitive teams internationally. Players from as young as twelve years of age have been scouted from 'developing' countries. Scouting agents offer the opportunity for players to be trained in football 'academies' in return for a fee from the players' families. The football academies are often far from their players' homes, sometimes in different countries and on different continents. Some players are eventually lucky enough to go on to play at a competitive level, but many teenagers' dreams are shattered when they are released by the academies if their skills do not prove good enough. Concern has been raised by a number of organisations regarding the welfare of these young players who do not qualify to progress up the football ranks and who may find themselves alone in foreign countries without family or friends to support them. Culture Foot Solidaire was set up by Jean Claude Mbvoumin, a Cameroon national, who was recruited at a young age to play for France. Mbvoumin, now retired, claims that in France there are approximately seven thousand such 'unsuccessful' young footballers living on the streets or in insecure environments. Organisations such as Culture Foot Solidaire, Save the Children and UEFA are working to change regulations surrounding the procurement methods used by prominent European football clubs.

For more information and personal stories:

'African Football Dreams – African Football Slavery'
www.soccerlens.com/african-football-dreams-african-football-slavery/8218

'The scandal of Africa's trafficked players'
www.guardian.co.uk/football/2008/jan/06/newsstory.sport4

'No easy glory for African footballers'
www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7187713.stm

DEBATE

- Hold a class debate around these issues.
Topics could include:
'The grass is always greener on the other side'
'Young footballers should follow their dreams'.

Children could be given the opportunity to come up with their own debate titles.

EXPLORE

- Write a newspaper article highlighting concern for the children's/teenagers' well-being.
- Write a series of diary entries for a fictional young footballer from the time he was scouted in his home country to the moment he was released without success from a football 'academy'.
- Research the stories of some of the successful young footballers who have gone on to play for prominent football clubs, eg Didier Drogba (Chelsea/Ivory Coast), Emmanuel Eboué (Arsenal/Ivory Coast), Samuel Eto'o (FC Barcelona/Cameroon).

PRETEND

- Children might pretend to be a soccer scout. Design a Wanted poster, highlighting the desired skills and listing the opportunities that are on offer. Can they think of any terms and conditions the scouts might include?
- Role-play an interview with an unsuccessful player who has been let down by his/her contract.





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RACISM IN SPORT

Using Mandela's quote on page 1 of this section as a springboard for discussion, open a debate around the topic of racism in sport. Mandela believed that sport had the power to unite people and change attitudes, but in the last number of years racism in sport has become a topical issue here in Ireland and across the globe. The topic of racism in sport was brought to the fore in 2006, when Cameroon national Samuel Eto'o was taunted by fans with racial slurs when his team FC Barcelona played Real Zaragoza, another Spanish team.

And in July 2008, Teboga Sebala found himself subjected to racial slurs when he played at an Under 14 GAA match in Carlow. Teboga Sebala is originally from Nigeria, but has been living in Carlow for the past four years. The GAA has since apologised to Teboga and has put forward a motion to its Annual Congress 2009 to include anti-racist rules in its rule book. Statements from the GAA and Show Racism the Red Card are available at: www.theredcard.ie/news/index.php

Show Racism the Red Card is an Irish organisation with a campaign against racism in sport and society. In 2008, it released an educational resource including teaching pack, lesson activities and a DVD: www.theredcard.ie.

- Children could read interviews with famous footballers (eg Samuel Eto'o, Rio Ferdinand, Mido, Dwight Yorke) where they talk about their experiences and speak out about racism on and off the pitch.

Kick it Out is a UK campaign to 'kick' racism out of football. There are a number of lesson activities suitable for senior classes available on their website:

www.kickitout.org/448.php and www.kickitout.org/390.php

Children could research laws surrounding how football associations deal with racism on/off the pitch and/or devise their own set of rules. RTE reported in July 2008 that UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) will issue a possible five-match ban to players found guilty of racial slurs with fines for clubs whose supporters are found guilty of similar offences:

www.rte.ie/sport/2006/0731/uefa.html.

Show Racism the Red Card

EXPLORING SPORTING EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD – TOPICS FOR CHILDREN TO INVESTIGATE

- The 2008 African Cup of Nations was held in Ghana. Egypt were the overall winners (for the sixth time) when they beat Cameroon in the final. Samuel Eto'o, who also plays for FC Barcelona, was the top goal scorer in the competition. The 2010 African Cup of Nations will be held in Angola.
- The 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games will be held in Greece. A schools programme to raise awareness about learning disabilities, special needs and the Special Olympics is available for download. www.specialolympics.ie/Education/Schools_Programme.htm.
- The 2010 World Cup will take place in South Africa, Nelson Mandela's home country. Italy won the cup in 2006 when they beat France in Germany.
- The 2010 World Cup will see Irish jerseys with 'Ireland' being replaced by 'Éire' on the back. www.fifa.com/worldcup/index.html.
- The 2011 Rugby World Cup will take place in New Zealand where South Africa will defend their 2007 title. www.rugbyworldcup.com.





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ANTI-RACISM 'WORLD CUP'

Many school communities are composed of children from a variety of ethnic groups. Specific and targeted work on the integration of all pupils is necessary to foster an inclusive and anti-racist ethos in children. The goal of the Anti-Racism 'World Cup' is to raise awareness about the different nationalities represented in a school, while, at the same time, introducing the theme of anti-racism. Discussions might initially be held with classes about what racism is (see Terminology section in the Teacher's Notes for definition) and the importance of tackling issues (in line with school policy/guidelines) of racist incidents should they arise. Allowing children a space to talk about anti-racism gives them ownership of the theme and can lead to a sense of pride in valuing and celebrating difference. Our differences make us unique and the Anti-Racism 'World Cup' gives rise to an opportunity to explore difference and find similarities within a safe environment that aims to promote equality. While we might come from different places, we work together as a team and we are all equal ('all different, all equal').

How to play

- 1 Put names of all the countries which pupils come from in one hat, names of sixth-class pupils in another, fifth class in another ... and so on.
- 2 First, pull the country names from the hat and write these on a board/poster.
- 3 Next pull out sixth-class names – first child's name is written under that of first country pulled out, second child is listed under name of second country pulled out etc. (The idea here is that no matter where you come from, you end up being matched randomly with a country, eg a Nigerian child could well end up playing for Romania, a Polish child could be playing for Ghana or Ireland).
- 4 Next pull out the fifth-class names in the same manner, then fourth-class etc. In a small school, it would be possible to include all pupils from second class up and to make a big thing of including the younger children and encouraging the older pupils to be aware of passing the ball to younger children/ being particularly careful when tackling them etc. In a bigger school, there could be one tournament for 5th and 6th class pupils, another for 3rd and 4th etc.

- 5 Before the games, all pupils are given a worksheet/ questionnaire to fill in about the country which they represent – they might have to name the capital city/ main rivers/mountains, what continent the country is in, name some neighbouring countries, say if it has a coastline etc. And, most importantly, name someone from the school who comes from that country (this means that it's not about 'countries', it's about children).
- 6 All children also make flags to represent 'their' countries. Team pictures are taken with the flags and a photo display is put up.
- 7 Divide teams into groups, eg sixteen teams would be four groups of four teams.
- 8 In the groups, teams play each other in short games (up to ten minutes per half). Allocate three points for a win, two points for a draw and one point for losing, so that all teams end up getting points. The teams that win each group play each other in semi-finals.
- 9 There could also be a 'Fair Play Award' which could be given to a senior pupil who does most to include the younger ones.
- 10 During the games, the spectators (the junior children and as many parents/SNAs/teachers/caretakers as possible) are encouraged to cheer for a particular team. It's great to hear the children shouting 'Come on Nigeria/Russia'!

(With thanks to Gregor Kerr and Audrey Devereux in St Mary's Place BNS, Dorset Street, Dublin, a school that has held an annual and hugely popular Anti-Racism World Cup tournament for many years.)

