

Aussies Get Commonwealth Games Boost



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Intermediate - Upper-Intermediate Instant Lesson™

Pre-Reading Activities

A: What Do You Think?

With a partner read each statement below about sports. Do you **agree** or **disagree** with it? Tell your partner the reason you agree or disagree.

1. Governments should spend a lot of money on sport because sporting success is very important for a nation.
2. An outstanding athlete from a poor country can just as easily become a champion as someone from a richer country. Sport makes everyone equal.
3. Sporting competitions like the Commonwealth Games or the Olympics encourage greater understanding and friendship between countries.
4. It doesn't matter if an athlete isn't successful. The most important thing is that he or she tried their hardest.
5. If two countries can play sport regularly against each other, they are unlikely to go to war against each other in the future.
6. Professionalism in sport (where athletes are paid money for their wins) has not changed the things that are valued about sport.

B: How Much Do You Know?

Part One: Work in pairs and try to answer these questions.

1. Which countries compete at the Commonwealth Games? (You do not need to list all the countries, but say what group they belong to.)
2. How old are the Commonwealth Games?
3. How often are they held?
4. Where are they being held in 2002?
5. Will disabled athletes compete at these Games?
6. Which sports are being held? (Try and think of at least six.)

Part Two: Now listen as your teacher reads a short text about the Commonwealth Games and check your answers for **Part One**.

Reading Activities

A: Understanding the Headline

Read the headline and first paragraph of today's article and answer the following questions.

1. Which Commonwealth Games team has received some extra money?
2. How much extra money has the team received?
3. Who gave the team the money?

Australian Team Gets Funding Boost

SYDNEY, Wednesday May 29 (Reuters) - Australia's team for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in July received a A\$500,000 (US\$280,000) funding **boost** from the national government on Wednesday.

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Glossary: *boost* - increase

B: Scanning

Now read the whole article and find the answers to these questions.

1. Which country has been the most successful at the last three Commonwealth Games?
2. How many gold medals did this country win at the 1998 Games?
3. How much in total is Australia spending on these Commonwealth Games?
4. How much is England spending?
5. How many athletes is Australia sending to this year's Games?
6. Is this team bigger or smaller than the team sent to Kuala Lumpur?
7. Which sports have been reintroduced for these Games?

Australian Team Gets Funding Boost

SYDNEY, Wednesday May 29 (Reuters) - Australia's team for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in July received a A\$500,000 (US\$280,000) funding boost from the national government on Wednesday.

Australia has topped the medal counts at the past three Commonwealth Games and collected a record 198 medals, including 80 gold, at the 1998 Games in Kuala Lumpur but expectations for Manchester are more **modest**.

Australia's Commonwealth Games chief Perry Crosswhite warned in April that Australia will be **hard-pressed** to match that level of performance and suggested that England would be the most likely nation to top the Manchester medal count.

Part of the reason he said was funding, with Australia's budget set at about A\$2.5 million compared with the A\$500 million England has reportedly spent.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard hoped the extra government funding would help Australia's Commonwealth

Games **athletes** keep performing at their **customary** high levels. "I believe the team will not only be very well supported, it will perform extremely well," Howard said.

"I encourage the team to do even better than Kuala Lumpur," he told a farewell breakfast for the team at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra.

Australia is sending a team of about 400 athletes to the Commonwealth Games, up **significantly** from the 310 who competed in Kuala Lumpur four years ago.

The Manchester Games will feature more sports and disabled athletes will be included on the official medals table for the first time.

The reintroduction of several sports such as badminton, judo, wrestling and table tennis is also expected to **favor** English athletes.

The Games start on July 25.

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Glossary: **modest** - not large in amount; doesn't expect great success **hard-pressed** - under great pressure or experiencing great difficulties **athletes** - sports people **customary** - usual **significantly** - importantly **favor** - to give an advantage to someone or something

C: Choose the Best Answer

Choose the best answer for each of these questions about today's article.

1. What is the main point of the article?
 - a. Disabled athletes will be included on the official medals table for the first time at this year's Commonwealth Games.
 - b. Australia is giving some extra money to its Commonwealth Games team.
 - c. Australia will probably top the medals table in Manchester.
2. Which other important idea does the article suggest?
 - a. The Australian team may not be as successful at these Games.
 - b. The Prime Minister of Australia is worried about the Australian team's performance.
 - c. Australia is spending too much money on its Commonwealth Games team.
3. What reasons are given for the possible success of the English team at the Commonwealth Games this year?
 - a. The size of the team and the amount of money that has been spent.
 - b. The amount of support they will receive from people in England.
 - c. The amount of money that has been spent and the reintroduction of certain sports.
4. What did the Australian Prime Minister tell the Australian Commonwealth Games team?
 - a. He is looking forward to going to Manchester and watching the Australian team.
 - b. He wants them to win as many medals as the 1998 team did in Kuala Lumpur.
 - c. He expects them to perform at their usual high level and do very well.

D: Reading Carefully

Answer these questions using your own ideas as well as your understanding of the article.

"Part of the reason he said was funding, with Australia's budget set at about A\$2.5 million compared with the A\$500 million England has **reportedly** spent."

1. What does the word 'reportedly' mean? Why is it used in this sentence from today's article?
2. The article tells us that the Australian team has been given a funding boost. What other points does the article make? Choose from the following list. (You may choose more than one point.)
 - It describes the history of the Games.
 - It suggests which team is likely to be more successful.
 - It reports the comments of the Australian Prime Minister at a breakfast.
 - It looks at how much funding the English and Australian teams have.
 - It talks about some sports which have been reintroduced to the Games.
 - It compares the size of the English and Australian teams.

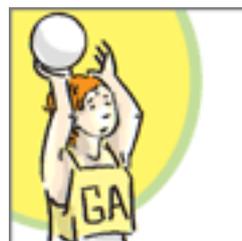
E: Language

Adverbs can be used to modify adjectives or verbs. Find an **adverb** in each of the sentences below that matches the description given.

1. Find the adverb in **Sentence 1** that is used with an adjective to make a comparison.
Sentence 1: *Australia has topped the medal counts at the past three but expectations for Manchester are more modest.*
2. Find the adverb in **Sentence 2** that modifies the verb 'spent' to show that a figure (an amount of money) may or may not be correct.
Sentence 2: *Part of the reason he said was funding, with Australia's budget set at about A\$2.5 million compared with the A\$500 million England has reportedly spent.*
3. Find the adverb in **Sentence 3** that means to a 'very high degree' and intensifies (i.e. makes stronger) the meaning of the adverb 'well'
Sentence 3: *"I believe the team... will perform extremely well," Howard said.*
4. Find the adverb in **Sentence 4** that means 'likewise'.
Sentence 4: *The reintroduction of several sports such as badminton, judo, wrestling and table tennis is also expected to favor English athletes.*

Now use the adverbs you found in the four sentences to fill the gaps in these sentences. (You will use two of the adverbs twice.)

5. England is hoping its team will be _____ successful at the Commonwealth Games this year than in 1998.
6. England has _____ spent millions on getting ready for these Games.
7. He did _____ badly in his race because of a stomach infection.
8. Getting lots of sleep and eating the right foods help prepare me for my event. Meditation is _____ important.
9. The athlete said he was feeling _____ positive about the race.
10. Ian Thorpe is competing in the freestyle events but will _____ race in three relays and the 100 meter backstroke.



Post-Reading Activities

You may do one or more of these.

A: Give Your Opinion

Read the extract from today's article. Then work in pairs and answer the following questions.

"Australia will be hard-pressed to match that level of performance and suggested that England would be the most likely nation to top the Manchester medal count. Part of the reason he said was funding, with Australia's budget set at about A\$2.5 million compared with the A\$500 million England has reportedly spent."

1. Do you think England has really spent this much? Why do you think this?
2. How do you feel about governments spending lots of money on funding sports teams?
"I believe the team will not only be very well supported, it will perform extremely well," Howard said. "I encourage the team to do even better than Kuala Lumpur."
3. How important is it to you that your country does well in international sporting competitions?
4. What kinds of support do athletes receive in your country?
5. Who are the sporting heroes of your country? Why are they admired?

B: Mixed-up Words

Here are the names of some countries which are members of the Commonwealth of Nations. The names are jumbled. Try to write the names correctly as quickly as you can. (The first one is done for you as an example.)

Mixed-up Commonwealth Countries	Commonwealth Countries
liaatursa	Australia
danaca	
aidni	
yakne	
ysiamala	
tankispa	
aupap wne giuaen	
proesniga	
babwezim	
wen leazdna	

C: Extra Reading

Here is an article that looks at drug-testing, one of the main issues for international competitions today. Read it, using a dictionary to help you, if necessary. Then work with another student and take turns saying what you remember about the article.

Thorpe Calls for Centralized Drug Testing

SYDNEY, Wednesday May 29 (Reuters) - World champion swimmer Ian Thorpe, a **strident** critic of drugs in sport, said on Wednesday a centralized system of drug testing was needed to replace current testing by three separate bodies.

Thorpe, world record holder in the 200, 400 and 800 meters freestyle, said testing by the Australian Sports Drug Agency, governing body FINA and the World Anti Doping Agency should be brought under one umbrella body covering the sport.

"I don't think they are testing in a way that gets the best results for our sport," Thorpe said at the **launch** in Sydney of a swimming "skins" event set for next month.

"I'm all for more drug tests (but) there's a lot of confusion and expense when you have three different bodies testing you," he said.

FINA officials told Thorpe to "stick to swimming" after the Australian teenager criticized the lack of doping tests at the world championships in Fukuoka last July.

Thorpe, 19, will enter the 100, 200 and 400 meters freestyle, plus three relays and the 100 meters backstroke at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester.

He is aiming to win seven gold medals and beat Australian Susan O'Neill's record of six gold set at the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Games.

Thorpe will be favored in the freestyle events but faces world champion Matt Welsh from Australia in the backstroke.

Thorpe won four gold medals at Kuala Lumpur as a 15-year-old.

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Glossary: **strident** - aggressive or loud in opinion **launch** - to start something all for - in favor of

D: Writing

Take one of the statements from **Pre-Reading Activity A** and write a short essay saying whether you agree or disagree with it. Support your opinion with examples or statistics.

TEACHERS' NOTES AND ANSWER KEY

Pre-Reading Activities

A: What Do You Think? - Notes

These statements are quite difficult, so you may like to go through them with students first to make sure they understand. Avoid discussing them at this stage. You could also select one or two (or ask students to select one or two) of the more interesting questions and discuss those rather than focussing on all of them. You may like to write them on the board as this allows students to look at them, ask questions and then refer back to them while they are discussing a topic with other students.

This is a good opportunity to mix students up. Organize a seating pattern where students can easily change seats and talk to a different student after discussing a statement. Alternatively, you could ask students to stand while they talk about a statement with a partner. After they finish talking about a statement, they can talk to a new partner.

B: How Much Do You Know? - Notes

Part 1: You could set a time limit and ask students to answer within the specified time. If you suspect your students know very little or nothing about the Games, you could go straight to **Part 2**.

Part 2: Read the text below at a normal speed at least twice to students. They can check the answers they have written. Discourage them from writing down the entire list of sports for question 6 as this will take too long.

B: How Much Do You Know? - Answers

1. Countries that are members of the British Commonwealth. These are countries who are (or used to be) governed or controlled by the United Kingdom.
2. 72 years (they began in 1930)
3. every four years
4. Manchester, England
5. yes
6. Aquatics, Athletics, Badminton, Boxing, Cycling, Gymnastics, Hockey, Judo, Lawn Bowls, Netball, Rugby 7s, Shooting, Squash, Table Tennis, Triathlon, Weightlifting and Wrestling.

B: How Much Do You Know? - Text to be Read Aloud to Students

The Commonwealth Games are a sporting competition for countries that are members of the Commonwealth of Nations. The Commonwealth (of Nations) is made up of the United Kingdom and independent countries which used to be governed or controlled by the United Kingdom (about 50 of them), or that still are.

The Commonwealth Games are held every four years and began in 1930 in Canada. They were first known as the British Empire Games but the name was changed to Commonwealth Games in 1974. This year they are being held in Manchester, England from July 25 - August 4.

At this year's games women will participate in all of the sports, except for three (rugby 7s, boxing and wrestling). Elite athletes with a disability will be included in the main sports program. The sports included in this year's Commonwealth Games are: Aquatics, Athletics, Badminton, Boxing, Cycling, Gymnastics, Hockey, Judo, Lawn Bowls, Netball, Rugby 7s, Shooting, Squash, Table Tennis, Triathlon, Weightlifting and Wrestling.

Reading Activities

A: Understanding the Headline - Answers

1. the Australian team
2. A\$500, 000
3. the Australian government

B: Scanning - Answers

1. Australia
2. 80
3. about A\$2.5 million
4. A\$500 million
5. about 400
6. bigger
7. badminton, judo, wrestling and table tennis

C: Choose the Best Answer - Answers

1. b 2. a 3. c 4. c

D: Reading Carefully - Answers

1. Reportedly means 'according to what some people say.' The sentence may be true but has not been verified by the writer of the article. The figure given has been reported by some people (i.e. reported in the media) but may not be correct.
2. It suggests which team is likely to be more successful; It reports the comments of the Australian Prime Minister at a breakfast; It looks at how much funding the English and Australian teams have; It talks about some sports which have been reintroduced to the Games.

E: Language - Answers

1. more 2. reportedly 3. extremely 4. also 5. more 6. reportedly 7. extremely 8. also 9. extremely 10. also
- (Students could also use the word 'extremely' for question 8.)

Post-Reading Activities

B: Mixed-up Words - Notes

As alternatives, you could write the jumbled names on the board and turn it into a class activity or have pairs compete against each other to see who can finish the list the fastest.

B: Mixed-up Words - Answers

Australia, Canada, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Zimbabwe, New Zealand

Please Note: The Weekly Warmer "Sports Equipment Vocabulary" complements this lesson nicely as it introduces some of the sports in this year's Commonwealth Games. You may wish to do the warmer before the lesson.

The official Internet Commonwealth Games site is at:

<http://www.commonwealthgames.com>

A set of quizzes is at: http://www.commonwealthgames.com/Kits_Zone/quizzes.asp

Please Also Note: This lesson also has further exercises for your students to do online at www.instantworkbook.com.

To get a username and password for your students, click on the blue icon next to this lesson description in the teachers' room at www.english-to-go.com.