



Photo: Tom Sodge/Stocksnap

CFE Level 2, 3 and 4 (Age 9-14)

# Sports and literacy

Ideas to bring physical  
education and literacy  
together

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## About these resources

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These resources have been created to support Scottish Book Trust's Authors Live event with Chris Hoy and Joanna Nadin, but you can use them at any time and in any context to bring together sports and literacy. The activities are designed to be flexible, so adapt as you see fit!

For Scottish teachers, Curriculum for Excellence links have been included. The age bandings are only a rough guide, and many activities can be differentiated to be useful at different levels.

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## About Chris Hoy and Joanna Nadin

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The *Flying Fergus* series is Chris Hoy's first venture into children's books, and is sure to inspire a new generation of young cyclists!

Since being given his first bike (a second hand girl's bike gifted by a neighbour) Chris has never looked back. His record at the Olympics is unparalleled: with six gold medals and one silver, he is the most decorated Olympic cyclist of all time. Since retiring from cycling in 2013, Chris has entered the world of motor racing, and hopes to compete in the 2016 Le Mans endurance race.

Joanna Nadin is an award-winning writer for children and teens. Making her name with the hugely popular Rachel Riley series, she has gone on in recent years to write the acclaimed teen novels *Wonderland* and *Joe All Alone*. She has won the Lancashire Fantastic Book Award and the Radio 4 Open Book 'Book of the Year' award, as well as twice being shortlisted for the Queen of Teen award.

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# Activities

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## **Design your own flag**

SOC 2-03a

At the beginning of each Olympic games, each country's athletes appear in the opening ceremony flying their national flag.

Hold a class or upper school competition to design a flag to represent your country today. Your pupils may wish to think about some of the major events and changes that have taken place in your country, whether these are political changes, advances in technology, famous examples of architecture, or any other prominent feature of society, politics or culture. Once your pupils have sketched a plan of your flag, they can create a large version on A3 paper and display these on sticks or attached to bunting.

## **Design your own mascot**

Exa 2-05a

Scottish football club Partick Thistle recently unveiled their new mascot, Kingsley. The mascot divided supporters and the general public alike: <http://bit.ly/KingsleyMascotPartick>.

Ask your pupils to design a sports mascot. This could be to represent their favourite team or represent their country at a particular sport. Get them to think carefully about the qualities they want their mascot to represent, and how these will be reflected in the mascot's design and behaviour. What clothes (if any) will it wear? Will it use any props? What message would they like their mascot to convey about their team?

## **Create a news broadcast about sports and exercise**

Lit 3-14a, Lit 3-03a, Lit 3-09a, Tch 3-04a

Your pupils can create a sports broadcast with a variety of features and stories.

First, split them into groups, and assign each group a different news feature. Some could be given the task of reporting on a sports match, some could be tasked with researching and writing a feature on an aspect of the country's sporting life (for example, a feature which looks at the opportunities young people have to take up new sports), some could arrange interviews with community sports figures, and others could be asked to present a breaking news story.

You can find some great guidance from the BBC on creating a news broadcast here: <http://bit.ly/BBCReportGuide>

## **Physical activity and mental health**

HWB 3-25a, Lit 3-14a, Lit 3-28a

Set up some fitness sessions with your pupils. This could take the form of circuit training, running or any other activity which involves a reasonable amount of physical exertion.

After the activity, ask pupils how they feel after taking part in it. Do they think that it's possible for exercise to lift a person's mood?

Back in the classroom, you can introduce pupils to the link between physical activity and mental health by showing them these videos:

- NHS video asking people how they exercise and why they enjoy it: <http://bit.ly/NHSExercise>
- Animation explaining how morning exercise is beneficial for mental health (for older pupils: <http://bit.ly/MorningExerciseBenefits>)

Ask pupils to research the links between exercise and mental health and produce an informative text for others. This could be a report, leaflet, article, news broadcast, infographic or any other suitable format.

Here are some good websites to help with their research:

- MIND website: <http://bit.ly/MindExercise>
- Scottish Association for Mental Health: <http://bit.ly/SAMHActive>

## **Discussion: changing perceptions about physical activity**

Lit 3-02a, Lit 3-09a

Many children are put off physical education by the impressions they've formed about it. It can often seem as if physical activity is only for those who are good at it. With the dominance of mainstream sports such as football and rugby, it can also often seem as if the choice of sports is limited.

To give your pupils fuel for discussion, ask them to answer these survey-style questions individually:

- Do you enjoy PE? Why/why not?
- Do you enjoy being competitive with others?
- Would you prefer playing team sports or individual sports? Why?

Then, show pupils the following video about the wide range of sports and activities people can take up: <http://bit.ly/ManySports>

Now, bring pupils together into groups and ask them to discuss the following questions:

- Do you think sports can be off putting for some people? Why?
- What do you think are the good things and bad things about team sports and individual sports?
- What do you think the benefits are to being physically active?
- What advice would you give to someone who hasn't enjoyed mainstream sports such as football and rugby?

There are a variety of tasks you can do to follow up this discussion:

- Encourage pupils to come up with a leaflet encouraging people to take up a sport or activity;
- Ask pupils to design a marketing campaign conveying the message that sports can be for everyone – you can get them to come up with slogans and design a logo for their campaign;
- Design a website to get the message out. You can do this in different ways: one would be to use Padlet to create a page of curated videos and images from around the web of different sports. Padlet allows you to accompany your videos and images with text, so pupils could write persuasive paragraphs. Padlet can be found here: <https://padlet.com/>. Alternatively, you can use Wix to create a free website: <http://www.wix.com/>;
- Organise an event to promote a wide range of sports. Your pupils could collaborate with the PE department to do this, making sure the event is promoted widely throughout the school and making sure that plenty of information about the various sports is made available to anyone interested in finding out more;
- Write an informative text about an alternative sport that captures their interest, explaining the rules and the appeal of the sport. This could form a part of the above task.

### **Write a picture book to inspire young children**

Eng 3-31a

Footballers like Frank Lampard and Theo Walcott now write books for young children. Why not ask your pupils to create a picture book with an inspirational sports story for younger pupils to read?

This could be done as a follow up to the previous task, where pupils have found out about alternative sports: these could feature in their picture book.

For tips creating illustrated characters, check out this resource:

<http://bit.ly/IllusResource>

For more advice about creating characters and formulating a plot, you can check out this blog series by Lari Don: <http://bit.ly/LariDon>. Much of the advice holds as true for picture books as it does for extended prose.

## **Invent a new sport**

Lit 2-28a, HWB 2-25a, HWB 2-26a

Quidditch is the most famous example of a writer inventing an entirely new sport. Why not get your pupils to make up their own? This presents great opportunities for literacy – pupils could write sets of instructions and rules, make a presentation about their sport, write a match report or write persuasive pieces to get people to start playing their sport.

Ask the pupils to think about the following questions when they are making up their sport:

- Will it be a team sport, or played individually?
- Is it an athletics-based sport, or a game?
- What will the scoring system be?
- Will it be a timed game? Or is the winner the first to reach a certain number of points?
- What do players have to wear? What kit will they need?
- What are the rules?

You could go even further by playing some of the pupils' made up sports in PE!

## **Discussion and debate: extreme sports**

Lit 3-14a, Lit 3-02a, Lit 3-09a

High octane sports have gained a higher profile in recent years thanks to Red Bull's backing of mountain biking, cliff diving, stunt driving and other extreme ventures.

Ask your pupils to find out more about some sports personalities in these types of fields. You could point them to some of the following stunts and ask them to find out more about how they were set up, the training that went into them and the careers of the performers:

- Travis Pastrana jumps 269 feet in a rally car: <http://bit.ly/1Sv0CrJ> (find a behind the scenes look here: <http://bit.ly/PastranaJumpBehindScenes>)
- Robbie Maddison's Las Vegas motorcycle jump, which although ultimately successful demonstrates the very real danger of stunts: <http://bit.ly/MaddisonMotoJump>
- Tightrope walker Philippe Petit is most famous for his daring walk between the twin towers of the World Trade Centre. The documentary Man on Wire is fantastic, but this original CBS news report is also a great source of information: <http://bit.ly/PetitCBS>

Your pupils can then present their findings to each other!

It can be difficult for most people to understand the psychology of those who undertake such dangerous stunts, and this could make for a compelling discussion between you and your pupils. Some insight might be gained from the following sources:

- Discovery News examines the brain's response to extreme sports: <http://bit.ly/WhyExtremeSports>
- For your own perusal (there are references to some adult themes), try this fascinating in-depth explanation of the biological need for extreme thrill seeking: <http://bit.ly/ExtremeSportPsych>

Extreme sports and stunts are undoubtedly thrilling to watch but are dangerous, and can have consequences not only for those taking part but also their families and others who are influenced to copy what they see. Ask your class to consider whether such activities should be banned. What are the arguments for and against?

### **Other topics for debate and discussion**

Lit 3-02a, Lit 3-09a

If pupils are looking for topics for discursive pieces, sport is full of contentious issues ripe for exploration. Here are a few suggestions:

- Can cycling ever be a clean sport?
- Should football referees wear microphones, as rugby referees do?
- Should women be allowed to compete against men in certain sports?
- Should certain performance-enhancing drugs be legal if they are proved to be safe?
- Should we base our judgements about athletes' standing solely on how many accolades they have won?
- Should Formula 1 cars be fitted with closed cockpits?
- Should Qatar lose the right to host the 2022 World Cup?
- Is it really possible to compare the performance of athletes now with the performance of athletes decades ago?
- Should Russia's athletics team be banned from the 2016 Olympics?
- Are women's sports being given enough prominence in the media?
- Should skateboarding become an Olympic sport?
- Is it ethical for animals to be involved in sports (for example, polo and horse racing)?
- In light of the debate around tennis player Johanna Konta's decision to represent Britain, how much freedom should athletes have to decide which countries they play for?

### **Growth mindset**

HWB 3-11a, HWB 3-22a, HWB 3-25a

Carol Dweck's growth mindset theory is really taking a foothold in education. The theory states that people have different beliefs about the nature of success. Some believe that success is achieved through innate ability, and that this ability is fixed – this is described as a “fixed mindset”. Others believe that ability can be improved through hard work and learning – this is described as a “growth mindset”.

You can introduce your pupils to these ideas by working with your PE department. Ask the department when pupils are likely to have a block of at least three weeks doing the same activity. Ask the pupils to keep a diary after each time they take part in the activity, recording their thoughts about the following things:

- What their preconceptions about the activity were;
- What they have learned each week about how to do the activity;
- The mistakes they have made and how they can learn from these.