



Australian Government

Department of Immigration and
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

Indigenous sport

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people invented many games to help them live in the Australian bush.

The Warlpiri people in the Northern Territory played a game called 'murri murri' where a disc was rolled between two lines of children who had to spear it quickly.

Sport brings us together



Australia is known as a sporting nation.

Our warm climate means we can spend lots of time outdoors. Australians are lucky to have plenty of room for parks, ovals and reserves.

Sport can be a great unifying force. Being part of a team encourages us to work together regardless of our background, and to recognise our individual strengths.

Origins of sport

Many of the skills used in games developed from a need to survive.

In ancient cultures sport became an important part of religious rites to encourage the growth of crops.

Bull-leaping was a favourite sport of the Minoans on Crete from about 3000 BC to 1200 BC.

Polo is thought to have originated in ancient Persia.

Keretizen was a type of hockey played by the ancient Greeks.

Baggatway, an early version of lacrosse, was played by teams of up to 500 native American warriors, using a stick with a hoop for catching and holding a ball.

Kite-flying was an ancient Chinese pastime.



Classroom activities

- 1 Research the origin of your favourite sport.
- 2 Name a sport invented in Australia.
- 3 Invent a team game.
- 4 Discuss what makes a good team.
- 5 Find out what other games Indigenous children played.

