

Historica Canada Education Portal

Basketball

Overview

This lesson is based on viewing the [Heritage Minute, "Basketball."](#) Canadian teacher, Dr. James Naismith, invented Basketball over 100 years ago when he hung a peach basket on a gym wall.

Aims

Students will develop their creative thinking and writing skills by writing about the first ever basketball game, or by devising a new game.

Using the story of James Naismith as the starting point, students can either research and write about other Canadian inventions, or other moments in Canadian sports history.

Activities

1. On the Spot Reporting

Students can take on the role of an eyewitness to sports history as a reporter for the Springfield Leader.

Write a newspaper article about the first game of basketball. In the course of the article, explain the game and offer an opinion as to whether the game has a future or not. Be sure to give reasons. Remember to describe the setting, the actions, and the people involved, and add colour with accounts of spectators' reactions, players' conduct and comments, and quotes from people involved.

2. Inventing a New Game

Naismith thought carefully about the rules for basketball, considering the size of the gym and the skills he wanted to train.

Create a new game for specific conditions. Describe how the game is played, the game's objectives, the equipment required, the playing area, and the rules. If it is possible, you may want to actually try some of the games. Either invent your own conditions or try some of the following ideas:

- A game in snow, on snowshoes, using a ball;
- A team sport, played in water, with racquets;
- An indoor team game using at least two bean bags;
- A field game using a fishing net and frisbee.

3. Canadian Sports Hall of Fame

There are many great sports stories in Canadian History.

Discuss the attraction of sports stories: the drama, the uncertainty, the character qualities that arise in competition. Discuss the sense of pride and identification that fans feel for their team, whether a National Olympic team or a local hockey team.

Brainstorm the many sports played in Canada in the past and present, listing familiar names associated with them. The teacher may also

contribute names of some lesser known sports figures.

Have individuals or small groups choose sports to research. Each narrows research to one person or team, then writes a short narrative highlighting the outstanding feature of that person/team. The subjects can be coaches or innovators, as well as athletes. Collect the writing, along with illustrations and/or photographs, into the Sports Hall of Fame.

4. Inventors and innovators

Naismith is only one of many Canadian inventors whose work has been recognized all over the world. In fact, Naismith himself later invented the first football helmet.

Uncover and tell the story behind some of these Canadian inventions: the telephone, the snowmobile, insulin, the Macintosh apple, Marquis wheat, newsprint from wood pulp, kerosene, the electron microscope, Standard Time, cobalt therapy, hockey.

Resources

- [Heritage Minute: Basketball](#)

- [The Canadian Encyclopedia: Basketball](#)
- [The Canadian Encyclopedia: James Naismith](#)