

The Very Best Sport

“Watch out!” yelled Grant. It was too late. The soccer ball spun right into the side of Cliff’s head.

“Oh . . . sorry,” Cliff yelled back absentmindedly.

“What’s going on?” Grant asked in an irritated voice. “You need to pay more attention. We need a lot more practice before we play in this weekend’s game.”

Cliff and Grant lived on the island of Barbados in the eastern Caribbean Sea. They were playing soccer, one of the island’s most popular sports for students. Cliff and Grant’s team was doing well and was favored to win in the upcoming game, but Cliff’s heart was not in it.

Since he had starting playing sports as a little boy, Cliff had always felt like he was being pushed in a direction he did not want to go. He had not liked cricket; the first sport he had attempted. Cricket is the national sport of Barbados, and almost everyone on the island plays. Cliff, however, had found the game, which involved batting a ball and running between two stumps called wickets, quite boring.

When Cliff was a little older and his parents detected his lack of enthusiasm for cricket, they had suggested soccer. Millions of people around the world love the game, and Cliff was a good athlete, so it was natural for him to give it a try. Unfortunately for Cliff, he was good at it. It all came naturally to him, but it just did not excite him. Even now, when his team was headed for a championship, he could not keep his mind on it. Instead, Cliff dreamed of water, waves, and the big, warm winds of the Caribbean.

After practice Cliff ran straight home and grabbed his windsurf board, or sailboard. Windsurfing is a popular sport for natives and visitors to Barbados. Most students in Cliff’s school, however, preferred the team sports of soccer, basketball, and, of course, cricket. But windsurfing was the sport for Cliff.

After school the following day, Cliff stopped off at the local surfboard shop. He liked checking out all the new windsurfing equipment, even if he could not afford it. He could always dream about it, and maybe someday he would start winning competitions and earn enough money to actually buy all this stuff. And then he would compete in the Olympics!

As Cliff was about to leave, something on the wall caught his eye. A brightly colored brochure announced an upcoming windsurfer competition. A small prize would be awarded to the first-, second-, and third-place finishers. Cliff was ecstatic. He knew he was ready for a competition—and this could be his big break. He grabbed the brochure and started reading the details. “Oh, no,” Cliff said aloud, “the competition is this Saturday, and the big soccer game is this Saturday too. Now what am I going to do?”

At first Cliff felt as if he could not really talk about this with his parents. How could they understand his dilemma when they really wanted him to become a big soccer star or the next cricket sensation? “Well that’s never going to happen,” laughed Cliff, “so I might as well tell them the truth.”

After dinner that night Cliff told his parents about his dream of becoming a champion windsurfer, how he had absolutely no desire to play soccer or cricket, and about the windsurfing competition on Saturday. Cliff was surprised; his parents seemed only a little disappointed. His mom, of course, expressed her concern about all the tricks he was doing on the sailboard, but Cliff assured her he was training properly. What they seemed most disappointed about was the problem of the soccer game on Saturday.

“Do you really want to let your team down, Cliff?” his father asked, looking directly into Cliff’s eyes. “Think about Grant and your other friends. They’ve been practicing hard, and this is important to them.”

“But the competition is important to me!” Cliff replied. As he said the words, however, he knew what he had to do. He had committed to the soccer team and the school. The windsurfing competition would have to wait.

“I’ll play in the game and support my friends,” Cliff said. “But just wait until the next windsurfing competition. I’m going to show Barbados what I can do! And finally I’m going to compete at the very best sport there is!”

Spice Up Your Day

What is your favorite food? Do you eat a special snack after school? Can you name some of the popular foods you and your friends eat? These foods may be common in some homes, but families in other parts of the world enjoy different types of foods for their meals.

India is a country in southern Asia. It is home to more than one billion people. Many Indians do not believe in eating animals. They do not eat animals for religious reasons or for ethical reasons (they do not feel it is the right thing to do). People who do not eat animals are called vegetarians.

You may be asking yourself, “What do vegetarians in India eat?” They actually have many food choices. In fact, Indian diets are becoming more popular in the United States as well.

On a typical day in many parts of India, children rise to the smells of their parents cooking a breakfast of potatoes, onions, yogurt, fresh fruit, tea, and coffee. Many spices are used in Indian cooking. A popular breakfast dish is made with rice, lentils, and spices. Lentils are the seeds of a plant similar to peas and beans. Other popular breakfast foods include rice pancakes filled with vegetables, rice noodles, and cakes made with rice and peas and served with bananas.

As children in India open their lunch bags, they find a bread called *naan*. Naan is soft, round, and flat. It is filled with many types of vegetables and sometimes cheese or yogurt to make a sandwich. People in India also might eat fresh salads, fruit, spicy potatoes, vegetable soups, and rice for lunch.

After a long day at school or at work, Indians enjoy the aroma of spices coming from their homes. Before hitting the books, Indian children might have a snack. One favorite is crispy rice loops. No, this is not a breakfast cereal. Crispy rice loops are made from rice flour that is deep-fried into the shape of loops. Many people eat them with tea. As with other Indian recipes, many snack recipes have been passed down through the generations.

But it is not a good idea to fill up on snacks. Many wonderful recipes await, and dinner is ready! A typical Indian dinner might include various kinds of dumplings. Salads made from carrots, cucumbers, pineapple, and mango are often on the menu as well.

Once again, rice, lentils, and vegetables make up many of the dinner recipes. Of course, they are blended with many different spices, some of them very hot! You may have heard of chili powder. It is also popular in many recipes in the United States. This is a common spice in Indian cooking along with some you may not have heard of, such as cumin and the curry leaf. A popular side dish in America is cottage cheese. Cottage cheese is also popular in India. It is used in many dishes mixed with green peppers, black pepper, and spinach.

As in many different countries, the end of a day would not be complete without a sweet treat. Desserts in India include rice, carrots, and nut puddings. Many Indian desserts are made using nuts, coconut, pumpkin, and fruits such as pineapple and mango. One of the most popular desserts in India is a type of carrot pudding. It is made with nuts and other dried fruit.

These dishes are accompanied by various drinks. Two popular drinks in India are coffee and tea. However, Indian drinks are usually flavored with spices. Chilled mangos and nuts make good shakes. One Indian drink that has made its way to the United States is chai. *Chai* is the Hindi word for “tea.” Chai is a spiced milk tea and is more popular in India than coffee. The next time you visit a coffee shop, try the chai!

Vegetarians can be found in every country. Most recipes can be changed to meet their needs. But in no other nation is being a vegetarian as much a part of life as in India. People around the globe can thank Indian cooks for inspiring some of the most delicious and healthful recipes in the world.

Vocabulary

FOCUS Review the selection vocabulary words from
“My Librarian Is a Camel.”

archipelago

capabilities

caravan

consists

devour

economical

isolated

nomadic

promote

refugee

refurbished

solar

PRACTICE Complete each sentence with a selection
vocabulary word. Each vocabulary word should be used once.

1. The _____ lights work by storing energy from the sun.
2. We will travel in a _____ so we can stay close to each other as we drive to the cabin.
3. When I love a story, I will _____ the book quickly.
4. My uncle _____ the old table our great-grandfather built.
5. The ferry stopped at four islands of the _____.
6. The _____ tribe moved depending on the seasons and available resources.
7. The mobile phone has many different _____, including taking pictures, sending texts, and calling.
8. The _____ traveled far to flee the war that broke out.

9. It was difficult to reach the _____ mountain village because no one had made roads.
10. This salad _____ of spinach, strawberries, almonds, and a light dressing.
11. To _____ good dental health, the dentist is providing free toothbrushes.
12. The _____ choice on the menu is the daily special.

APPLY Read each sentence. Answer each question by explaining the definition of the underlined term in your own words.

13. You are traveling in a caravan to the big game. What are you doing?

14. The economical car does not have many features. What does that mean?

15. A BLT sandwich consists of bacon, lettuce, and tomato. What does that mean?

16. The dancing toy worked by solar energy. What is happening?

17. The auto collector refurbished an old car. What did she do?

18. We tried not to devour our lunch, even though we were hungry. What does that mean?

Devoured Books

Melanie was full of questions and devoured books in search of the answers to those questions. Her book diet consisted of both nonfiction and fiction books related to a topic to get a full understanding. She had a strong capability to visualize as she read. She had so many questions about a topic, that sometimes the librarians would lead her to whole sections of the library.

Melanie wondered, “What would it be like to live nomadically in Africa?” So, she began to look up books about nomadic life. She read realistic fiction about modern nomads, and she especially enjoyed reading about the caravans traveling by camel. She could imagine the way the camels walked, the heat of the desert, and the cool shade of the tent. She then read historical fiction about ancient nomadic tribes in other parts of the world.

After reading about nomadic life, Melanie wondered, “What would it be like to live isolated from others?” This was a little harder to find on her own in the library, so she asked the librarians for help. They directed her to many fictional stories of survival in isolating conditions. She was amazed by the characters’ capabilities of finding ways to stay alert and strong to overcome such loneliness.

Once she finished reading all she could find about living alone and in isolation, she began to wonder, “How could I power something if I lived alone?” She went to the library and began devouring books about all types of power: solar power, wind power, and electricity. As she read more, she learned an economical way of providing heat in some isolated communities involved heating dry animal manure!

The next topic for her inquiring mind was life on an archipelago. She wondered “How connected are the people who live on neighboring islands of archipelagos?” She read nonfiction stories about island life and learned about different archipelagos around the world. She imagined living on an archipelago, feeling the wind from the sea, the smell of salt water, the sounds of the waves lapping the shore. And she wondered, “Why would anyone leave such a beautiful place?”

Then Melanie began to learn more about refugees in the world. She devoured news articles and books that described the refugee experience. She imagined their fear and uncertainty as they traveled far from home.

Melanie began to imagine her life as an adult. She wanted to promote reading and help others find books, like the librarians helped her. Only, she wanted a place where people could buy books economically, so they could read them again and again. She wanted a place where people could meet and share books and stories. She wanted a place that used renewable energy resources, so maybe her place would be powered by solar panels. She wanted a place that would be welcoming and inviting.

As Melanie grew older, she continued to think about what her book store would look like. She imagined all the different places she visited in her mind while she devouringly read. Maybe her store could look like a nomadic caravan of books. Maybe her store could look like life on an archipelago. As she was walking through town, she found the perfect spot in the suburbs, several miles from the closest library. It was an old restaurant that would need to be refurbished, however it would be work well.

Melanie refurbished the old restaurant, so that it was now a book store with shelves and shelves of books. She kept a small section of the restaurant so people would have a place to read and have a cup of tea or coffee while they discussed books. She began promoting her book store and events she would hold. She scheduled authors to come visit so they could promote their books. She set up book clubs that consisted of neighbors interested in similar genres and topics.

On opening day, Melanie welcomed everyone into her book store. People came from all over town to see what was available and what programs she might offer. The neighbors of the store were amazed at how she was able to refurbish the restaurant for this new purpose. They were excited about the programs and economical options for books. The store was humming with people sharing books and stories, just as she imagined.

Soon, Melanie had a regular set of customers. They would come to greet her, talk books, and ask many questions. One of Melanie's favorite customers was a young boy who had a question-asking capability similar to her own. She looked forward to directing him to a section of the store to find answers. She smiled as he devoured book after book.

Classify and Categorize

- FOCUS**
- To **classify** is to identify the similarities that objects, characters, or events have in common with each other, and then group them by their similarities.
 - To **categorize** is to organize the objects, characters, or events into groups, or categories.

PRACTICE On the lines below, building items are categorized into tools and supplies. Classify the items listed in the word box by placing them into the appropriate category.

hammer	bolt	nail	saw
wood	screwdriver	wrench	screw

1. Tools

2. Supplies

APPLY Classify the emotions listed in the box by placing them into their appropriate categories.

melancholy	joy	sorrow	fury	glumness	rage
cheerfulness	bliss	irritation	wrath	contentment	misery

3. Happy

4. Sad

5. Angry
