

**УДК 796.389. 77.01.82**

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### **CRICKET... AND TEACHING ENGLISH**

**Annotation.** As the title implies the article describes cricket as the sport which is not typical for Russia and teaching English. The text gives valuable information on the rules, history and interesting facts of the game. Much attention is given to the research work. The following conclusions are drawn: «After reading the text, doing exercises, students not only master the language material and expand their cross-cultural knowledge, but also get a message to go in for sport». The article is of great help to the teachers, students and other people who are interested in learning English or sport.

**Key words:** cricket, teaching English, doing sports, sports which are not typical for Russia.

It is common known that sport plays a great role in our life. Firstly, doing sports is one of the healthy ways. Secondly, it develops such important qualities as strength, will, purposefulness and a team spirit. Naturally, teachers cannot but have talks about sport at the lessons. As a teacher of English I discuss the use of doing sport too and it is always interesting to talk about sports which are not typical for Russia.

The sources are mainly studied traditional sports, such as skiing [1, p. 110], judo [2, p. 143-144], Japanese martial arts [3, p. 60], or even fitness [4, p. 137] and other. National sports are practically not been studied, so in this article I would like to describe the features of cricket.

Before starting a talk, I ask the students: «What is cricket?» As a rule, they have difficulty answering the question. At the same time, due to the natural curiosity of the young people, they get interested in the subject.

After stating the problem, the students are given the texts, containing the information about the above- mentioned sport.

**Cricket** is a popular summer sport. It is sometimes called an English national game and it is the chief summer game for boys in most schools. It is known that people have been playing cricket since 1550. Nowadays this game, which is typically British, is played in schools, colleges and universities and in most towns and villages of Britain [5, p.250]. It is a team game. A cricket team consists of 11 players. Athletes

have cricket bats, special protective equipment, a wicket (a set of three wooden stumps) and a cricket ball (a hard ball about the size of a tennis ball). The game is played on a special field. There are two wickets in the middle of the field at a distance of 22 yards (about 18 meters) from each other.

One side is «in», that is, each player of that side has his turn to hit the ball with his bat. He bats the ball, so he is the batsman. While two batsmen, one in front of each wicket, are batting, the other players of their side do nothing, they only sit on the grass or in the tent and watch.

The other side is «out», that is, it is in the field. Two of them are wicket-keepers, one behind each wicket, and two are bowlers, one at each end. The bowler throws the ball at the wicket, and the batsman must bat it. If he can't and the ball hits the wicket, that batsman is out of the game and another one from his team takes his place.

The task of the bowler is to make the ball hit the wicket of the batsman who is facing him. The task of the batsman is not to let the ball hit the wicket, but to bat it a long way into the field. When he does that, he runs to the other wicket and his fellow-batsman runs towards him to his wicket. They change places in this way as many times as they can. They make runs: one, two, even six runs, for their side.

While the two batsmen are making runs, the players in the field must pick or catch the ball and throw it back to the bowler if the two batsmen are standing at the wickets. If they are not there, the wicket-keeper (or the bowler) hits the wicket with the ball and the batsman who is running towards that wicket is out of the game and another player from his team takes his place.

The game is over when both sides have batted twice and have been in the field twice. The team which makes the most runs wins the game [6, p. 6].

Cricket is not played only by men. Girls and women play this game too [4, p.250].

Cricket is a very long game, and slow too. When a big game is in progress, you will always see people standing round a shop window and watching it on TV [6, p. 6].

International cricket matches last for 5 days [5, p. 250]. The five-day international matches are called Test matches. They are played between England, Australia, Pakistan, India and New Zealand. Nevertheless, the game is enjoyed by millions of people.

There is a special telephone number which you can phone during international cricket matches. It gives you the latest score [7, p. 183]. Some cricketers received BBC Overseas Sports Personality of the Year Award.

The British even knight the most famous cricketers.

There are Englishmen for whom playing cricket is a profession. For example, the father of H. G. Wells, an English writer, was a professional cricketer.

To some people, cricket is as interesting as chess or a play at the theatre. To others, it is an uninteresting old game which only fools play, twenty-two fools in white clothes. What use is cricket, these people think, in our time of spaceships and sputniks?

But even those who don't like cricket use a phrase which has come from this game. If a man says something is «not cricket», he means it is un-English and very bad. It's not cricket to hit a girl. Well, England without cricket will be like a letter without a stamp, a classroom without a blackboard, football without a ball. So let us wish cricket all the best! [5, p.6]

After reading the text about cricket, the students are offered to do some research work:

1. Arrange the following units into three sets. In each set pick out the word which has the most general word: sport, cricket, football, ball, chess, cricketer, batsman, bowler, wicket, wicket-keeper, player, equipment, bat.

2. (key: sport, cricket, football, chess; player, cricketer, batsman, bowler, wicket-keeper; equipment, ball, wicket, bat)

3. Arrange the words into lexical sets: «Sports», «Equipment», «Actions»:  
win, equipment, play, bat, pick, cricket, run, football, catch, ball, throw, chess, hit, wicket, sit.

(key: «Sports»- cricket, football, chess; «Equipment»- ball, wicket, bat; «Actions»- win, play, bat, pick, run, catch, throw, hit, sit.)

4. Translate the following word combinations into Russian without using any dictionaries, using your knowledge or guessing:

an English national game;  
a cricket team;  
cricket bats;  
special protective equipment;  
international cricket matches;  
a special telephone number;  
a professional cricketer;  
un-English.

(key: английская национальная игра; крикетная команда; крикетная бита; специальное защитное снаряжение; международный матч по крикету;

специальный телефонный номер; профессиональный игрок в крикет; не по-английски)

5. Which of the given words and word combinations may be considered as synonyms? Arrange the synonyms into pairs: a pitch, like, a wicket, hit, a set of three wooden stumps, a cricket ball, bat, a hard ball about the size of a tennis ball, a field, enjoy.

(key: a pitch- a field; like- enjoy; a wicket- a set of three wooden stumps; hit- bat; a cricket ball- a hard ball about the size of a tennis ball)

6. We know cricket is a very long and slow game. Should we appreciate the British sense of humour, when they say «as cheerful /lively /merry as a cricket» [8, p.323]. Why? Why not?

(key: In this case, we do not come across irony or humour. The thing is that the word “cricket” has one more meaning – a small, dark brown insect that makes a high-pitched noise [9, p. 182]. So, the word “cricket” is used in these word combinations exactly in this meaning).

7. There is a Russian game similar with cricket, isn't there? What is it? What are their common features?

(key: There is a Russian game similar with cricket. It is called *lapta*. The common features of these games are:

1. Players use bats and a ball;
2. The aim of the games is almost similar;
3. Players can leave the game and also can be replaced by other players;
4. There are lines that should be reached and then a player go back to his place.

After reading the text, doing exercises, students not only master the language material and expand their cross-cultural knowledge, but also get a message to go in for sport. Maybe they want to get acquainted with cricket even closer and try themselves in this sport.

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