

SPORTS

Learn
BRIGHT

PICKLEBALL

High-Interest Reading Comprehension



GRADE 3-5

- Teacher Guidelines** ▶ pages 1 – 2
- Instructional Pages** ▶ pages 3 – 4
- Activity Page** ▶ page 5
- Practice Pages** ▶ pages 6 – 7
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Classroom Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson with the following: Did you know pickleball was named after a dog? That's right! One of the creators, Joel Pritchard, had a dog named Pickles, who loved chasing after the ball during their games. And guess what? Now, pickleball is one of the fastest-growing sports in the world! Today, you'll learn how to play this super fun game. So, grab your paddles, get ready to move, and let's dive into the world of pickleball!
2. Distribute the *Sports: Pickleball* Content Pages. Read and review with students. Point out the text features like numbered paragraphs, images, **bold** printed words, and insets. Explain to students that authors add text features to help readers comprehend and find information in the text more easily. Have your students annotate, take notes, highlight, or underline information as they read.
3. Distribute the Activity Page. Have students practice volleying the ball by hitting it back and forth before starting the games. Have a competition to see who can keep it up the longest.
4. Distribute the Practice Pages. Read and review the questions with students to check for understanding. The Practice Pages can be an independent, group, or summative assessment.
5. In closing, ask students what they learned about pickleball while reading or about something related to comprehension, annotations, or some comprehension skill. What was the most interesting thing you learned about pickleball? How do text features help readers comprehend the information? After reading this article, would you like to play pickleball? How is pickleball different from tennis? Do you think you can invent a sport?

Lesson Title: Sports: Pickleball

Subject: High-Interest Informational Reading

Approximate Grade Level: 3 – 5

Objectives: The student will practice various close reading and comprehension skills. In addition, the student will learn about this fun and fairly new sport.

State Educational Standards*:

LB.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2

LB.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.4

LB.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.6

Approximate Lexile Reading

Comprehension Level: 810L to 1000L

Class Sessions (45 minutes):

1 to 1½ class sessions

Teaching Materials/Worksheets:

Content Pages (2), Activity Page (1), Practice Pages (4)

Student Supplies:

Pickleball paddles and balls

Prepare Ahead of Time:

Copies of worksheets; chalk off areas to make courts

*Lessons are aligned to meet the education objectives and goals of most states. For more information on your state objectives, contact your local Board of Education or Department of Education in your state.

Sports: Pickleball



¹Have you ever watched a tennis match or played tennis yourself? Maybe you thought it would be a fun sport if the court were smaller. Guess what? There is a sport similar to tennis that people play on a smaller court! It's called pickleball, and today, we will read all about it. Grab your paddles and get ready to learn all about this fun and fast-growing sport!

A Little Bit o' History

²Pickleball was created in 1965 in Bainbridge Island, Washington. Three dads, Joel Pritchard, Bill Bell, and Barney McCallum, wanted to make a game their families could enjoy. They **combined** parts of tennis, badminton, and ping pong. They used paddles, a plastic ball with holes, and a smaller court. What started as a simple backyard game quickly became popular across the country and the world.



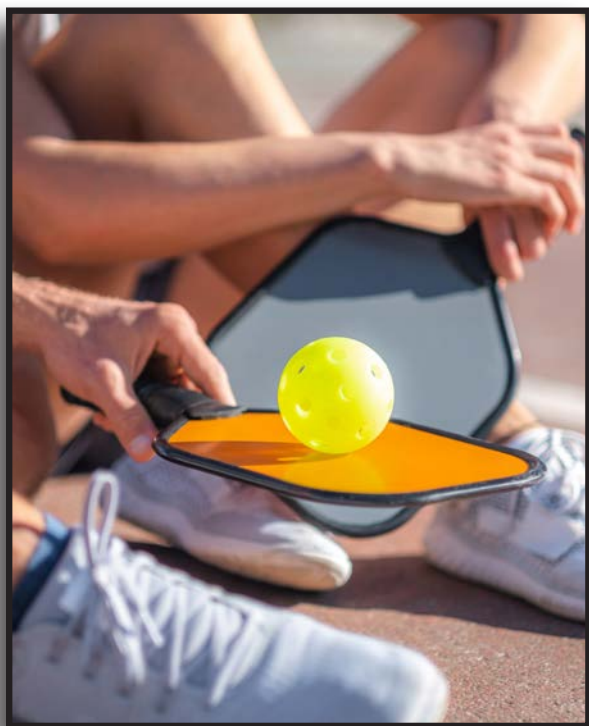
Worldwide Wow

³People now play pickleball all around the world, from the United States to Canada, India, and Australia. Tons of parks, schools, and community centers have added pickleball courts to meet the growing demand. There are leagues for players of all ages and skill levels. Major tournaments like the US Open Pickleball Championships draw top competitors from around the globe. Pickleball is a sport anyone can enjoy, whether they're playing for fun or competing at a high level.

Cool Facts Alert

⁴Did you know that the longest pickleball rally ever recorded happened on April 12, 2022? Emma and Liam Davis, two professional players from Florida, kept the ball going for 78 minutes straight! They hit the ball 35,791 times without stopping. Their incredible rally set a world record and showed how exciting pickleball can be.





⁵If you want to become a professional pickleball player, it takes practice, patience, and a lot of hard work. Most players start by joining local pickleball clubs and leagues to improve their skills. They focus on mastering serves, volleys, and different strategies. They may attend special camps or work with experienced coaches as they get better. Some players even have the opportunity to compete in national tournaments. With determination and practice, anyone can work up to the professional level.

⁶Now, let's go over the basics of the game. Pickleball is played on a court similar to a badminton court with a net (like tennis). You can play with either two players (singles) or four players (doubles). The goal is to hit the ball over the net and into the other team's court. Players serve underhand, and points are only scored by the serving team. Games usually go up to 11 points, and the winner must win by at least two points. If the ball goes out of bounds or hits the net, the other team gets to serve. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins. In big tournaments, winners often receive trophies, medals, or cash prizes.

Pickleball 101

⁷During a game of pickleball, you might hear some interesting words. For example, a "**dink**" is a soft shot that clears the net, and an "**ace**" is a serve the other team can't return. The area near the net is called the "**kitchen**," where players aren't allowed to hit the ball in the air.

⁸To play pickleball, all you need is a paddle, a pickleball, and comfortable clothes. Paddles can be made from different materials, such as wood or **composite**, depending on your preference. There are also other types of pickleballs designed for indoor or outdoor play. A good pair of shoes is essential, too, because pickleball involves lots of quick movements around the court.



Why It's So Fun

⁹Pickleball is a blast because it's simple to pick up but still packed with fast-paced action. One reason it's fun is that the smaller court means less running around. It's perfect for friendly games, where you can laugh and enjoy time with others or get competitive in tournaments and test your skills. The thrill of making a tricky shot over the net or winning a long back-and-forth rally feels awesome.

¹⁰So, there you have it, future pickleball stars! This fun sport has an exciting history, global popularity, and endless excitement. Grab your paddle, find a court, and get ready to become the next pickleball champion!





PLAY SOME PICKLEBALL

Instructions: Follow the gameplay rules and directions to engage in a friendly pickleball game.

SETUP:

You can play pickleball with two players (called singles) or four players (called doubles). You'll need a pickleball, which is like a wiffle ball, and each player needs their own paddle

THE SERVE:

- The game starts with a serve. The player serving must stand behind the back line and hit the ball underhand.
- The ball has to go over the net and land in the opposite team's service box (the big rectangle on the other side).
- You only get one try to serve, so aim carefully!

THE KITCHEN (No-Volley Zone):

- The area close to the net is called the kitchen.
- You can only go into the kitchen to hit the ball after it has bounced.
- Players aren't allowed to remain in the kitchen and hit the ball in the air before it bounces. If you do, it's a fault!

PLAYING THE GAME:

- After the serve, both teams hit the ball back and forth over the net.
- The ball has to bounce once on each side before players can hit it back in the air.
- After those two bounces, you can hit the ball without letting it bounce after that, but remember: no kitchen volleys! (If the ball starts to fall in the kitchen, let the ball bounce first. If it is not in the kitchen area, you don't have to let it bounce.)

SCORING:

- You can only score points when it's your team's turn to serve.
- Every time your team wins a rally, you get 1 point.
- The first team to reach at least 11 points wins the game, but you have to win by at least 2 points. (If the score is 10-10, a team would to get at least 12 points to end to the game).

FAULTS (How You Lose the Rally):

- Hitting the ball out of bounds
- Not hitting the ball over the net
- Stepping into the kitchen and hitting the ball without letting it bounce first
- Letting the ball bounce more than once on your side



Practice

Name _____ Date _____



Instructions: Show what you know!

1) Why does the author write words using bold print? (Text feature)

2) How do the images relate to the content? (Text feature)

3) In paragraph 7, the author uses the word *kitchen*. How is the word used differently from other uses of this word? (Vocabulary)

4) Why has pickleball become a popular sport worldwide? (Comprehension)

5) Which gear do you need to play a game of pickleball? Where did you find the information? (Comprehension)



Practice

Name _____ Date _____



6) Why does the author say becoming a professional pickleball player takes practice, patience, and a lot of hard work? (Inference)

7) How many minutes was the longest pickleball rally? (Close reading)

8) Choose the word(s) the author would say **best** describes pickleball. (Point of view)

- a. energetic b. confusing c. dull d. difficult e. studious

9) What is the author's purpose for writing "Sports: Pickleball"? (Author's purpose)

10) What is a dink? (Find information in the text)



Practice

Name Answer Key Date _____



Instructions: Show what you know!

1) Why does the author write words using bold print? (Text feature)

Essential vocabulary words or words that have a special meaning appear in bold print. Readers may not be familiar with these words. The definition is usually somewhere in the surrounding sentences.

2) How do the images relate to the content? (Text feature)

Images provide the reader with a visual that reinforces the text in the content. They help paint pictures in the readers' minds so that they can visualize what the author is saying in the text.

3) In paragraph 7, the author uses the word *kitchen*. How is the word used differently from other uses of this word? (Vocabulary)

Normally, a kitchen is a place where you go to prepare food. A pickleball kitchen is an area near the net where players aren't allowed to hit the ball in the air. Words that are spelled the same but have different meanings are called homographs or homonyms.

4) Why has pickleball become a popular sport worldwide? (Comprehension)

(Answers may vary.) People of all ages can play. It is also an easy game to learn, and there's a lot of action. It can be friendly or competitive.

5) Which gear do you need to play a game of pickleball? Where did you find the information? (Comprehension)

All you need is a paddle, a pickleball, some comfortable clothes, and good tennis shoes since you'll be moving on your feet a lot. The information is in paragraph 8.



Practice

Name Answer Key Date _____



6) Why does the author say becoming a professional pickleball player takes practice, patience, and a lot of hard work? (Inference)

Like many things you want to be good at, you have to put in lots of time practicing and learning the skills that make you better. Because you have to join leagues, practice and master your skills, attend camps, and compete in tournaments.

7) How many minutes was the longest pickleball rally? (Close reading)

The longest rally recorded was over an hour at 78 minutes! The information is in paragraph 4.

8) Choose the word(s) the author would say **best** describes pickleball. (Point of view)

- a. energetic b. confusing c. dull d. difficult e. studious

9) What is the author's purpose for writing "Sports: Pickleball"? (Author's purpose)

The author wants to describe and inform readers about this unique sport. The author also wants to encourage kids to try new sports.

10) What is a dink? (Find information in the text)

A dink is a soft shot that just barely goes over the net.