




Text Type: Magazine article
Suggested finishing time: 25 mins

Let's think! 

1. What sports do you consider unpopular?
2. In your opinion, what makes these sports unpopular?

More to Take Away

Ice hockey's status as one of Canada's national sports is confirmed not only by the custom of the Canadians, but also by Canadian law, namely the National Sports of Canada Act.

Determine whether each of the following statements is a fact, an opinion, or undecidable because not enough information is given.

- (i) The standardised depth of a swimming pool designed for water polo must not be less than 1.8 metres. (¹it is at least 1.8 metres ► fact)
- (ii) For tall people, the rules are hard to follow. (²John's idea ► opinion)
- (iii) Water polo and rugby are equally popular. (³popularity is not mentioned ► not given)

STEAM CLASSROOM

Moving in water is more strenuous than walking on land because water is much denser than air. While we walk, air resistance is much less of a concern unless there is strong wind. However, while underwater, we feel much more profoundly the presence of water resistance.

Can you name eight sports now? Swimming. Basketball. Football. Tennis. Baseball. Volleyball. Golf. Table Tennis. Have I mentioned all of what you just named? If so, you may want to be better informed about the world of sports. Check out what some of the local athletes have to say about the less popular sports they play.

WATER POLO — John Wong

Ten years have passed since the birth of my passion for water polo. It's a competitive team sport played in water, where two teams compete against one another to score goals. Each team has seven players, one goalkeeper included. Think of it as handball that takes place in a swimming pool, not a pool where kids splash around, ¹but one that has to be at least 1.8 metres deep.



One strict rule of the game is that players are not allowed to touch the bottom or sides of the pool. ²I'm 1.97 metres tall so not breaking this rule takes extra caution. To make sure that we maintain an upright pose and keep our heads above the water, we must tread water (by rotating our legs) the whole time. You can imagine how gruelling it can be! For this reason, ³it is often compared to rugby: both require an extremely high level of agility and stamina.

The path to passing the ball and scoring a goal successfully in water polo parallels the path to walking for the first time successfully as a kid—paved with challenges, falls and struggles, yet leading to momentous rewards. They would make a list too long to appear on a magazine page, but could nonetheless be encapsulated in one sentence: every water polo athlete is trained to be capable of thriving in water and on land, like an amphibian.

ICE HOCKEY — Mandy Tsui

Tender memories come back whenever I recall the beginning of my romance with ice hockey. When I was eight, my uncle brought me to a game for the first time. The disc that was moving like lightning on ice had my gaze completely fixed on it. Immediately after I got home, I looked up the rules of the sport. I learnt that there are two teams of players, and they score by sending the small disc (with hockey sticks) to their opponent's goal. Seeing that



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everything happens on the rink, I realised ice hockey players must be skilled skaters as well.

So, I started learning ice skating at nine, and became fairly skilled at it after
40 months of training. Then, being able to do turns, I thought I had finally
become a good enough skater to play ice hockey. How wrong I was! It wasn't
until I started taking formal, systematic ice hockey lessons, that I came to
realise my ignorance of the sport. The forward stride. Forward crossovers.
Tight hockey turns. These are just some of the basic skills needed in ice
45 hockey that I had no ideas about. Rather than frustrating me, the filling of
the void in my understanding of the sport taught me one thing: the charm of
ice hockey lies not in the cool equipment or the rules, but in the exhilaration
that comes with shooting around in the rink while having a goal to achieve
and a team to compete with.

50 Ice hockey is a sport of speed and power, so collisions and falls are bound to
happen in every game. However, it is due to this certainty that every one of
us must learn to keep our balance at all times, and to rise to our own feet
by ourselves when we stumble. ⁴Having been an ice hockey player for nearly
a decade, I remain grateful to my uncle. If I were doing something else, I'm
55 sure I would not be as tough as I now am.

Determine whether each of the following statements is true, false, or undecidable because not enough information is given.

(i) Mandy is no longer a beginner in ice hockey. (⁴she has been playing the sport for nearly 10 years ➤ true)

(ii) Natalie has once thought synchronised swimming is relaxing. (⁵how she thought about the sport is not mentioned ➤ not given)

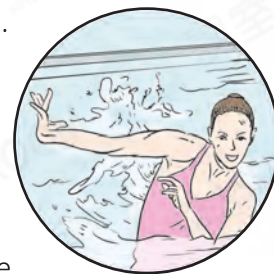
(iii) Some's false impression of the sport puzzles Natalie. (⁶she thinks the situation is understandable ➤ false)

SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING — Natalie Ho

Synchronised swimming, nicknamed water ballet, sounds different to different ears. To some, it is a kind of dance. To some, it is swimming. To some, it is gymnastics. To me, it is an artistic blend of all three. ⁵If you have ever watched a synchronised
60 swimming performance, it may leave you under the mistaken impression that it is possibly one of the most effortless and relaxing sports ever on earth. The reality, however, is quite the opposite.

⁶It's totally understandable why such an impression is so commonly shared by those unfamiliar with the sport—there's too much that is not visible to the public. First, we have to hold
65 our breath long when we are dancing upside down underwater. That's why we have nose clips, which keep us from accidental exhalations through the nose and the subsequent burning sensation. Aside from that, we must stay in perfect sync with one another, and therefore give our attention to not only the music, but also ourselves and our teammates. A split-second mistake is fatal enough! However, what steps up the difficulty is the need to keep our tiredness, or the pain of our burning muscles, all to
70 ourselves. So, don't take our smiley faces for granted!

Much as it is a tremendously challenging sport (its difficulty is matched only by water polo), I have never regretted taking this up as my professional career. I adore the fact that we get to work on our original choreography and are the ones who execute it. For this reason, I feel like being an artist and an athlete at the same time. There is no greater pleasure, I believe, that can be derived from other sports.



~900 words

Looking into Grammar

The Type 2 (simple past) conditional is used to refer to a hypothetical condition and its probable result.

✓ If I had more money, I **would go** (✗ **will go**) to Paris with John this summer.

? Underline a sentence in which the Type 2 conditional is used in paragraphs 5-7.

Part A Multiple Choice Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the magazine article. Choose the best answer by blackening the appropriate circle.

1. The writer named the eight sports in an attempt to _____.
- A. draw readers' attention to popular sports
 - B. show that most people tend to only think of mainstream sports
 - C. argue that people hold biased views towards different sports
 - D. inform readers of three lesser-known local athletes

2. John Wong claimed that _____.
- A. water polo is a recreational sport for groups
 - B. it is not a good idea for children to take part in water polo
 - C. the need to continuously tread water makes water polo physically demanding
 - D. water polo can be risky

3. In line 22, the word 'parallels' can best be replaced by '_____'.
 A. is similar to
 B. contradicts
 C. differs from
 D. is relevant to



4. Which of the following is TRUE?

- A. Mandy's uncle inspired her.
- B. Advanced skating skills come after protective gear in ice hockey.
- C. Mandy's career is full of frustrations.
- D. Mandy once underestimated the difficulty of ice hockey.

4 Pay attention to Mandy's reflections.



5. Which of the following is Mandy's opinion?

- A. It takes perseverance to be a professional ice hockey player.
- B. Stumbling is seen as a result of insufficient training.
- C. A flawless sense of balance is basic in ice hockey.
- D. Every ice hockey match is thrilling to watch.

6. In Natalie's opinion, synchronised swimming _____ and _____.

- A. is perceived differently... misunderstood by many
- B. is not officially defined...causes confusion
- C. is a modern sport...favoured by swimmers and gym-goers
- D. requires special equipment...is the most challenging sport

7. Which of the following is NOT necessary to synchronised swimmers?

- A. team spirit
- B. proper breath control
- C. swimming goggles
- D. nose clips

8. _____ would probably be the most beneficial for triathletes' practice.

- A. Water polo
- B. Ice hockey
- C. Synchronised swimming
- D. none of the above

8 What does a triathlon consist of?



Self-evaluation Checklist

Please scan the QR code on P.6 to access the checklist for evaluating your own reading progress.

Part B Pre-HKDSE Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the magazine article. For questions 1 and 4, answer in complete sentences.

1 Think about the characteristics of amphibians.

1. Explain why every water polo athlete is like an amphibian. What makes it so?

2. Which literary device is used in John's one-sentence summary? _____



3. Determine whether each of the following statements is a fact (F) or an opinion (O). Write the correct symbols 'F' or 'O' in the spaces provided.

Statement	F/O
(i) The fashionable gear alone does not make ice hockey a sport to love.	
(ii) There remain various interpretations of synchronised swimming.	
(iii) Having the opportunity to come up with original choreography is the primary reason why most synchronised swimmers go for the sport.	

4. In line 61, what is the reality?

4 What is the general perception of synchronised swimming?

5. Look for words in the magazine article to match the definitions below.

(i) _____ (para. 2-4)	(v.) summed up
(ii) _____ (para. 5-7)	(n.) a real or symbolic empty space
(iii) _____ (para. 8-10)	(adj.) coming after something else



6. In each line, there MAY be a wrong word. If there is one, underline it and write a word that expresses the correct idea in the right-hand column. If not, put a tick (✓).

(i) I've never <u>realised</u> why some judge synchronised	<u>wondered</u>
(ii) swimming as a sport to be taken seriously. Let me tell	_____
(iii) you: it all comes down to the genuine effortless.	_____
(iv) As a practised synchronised swimmer, I can assure	_____
(v) you that we are often panting out of stress and	_____
(vi) our limbs are barely aching all the time.	_____

Part C Vocabulary Bank

Label the items below with the names of the essential items needed for the three less popular sports from the word box.

ear plugs

helmet

chest protector

mouthguard

water polo cap

elbow pads

nose clip

hockey stick



Part D Cloze Passage

Complete the complaint letter below with the appropriate words introduced on the previous page.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I received last Monday the equipment for synchronised swimming and ice hockey that I ordered at your online store two weeks ago. I am writing this letter to let you know that the quality of what I received is terrible and that I am requesting a full refund.

Only one of the four swimming items I bought can serve its purpose. I bought the (1) _____ because I thought it could prevent me from choking on water, and the (2) _____, because I thought they could stop water from entering my ears. Yet they became detached so easily, frequently and stubbornly that they were evidently not designed to fulfill these roles, as they were supposed to be. The (3) _____ was worse. When I unpacked it, I noticed there were no ear guards attached to it. Without them, how can I assure myself that my ears won't bleed when they get hit by a forcefully thrown ball? The only item that 'works' is the (4) _____, which did manage to protect me from losing my front teeth. After its heroic service, it melted into several semi-liquid pieces.

The items for ice hockey are even worse. The (5) _____ was awfully brittle. I was only using it for the first time and I never expected that it would suddenly snap into two separate halves halfway through a game! Fortunately, a friend of mine had a spare one. As for the (6) _____, there is something preposterous about its fitting. After reading the product's customer reviews, I became concerned that 'M', the size for my casual wear, would be too small, so I ordered 'L'. But still, what I eventually received was still tight near the waist. Then it came to the (7) _____. It was ridiculously loose compared to the item I previously mentioned. While I ran, it shook in such a violent way that my entire head was like in an earthquake. How unforgettable it was! Lastly, I will not be so kind as to omit an honourable mention of your (8) _____, which were neither thick nor hard enough to protect my arm from injury when I stumbled on the ice during the competition. I cannot raise the hurt arm properly now: my sincerest thanks to you.

I am expecting a full refund, in cash, enclosed with a formally written letter of apology. Any other suggestion, better or worse, is unacceptable and will be regarded as a calculated attempt to evade responsibility.

~~Yours faithfully,~~ *Your offended customer,*

Anthony Chan

Let's Discuss!

1. Do you agree that synchronised swimming is one of the most challenging sports? Why or why not?
2. Some think that there should be a greater variety of sports for students to choose from. Share your thoughts.