

# Franklin Jr./Sr High School Reading Article

## History and Growth of Dodgeball as a Sport

Reading Strategy for the Article: Students will take turns reading aloud. Mark the text and write in the margins as you read.

L1120

**Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND WRITE NOTES in the margin box. This requires reading of the article more than once.**

**Step 1: Skim** the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (\*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

**Step 2: Number** the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

**Step 3: A final quick read** noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

**Your margin notes will be assessed by your teacher along with your answers to the questions.**

## History and Growth of Dodgeball as a Sport

Dodgeball was originally played in Africa over two hundred years ago, but instead of the fun, **jocular** game that it is today, it was in fact a deadly game. Instead of using soft, rubber balls, the game was actually played with large rocks or **putrefied** matter, and it was used as an intense work out for the tribes, where each competitor would attempt to hit their opponent with the rock to injure or **incapacitate** them. Once a player was hit, they would attempt to be pelted by further rocks to finish them off. It would be the responsibility of the teammates of the fallen competitor to try and defend him and force the attackers off with their own rocks. This would said to be a great way to encourage the tribesman to work together during skirmishes against other tribes, working to take out the weak and protect their own.

A **missionary**, by the name of Dr. James H. Carlisle saw what was happening and was intrigued by the **agility** and ruthlessness of the tribal men, as well as by the **solidarity** and heart they were showing. He spent many hours watching the men, and became **besotted** with the ritual that he saw on a daily basis.

When he made his way back to England, via Europe, he showed some of his pupils what he had seen. The European men that tried what Carlisle was telling them found they didn't have the natural **agility** or accuracy to dodge or throw, and with Dr. Carlisle continuously moving on, he was not able to encourage the people he spoke to about the sport to carry it on. It was only when he returned to his teachings at St. Mary's College in Norfolk, that he was able to transform the **vicious** training in to an all-inclusive game.

*Notes on my thoughts,  
reactions and questions as  
I read.*

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He changed the rock and putrefied matter for a leather ball, which was still hard but not dangerously so. The sport was played on an open field with no restrictions as to where players were able to go, and was played as if a game of chess or war, with players moving strategically to try and trap an opponent. A player was only out from the game when they were knocked to the floor by the continuous blows of the ball. Players would look to bat the ball away with their hands, in an effort to deflect the power away from them. This was played for the next century in much the same way, with only minor variations.

In 1884, St. Mary's College played host to a number of their colleagues from Yale University. Included within that party was Phillip Ferguson. Philip Ferguson is generally regarded as the person most responsible for taking dodgeball over to America and *popularising* it. He saw the boys of St. Mary's College playing and he hit upon an idea for the game that would make it quicker and faster. He brought in the idea of playing within a set area, with teams on either side of the pitch. Once the sport made it back across the pond to America, it was there that the details of the sport we know today were fleshed out. 1905 saw the first official rules drawn up, which included the rules regarding players coming in after a catch and being hit once and you were out. With the colleges across America playing each other, it enabled the sport to spread like wildfire. News of this emerging sport made its way back to England, and the American *popularised* rules became the norm for which all dodgeball matches were played. Schools up and down the country would play for fun, but it was the film of the sport in 2004 that brought the whole world's attention to the sport. The only place that the original sport is played is St. Mary's College, when they host their Yale brethren for a match, every 4 years, to *honour* the founding fathers of the sport, and the African innovators.

*Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as I read.*



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**Comprehension Questions— you may answer in phrases.**

1. Where was dodgeball originally played?
2. What made it a dangerous game?
3. What was the responsibility of the team when one of its players was hit?
4. How was Dr. James H. Carlisle both unsuccessful with the European men who tried the game?
5. Where was he successful
6. Wht changes did Carlisle make to the original game?
7. What changes did Phillip Ferguson make to the game?
8. How did the game change in 1905?
9. Where were the details of how the sport is played today created?
10. Where and when is the sport played as it was originally played?

**Answer the following questions in one or more complete sentences.**

1. It may appear that the author misspelled “popularising” and “honour”. Why did the author use this spelling of the two words?
2. In what way did the “rules” of the game encourage the tribesmen to work together?
3. What is the meaning of thw word “jocular” in paragraph 1?
2. What is the meaning of the word “besotted” in paragraph 2?