

ACTIVITY 29

Size Matters

Suggested Learning Intentions

Pupils will develop understanding of how height and weight can be an advantage or disadvantage for competitors in sports.

Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Ask your pupils to read **Pupil Resource W Can Height be an Advantage in Sport?**. Working in pairs, ask your pupils to sort sports into different categories, for example sports in which being tall or short is an advantage. Discuss their answers in a plenary session.

Then, encourage your pupils to investigate other sports, or positions in sports, where height matters.

Further Activities

Encourage your pupils to investigate and discuss:

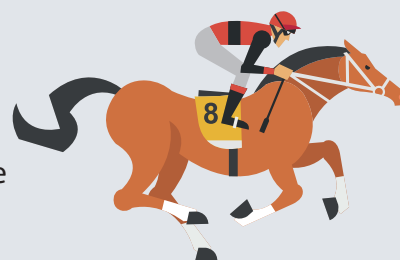
- whether height matters as much in children's sport as it does in adults' sport;
- personal experiences where their height placed them at an advantage or disadvantage while playing sports; and
- sports in which weight can put competitors at an advantage or disadvantage.



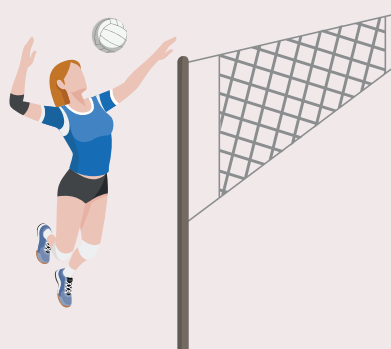
Resource W: Can Height be an Advantage in Sport?

A jockey plays an important role in horse racing, guiding and instructing the horse. Jockeys usually weigh between 48 kg and 54 kg. The average weight of a man in the UK is around 84 kg. A lighter jockey tends to have more control of the horse. The lower weight means the horse has less to carry and can sprint faster. This is important because racing authorities set limits on the weight a horse can carry, including the jockey and equipment.

Jockeys tend to be short because their lower height usually means they weigh less. They are usually somewhere between 1.47 and 1.68 metres tall. The average height in the UK is around 1.75 m for a male and 1.62 m for a female.



Basketball and netball involve teams of players competing to score points by putting a ball through a basket or net 10 feet high (just over 3 m). The average player in both sports is more than 1.83 m tall.

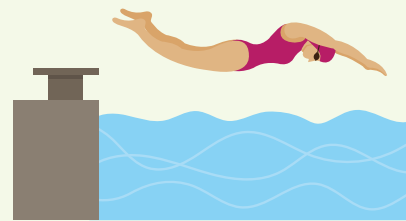


Similarly, tall volleyball players have an advantage as skills include leaping to block shots and to send the ball across the net to score points.

In football, being tall is important for goalkeeping. Goalkeepers must be able to reach above players when jumping to catch or punch a ball, and diving to save shots. Central defenders tend to be tall too, as they need to use their heads to clear balls above opposing players to score goals.



Taller swimmers are at an advantage because they can cover more distance than smaller competitors can.



Height is not everything in sports. Two of the greatest football players in history, Lionel Messi and Diego Maradona, are both quite short. Wingers in football tend to be smaller. This can be an advantage, because their lower centre of gravity helps them to evade tackles when dribbling.