



Learn English Through Stories

A1 Stories

Elementary Level

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Free Time Around the World

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Chapter 1

Goal

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world and it's a big part of life in Brazil. People here love to watch and play soccer in their free time.

In Brazil you don't need a pitch or expensive boots to play soccer. People play soccer in the street and on the beach. Children often play with no boots.

Some people think that Brazilians are good at soccer because they learn a special way to play when they are children. They learn to play a type of soccer called futsal. There are five players in each team. The ball is small, but it's full of sand so it's very heavy.

Futsal started in South America, but now it's popular in many other countries.

CHAPTER TWO

Snow Sports

In Nunavut in the north of Canada, winter is from September to June. So there's a lot of time for snow sports. Skiing and tobogganing are very popular. Dog sledding is another exciting snow sport. The driver sits in the sled and the dogs pull it over the snow. Every year there is a big dog sled race.

There aren't many roads in Nunavut. In winter most people travel by snowmobile or plane.

In Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, the summer is very hot. It's even warm in winter, but it's still a good place for snow sports!

Dubai has the biggest snow dome in the world. People come here for skiing, snowboarding, and tobogganing. It's very, very cold in the snow dome, but it's much hotter outside. The snow dome is in the desert!

CHAPTER THREE

Let's Dance

In India there are many different types of dance. Bollywood dance is very popular, and many people are learning it in their free time. This type of dance is fast and colourful.

Bollywood is the name of India's most famous movie industry. In Bollywood movies there is always singing and dancing.

Bollywood is the biggest movie industry in the world. It makes about 1,000 movies every year.

Bollywood dancers wear colourful clothes. They also wear jewellery like earrings, necklaces, and lots of bangles. Between their eyebrows, they have a mark or jewel called a bindi.

Bollywood dance started in India, but now it's popular all around the world. You can watch a Bollywood movie or go to Bollywood dance lessons in lots of countries.

CHAPTER FOUR

Martial Arts

Tae kwon do is a national sport in South Korea and it's the most popular martial art in the world. About 70 million people in 188 different countries practice tae kwon do in their free time.

Tae kwon do means 'the way of hands and feet'. Students learn different moves with these parts of the body. They also learn how to balance, and how to control the body.

Students wear different-coloured belts to show their level. The first belt is white. The other colours are yellow, green, blue, red, and black. When students are practicing for the next level, they wear a striped belt. The last belt is the black belt.

In some schools in Korea there are Taenglish lessons. Students learn tae kwon do and English at the same time.

CHAPTER FIVE

Let's Read

All around the world, people like to read books, newspapers, magazines, and comic books. In Japan, reading manga is a really popular free-time activity.

Manga is a type of comic book. In manga there are words and pictures to tell a story or give information. There are lots of different types of manga, for example, adventure, mystery, science fiction, and comedy. There is manga for all ages.

You can find manga on the Internet, too. There are also manga computer games and manga cartoons on television. There are even manga cafes, where you can look at manga on the Internet, or read manga books and magazines.

Manga started in Japan, but it's now popular in many countries. Some libraries in the USA have manga reading groups.

CHAPTER SIX

At the Game

Basketball is the most popular team sport in the USA. Many students are in school or college teams. Lots of other people play the game in their free time, on courts or in their gardens.

Basketball is a fast game. It's fun to play and it's fun to watch. People like to support their friends or family at the games. They also watch their favourite team on television.

Basketball is very popular in China.

About 300 million people play it, and 450 million people watch it on television.

Cheerleaders support their team at the games. About three million people in the USA are in cheerleading groups. Today most cheerleaders are female, but when cheerleading started it was only for men!

Cheerleading isn't easy. You have to be good at dance and gymnastics.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Making Music

Music is very popular all around the world. It's a very important part of life in Nigeria, in Africa. People here sing, dance, and play music at important times in their lives.

In traditional Nigerian music, there is singing, and people play instruments. There are percussion instruments like drums, bells, and rattles. There are other instruments like pipes and trumpets, too.

The kakaki trumpet can be 4 meters long. Only men play it.

Nigerian children sometimes make their own instruments. They make drums from tin cans, and pipes from plants. They also make rattles from fruits.

Lots of different types of modern music are popular in Nigeria, too.

Some modern music, like jazz, reggae, and rock, came from traditional African music.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Beach Sports

In Australia there are about 26,000 kilometres of coast and about 11,000 beaches. Most people live near the ocean and many Australians spend a lot of their free time at the beach.

Many beaches in Australia are great for surfing. Kayaking, swimming, and snorkelling are popular water sports, too. Australia has thousands of surf lifeguards to keep the beaches safe.

On the sand, people play beach volleyball and beach cricket. Beach cricket started as a fun activity, but now it's an official sport. There are beach cricket championships every year in Australia.

You can go sand-surfing on some beaches, and also in the desert in countries like Peru and Egypt.

CHAPTER NINE

Scouting

Scouting started in the United Kingdom in 1907. The first Scouts were boys from 11 to 18 years old. They went camping and walking in their free time. They learned how to read maps and make fires.

Today, Scouting isn't only for boys. Anyone from 6 to 25 years old can be a Scout. Scouts still go camping and walking, but there are lots of other exciting activities.

Scouts can do land activities like climbing and skateboarding, and water activities like sailing, kayaking, and snorkelling. Sometimes they can even do air activities like paragliding.

Scouts have fun, but they also work together to help other people and the countryside. Do you have Scouts in your country?

CHAPTER TEN

Let's Cycle

Cycling is a very popular free-time activity all around the world. In the Netherlands about 85 percent of people go cycling. Most of the land is flat, so it's a good place to cycle. It's also very safe. There are 17,000 kilometres of cycle paths, and most of the time, cars have to wait for bicycles.

BMX riding is another popular activity in many countries. There are two types of BMX riding — racing and freestyle.

BMX racers travel around a track and try to win a race. It isn't easy, and there are lots of jumps and turns. In BMX freestyle, riders do jumps and tricks. The best place to practice BMX freestyle is in a skate-park.

Which new free-time activities do you want to do now?

Vocabulary: snorkelling, kayaking, skateboarding, tae, sledding, snowboarding, manga, cheerleading, surfing, practicing, reggae, percussion, snowmobile, freestyle, sled, riding, nigerian, learned, racing, gymnastics, sailing, called, trumpet, cricket, cycling, striped, martial, volleyball, surf, camping.

Snorkelling — the sport or activity of swimming underwater with a snorkel.

Snorkel — a tube that you can breathe air through when you are swimming under the surface of the water.



Kayaking — the activity or sport of travelling in a kayak.

Kayak — a light canoe in which the part where you sit is covered over.



Skateboarding — the sport or activity of riding on a skateboard.



Tae kwon do — a Korean system of fighting without weapons, similar to karate.



Sledding or Sledging — the activity of riding on a sled or sledge.



Snowboarding — the sport or activity of moving over snow on a snowboard.



Manga — a Japanese style of comic strip, which may be aimed at either adults or children.

Cheerleading — a sport involving organized cheering and dancing in support of a sports team.



Surfing — the sport of riding on waves while standing on a narrow board called a surfboard.



Reggae — a type of popular music with strong rhythms, developed in Jamaica in the 1960s.

Percussion instruments — musical instruments that you play by hitting them with your hand or with a stick, for example drums.

percussion family



Snowmobile — a vehicle that can move over snow and ice easily.

