

## Selections: I can't catch that ball!

by Leo Kingsmill

**Activities author:** Adrian Tennant

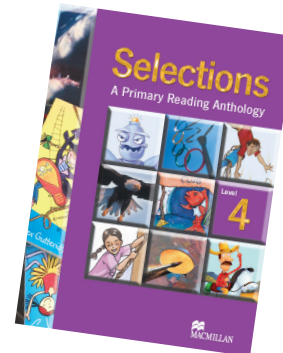
**Level:** Movers+

**Recommended age:** Level 4, primary (9+)

**Time needed:** Indicated for each activity

**Type of English:** American

**Note:** These activities can be done one after the other, or can be done separately, depending on the length and focus of your lesson.



### Activity 1 (5-10 minutes)

- Put the children in pairs.
- Hand out the worksheet with activity 1.
- Ask the children to look at the pictures and discuss the questions with their partner.
- Monitor and help where necessary.
- Finally, ask a few children to report back on their discussion with their partner.

**Note:** See if the children can pick up the difference in the boy's expression between the four pictures with catching, jumping, etc. and the one where the boy is diving.

### Activity 2 (5 minutes)

- Ask the children to match the action words / verbs on the left with the things / nouns on the right.
- Monitor and help where necessary.
- Put the children in pairs and have them check their answers together.
- Check the answers as a class.

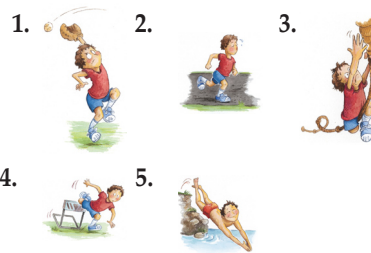
*Answers:* 1. d; 2. a; 3. c; 4. e; 5. b.

### Activity 3 (10 minutes)

- Ask the children to look at the pictures from Activity 1 again.
- Explain that you will play the recording (or they will read the text) and they should number the pictures in the order they hear / read them. There is a box for the children to write the numbers underneath each picture.
- Play the recording of the poem or get the children to read the text.
- Get the children to number the pictures.

- Put the children in pairs and have them check their answers together.
- Monitor and help where necessary.
- Play the recording or get the children to read the text again if necessary.
- Check the answers as a class.

#### Answers:



**Note:** If you are going to get the children to read the poem, they will need to read the text used in Activity 4 with the gaps. Alternatively, you could do Activity 4 first, followed by Activity 3.

### Activity 4 (10-15 minutes)

- Hand out the worksheet with Activity 4 to the children.
- Explain that you will play the recording, or they should read the text, and they will fill in the gaps with the phrases in the box.
- Put the children in pairs and get them to look at the text and the phrases in the box and see if they can complete the gaps while they listen or read.
- If the students are listening, play the recording and have them complete the poem. You can pause after each verse to give them time to write.
- If they are reading, remind them that poems often have a pattern and use rhyme.
- Monitor and help where necessary.
- Check the answers as a class.

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**Answers:**

- (1) *I'm jumping up and down.*
- (2) *I really can't catch that ball!*
- (3) *And shivers down my back.*
- (4) *I think I'm going to fall!*
- (5) *But I won't fall off, I hope.*
- (6) *I'm going to hit the wall!*
- (7) *And my feet becoming flat.*
- (8) *I'm really not that tall!*
- (9) *I'm happy as can be.*

**Extra ideas:**

1. Why not get your students to read out the poem aloud? This can be fun either done chorally as a whole class or with different children reading different lines. Alternatively, play the recording, stopping before each chorus, and get the children to say the chorus together.

**Note:** This kind of activity can be a lot of fun and really motivating for the children.

2. If you want, you could ask some comprehension questions here – but ones that go a little bit deeper than merely the contents of the poem. For example:

- a. *Why does the boy say he looks like a clown?*
- b. *What happens when he runs?*
- c. *Why does the boy have a big smile on his face?*

**Activity 5 (5-10 minutes)**

1. Put the children in small groups of three or four.
2. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 5.
3. Ask the children to discuss the questions together.
4. Monitor and help where necessary.
5. Finally, ask a few children to report back on their discussion with their group.

**Activity 6 (15-30 minutes)**

1. Tell the children they are going to write their own poem about sports and hobbies. Ask the children to use the outline of the poem to help them write their own poem.
2. Monitor and help where necessary.
3. Once the children have completed their poems, post them around the classroom on the walls.
4. Get the children to stand up and read each other's poems.
5. You could get the class to vote on which of the poems is their favorite.

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# I can't catch that ball!

Written by Leo Kingsmill

Illustrated by Gene Barretta

I'm trying to catch the baseball,  
I'm jumping up and down.  
I feel my legs start shaking.  
I look just like a clown.



I wasn't born to do this. It's not my thing at all.  
Please don't make me do it! I really can't catch that ball!

I'm sprinting down the field.  
I'm running around the track.  
I feel my muscles hurting,  
And shivers down my back.



I wasn't born to do this. It's not my thing at all.  
Please don't make me do it! I think I'm going to fall!

I'm swinging from a trapeze.  
I'm climbing up a rope.  
I feel my right hand slipping.  
But I won't fall off, I hope.



I wasn't born to do this. It's not my thing at all.  
Please don't make me do it! I'm going to hit the wall!

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I'm jumping over fences.  
I'm trying to use a bat.  
I feel my knees get weaker  
And my feet becoming flat.



I wasn't born to do this. It's not my thing at all.  
Please don't make me do it! I'm really not that tall!

I'm diving off the clifftop.  
I'm as happy as can be.  
My smile is ten times bigger.  
This is the sport for me!



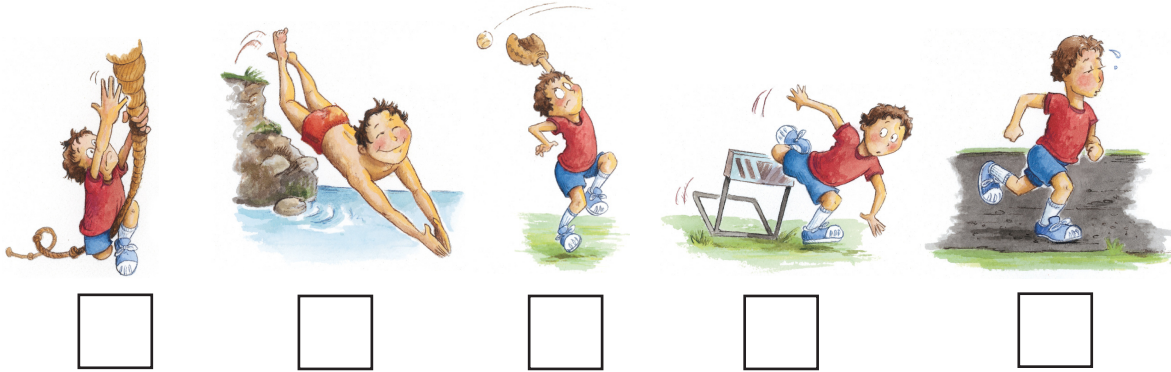
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Before listening / reading

Activity 1

Look at the pictures and answer the questions.



What can you see?

Does the boy look happy in each picture? Why? Why not?

What do you think he says about each sport?

Activity 2

Match the actions (verbs) in A with the things (nouns) in B.

- | A           | B           |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. catching | a. rope     |
| 2. climbing | b. track    |
| 3. diving   | c. clifftop |
| 4. jumping  | d. baseball |
| 5. running  | e. fence    |

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Listen or read

## Activity 4

Listen to / read the poem and complete the text with the phrases in the box.

And my feet becoming flat.  
I'm going to hit the wall!  
I'm really not that tall!

And shivers down my back.  
I'm happy as can be.  
I really can't catch that ball!

But I won't fall off, I hope.  
I'm jumping up and down.  
I think I'm going to fall!

I'm trying to catch the baseball,

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

I feel my legs start shaking.

I look just like a clown.

I'm jumping over fences.

I'm trying to use a bat.

I feel my knees get weaker

(7) \_\_\_\_\_

I wasn't born to do this.

It's not my thing at all.

Please don't make me do it!

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

I wasn't born to do this.

It's not my thing at all.

Please don't make me do it!

(8) \_\_\_\_\_

I'm sprinting down the field.

I'm running around the track.

I feel my muscles hurting,

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

I'm diving off the clifftop.

(9) \_\_\_\_\_

My smile is ten times bigger.

This is the sport for me!

I wasn't born to do this.

It's not my thing at all.

Please don't make me do it!

(4) \_\_\_\_\_

I'm swinging from a trapeze.

I'm climbing up a rope.

I feel my right hand slipping,

(5) \_\_\_\_\_

I wasn't born to do this.

It's not my thing at all.

Please don't make me do it!

(6) \_\_\_\_\_

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After you listen or read

**Activity 5**

**What about you? Answer the questions together.**

1. What sports are you bad at?
2. What sports are you good at?
3. Do you enjoy sports?
4. How do you feel if you aren't very good?

**Activity 6**

**Now write your own poem about sports and hobbies.**

I'm \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I wasn't born to do this. It's not my thing at all.

Please don't make me do it! \_\_\_\_\_

I'm \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I wasn't born to do this. It's not my thing at all.

Please don't make me do it! \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My smile is ten times bigger.

This is the sport for me!