

NATIONAL
SPORTS
MUSEUM

National Sports Museum
& MCG Tour
LEVEL 6 – YEAR 9/10

WRITING SPORTS



Important Note

This program must be pre-booked with the National Sports Museum. It involves a specialised tour of the MCG and opportunities to do this may be limited. All enquiries should be addressed to education@nsm.org.au or 61 3 9657 8879

Key concept

Sports journalism is an ever-expanding area with many career opportunities. Sports journalists are required to think, analyse and report in many different ways.

Focusing questions

1. What is a Journalist?
2. What is a sports commentator?
3. What is a spectator?

National Sports Museum exhibition focus

Faster, Higher, Stronger, Australia's Game, Spirit of Sport and Backyard to Baggy Green.

As well is the integral Melbourne Cricket Ground Tour.

VELS dimensions addressed

Physical, Personal and Social Learning: Interpersonal Development

Discipline-based Learning: English

Interdisciplinary Learning: Communication; Information and Communications Technology

Overview

Students respond in writing to different scenarios presented at particular locations while touring the Melbourne Cricket Ground. There is opportunity for students to create inspirational, in-depth, emotional or instructional pieces from the standpoint of a coach, interviewer, media reporter and spectator. Scenarios will be presented at each of the chosen locations. Students will be given a period of 10 minutes to choose a scenario and prepare a written response to the task.

Students then self-guide through the National Sports Museum and follow the guiding questions.

The program offers a total writing package to the teacher in the form of: Pre-visit activities, on day program and post-visit activities. Support materials and relevant websites will also be available.

Pre-visit activities

What do we already know about the Melbourne Cricket Ground?

- Introduce students to a **thinking map** (the focus: Melbourne Cricket Ground). Using Post It Notes, students record what they know about the MCG. (one note, one piece of information). Students contribute as many times as they are able.
- Pose questions on, "What We (as a class) Want to Know About the MCG."
- Prepare a fact sheet about the MCG. This could be a class exercise in which all students participate.

Stereotypes in Sports

The Coach

- Write a definition of a coach.
- What are coaches employed to do?
- In your opinion, what makes a good coach?
- Does the job go beyond winning games? Give reasons.
- Build a profile of a past or present AFL coach.
- How important is communication to this role? Explain
- What qualities does a club look for in a coach?
- Build a glossary for this occupation

The Journalist

What is the origin of the word: "Journalist"?

Those who take up this occupation have to be diligent in not only finding instances that are newsworthy but also knowing "the right questions to ask" in order to receive the answers they're seeking.

Prepare a list of questions a journalist might ask:

- an umpire
- player
- sports doctor

What is meant by a "slanting copy"?

As a journalist, how can "slanting copy" be avoided? Explain.

Pre-visit activities continued

In your opinion, do journalists have an obligation to:

- their readers?
- those they interview?

What are they?

How far should a journalist go in pursuit of a story?

Is there a difference between the work of a reporter and that of a journalist?

What would you ask a journalist during an interview?

Research an Australian Sports Journalist.

Sports Commentator

Definition: A sports announcer who reads sports news or describes sporting events. In Sports broadcasting, a commentator gives a running commentary of a game or event in real time, usually during a live broadcast.

Task: Name the sport associated with the following commentators.

- Ian Baker-Finch
- Richie Benaud
- Pam Shriver
- Dennis Cometti
- Neil Crompton
- Norman May
- Alison Mitchell
- Greg Miles

Give reason/s how each is associated with a particular sport.

Research:

- Kelli Underwood
- Tim Lane (note the way in which his career began)

Listen to a commentary of your favourite sport. Make a list of the skills utilised by the commentator whilst broadcasting the event.

Using YouTube, find a piece of sports action. Watch the piece with the sound off. Make up our own names for the participants and then make up your own commentary. Try recording your commentary and dubbing it over the visual piece. Broadcast to your class.

Pre-visit activities continued

The Spectator

There are different types of spectators.

Discuss the following:

- Passive spectator
- One-eyed spectator
- Angry spectator
- Reflective spectator
- The ugly parent

Build a spectator profile using the following descriptors as a guide:

- Physical appearance
- Personality
- Background e.g. favourite sport, reason for supporting sport/team/club
- Attitude towards (a) Winning (b) Losing (c) Controversial decisions
- Reaction to (a) Winning (b) Losing.

During the visit to the National Sports Museum

During their visit to the National Sports Museum, students will receive this section of the resource. It is published here for the teacher and it is not required the student pre-read this section.

Welcome to the Melbourne Cricket Ground and the National Sports Museum. Today you are focussing on sports writing. We want you to enjoy this experience and to have fun, but to focus on the tasks.

Tasks on Melbourne Cricket Ground tour

At each location you have ten minutes (Depending on availability). Your guide will ask you to respond to one of the tasks below.

You have 3 minutes to do your writing.

Up to 5 people will share their writing to the rest of the group at each location.

Seating bowl (Level 4)

Emotional Response

The MCG is iconic to many people in many ways. It has been the home of Australian Football, Australian Cricket, International Soccer matches, rugby matches, rock concerts, the 1956 Olympic Games, the 2006 Commonwealth Games. Do you feel the power of the MCG and if you do, then what are you feeling now as you look out across the enormous cauldron? If you don't feel moved, consider what it must be like for the great heroes of sport to walk out on to the field. You have three minutes to write.

Coaches room in the change rooms

Instructional task

You are the coach. It's half time in the grand final. Your team started really well but crashed in the last ten minutes and are now trailing the other side. You had prepared a speech, but it's all changed because of the last ten minutes. This is your last chance to speak to your team away from anyone else. (At three quarter time it is not private on the ground.) How do you feel now and how will you instruct your team to win this most important game?

Media Room in the change rooms

Reflecting, explaining, responding

Multiple choices: You are facing the media in a live interview because:

Your team just won.

You won it for your team.

Your team just lost.

You had the chance to win it for your team, but you lost it.

You have just decided to retire and this is your press conference.

You have just been told that as coach you are sacked!

During the visit to the National Sports Museum continued

Ron Casey Media Centre (Newsprint room)

Eyewitness account of events on ground (imaginary/creative)

Imagine you can see an event being played out before you. You might be writing to record this for a newspaper, or to go online as if it was live. You want to capture the spirit of the great moment that you see. It might reflect the work of a commentator.

Tasks in the National Sports Museum

Your MCG tour is guided. In the National Sports Museum you are self-guided. The following tasks focus on the media and sports writing, commentary and historical recording.

In Faster, Higher, Stronger (The Olympic Gallery)

Gallery introduction: *From the ancient games to present day, trace Australia's role in the Olympic Games including stories and artefacts from past and present Australian Olympians.*

See the section Harry Gordon: A Man and his Words.

Task: Choose 2 moments that Harry Gordon wrote about and read them. Choose some of the words that he uses for you to use in your writing.

Task: Watch the highlights video from the Sydney Olympics in the Sydney Olympics case.

Listen to the commentary. Compare and contrast these with the occasional commentary that is used to describe the Olympic moments that you can see in the Olympic theatrette which is directly opposite.

What observations have you made?

Australia's Game (Australian Rules Football)

Gallery introduction: *Trace the history of Australia's indigenous game from its origins to international expansion. Immerse yourself in the stories of the greats of the game within the Australian football Hall of Fame.*

See the Radio Broadcasting section.

Task: Listen to the different commentaries and compare the older commentaries with newer commentaries. What are the major differences that you note in style?

See the Coaches in Depth section opposite the Radio Broadcasting section.

Task: Listen to coaches discussing their careers and philosophies. What does David Parkin attribute a lot of his success to?

Task: See Coaching notes published below Coaches in Depth. Copy down some lines that you think might be significant.

During the visit to the National Sports Museum continued

Spirit of Sport (Sport Australia Hall of Fame)

Gallery introduction: *Spirit of Sport introduces athletes and general members inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame since 1985, and honours those sports people who have been elevated to Sport Australia Hall of Fame Legend status, Australian sport's most prestigious honour.*

See the section: Media/Sports History. There are currently 24 inductees in this section.

Task: Select one name from the list. Go to the computer and research your chosen name.

Write down three points about why this person that stands out.

Backyard to Baggy Green (Cricket)

Gallery introduction: *Including the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame and the famous Baggy Green Room, explore the evolution of cricket and its undeniable spirit.*

Task: Go to the Media section (on your left walking towards the Baggy Green room.) Look at the images of the newspaper columnists, media conferences and synthetic broadcasts. What do you think a synthetic broadcast is and why was it done?

Final Task (Reflection)

We value your thoughts and ideas. Tell us what you thought of the program that you participated in today. Write your response here and then copy it into an email. Send it to us at education@nsm.org.au Thank you.

Post-visit activities

Writing Sports Activities

Focus skills, knowledge and understandings: Communication; Thinking Processes; Interpersonal Development; English

If students enjoyed writing quickly to a given task, here is a list of associated tasks. Students could choose one and respond.

It is important that students publish their work; that's what journalists do. Try publishing by having students read their fast response to the class, or spend time editing and re-drafting and then publishing in the school newsletter alongside a write-up of your trip to the MCG and the National Sports Museum

1. More tasks from the SEATING BOWL

- Are you witnessing a Grand Final with every seat taken in the arena, what is the atmosphere like?
- Spectacular marks are being taken, amazing goals are being kicked, how do you feel?
- A player from the team you support has just kicked the winning goal! How do you feel?
- A player has just kicked his 100th goal for the year and supporters are running onto the ground, are you amazed, thrilled disgraced that people are running onto the ground?
- A team has just won by 100 points, how do you feel about this?
- There has been a draw between two sides, are you feeling sad, angry, thrilled, relieved?

Cricket

- A player has just hit a 6 and the crowd is going wild, how do you feel about this?
- A player has just made a half century, century, double century etc. are you feeling proud, happy, thrilled relieved?
- A player has made a golden duck, how do you feel?
- A player has just taken a spectacular catch, what were your reactions to this?
- A player has just taken a Hat-trick, what were your emotions and the crowd's response to this?

2. COACHES ROOM IN CHANGEROOM WHERE HE/SHE ADDRESSES THE PLAYERS

- You are leading by 50 points and it is halftime, what is the coach saying to you?
- You are about to play in the grand Final, what are the coach's words to his team?
- You are down by 70 points at half time; there is no coming back from this, what is the coach saying and what is the morale of the team?
- You have just lost by 100 points, what is the coach's reaction to the performance of the team?
- A player is about to play his 100th game, what are the coach's words of wisdom?

3. PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM

Located between each change room.

Scenarios:

- A 100 point win
- A 100 point loss
- A draw
- Goal of the year was kicked
- Mark of the year was taken
- A fight broke out and there were reports and then suspensions handed to the players.
- Grand Final, both the winning coach and losing coach are interviewed
- The top team lost to the team on the bottom of the ladder
- The coach is sacked after a major defeat
- A player is retiring, therefore has just played their last game
- A player has just played his 100th game
- A new player to the club is being interviewed about how they played in their new team

Questions to ask the coach or a player:

- Why weren't the team playing as a team and helping each other out in a tough contest?
- The 100 point win, was it satisfactory enough for you, or could you have done better?
- Are you purposely losing by 100 points so you can have to #1 draft pick for next season?
- Do you think if your kicking could have been more accurate, would this have prevented the draw from happening?
- We watched you kick goal of the year, what was going through your head at the time
- You took mark of the year, did you expect to get that high up in the air and actually hold onto the ball?
- Will this large amount of suspensions affect how the team will play and focus in next week's match?
- You have won the Grand Final, how do you feel?
- You have lost the Grand Final, how do you feel?
- Your top 8 side just lost to the wooden spoon contenders, how do you feel?
- Do you think you could have prevented yourself from being sacked; was it partly because of the team?
- Did the 100 game milestone affect how you played?
- Do you think your new club has given you more opportunities as a player?

4. RON CASEY MEDIA CENTRE

Scenarios for the Radio, TV, News Paper → what are they witnessing?

- It is the grand Final, there are many listeners
- Goal of the year was kicked
- Mark of the year was taken
- A very large fight broke out between the players
- There was a 100 point win
- There was a 100 point loss
- Top 8 team lost to a bottom 8 team
- A player is retiring and has just played his last game
- There is a record crowd at a game for footy or cricket, what is the crowd's atmosphere like?
- The top 2 teams are playing against each other
- What is the weather like → rain, hail, thunder, lightning, wind, sun etc.
- Injuries have taken place → broken leg, concussed etc.

Indicators of student achievement and assessment strategies

The activities in these materials address the following dimensions of VELs:

English: Reading; Writing; Speaking and listening

The student is able to read and view informative texts that explore ideas and information related to challenging topics.

The student is able to identify the ideas, themes and issues explored in these texts, and provide supporting evidence to justify their interpretations.

The student is able to produce, in print and electronic forms, texts for a variety of purposes.

The student is able to critically evaluate the spoken language of others and select, prepare and present spoken texts for specific audiences and purposes

The student is able to ask clarifying questions and build on the ideas of others.

Communication: Listening, viewing and responding; Presenting

The student is able to modify their verbal and non-verbal responses to suit constructive feedback.

The student is able to provide and use constructive feedback and reflection to develop effective communication skills.

Information and Communications Technology: ICT for communicating

The student is able to use complex search strategies to refine their searches.

The student is able to judge the integrity of the located information based on its credibility, accuracy, reliability and comprehensiveness.

Interpersonal Development: Building social relationships; Working in teams

The student is able to demonstrate respect for the individuality of others.

The student is able to accept responsibility as a team member and support other members to share information, explore the ideas of others and work cooperatively to achieve a shared purpose within a realistic timeframe.

The student is able to reflect on individual and team outcomes and act to improve their own **and the team's performance.**

Source: Adapted from Victorian Essential Learning Standards, VCAA 2005

Additional resources

- AFL (Development) website: <http://www.afl.com.au/Development/tabid/10211/Default.aspx>
- ABC Grandstand Website: <http://www.abc.net.au/grandstand>
- Australian Sports Commission website: <http://www.ausport.gov.au/schools/index.asp>
- AFL Victoria website: <http://www.aflvic.com.au>
- Youth Central:
<http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/ViewPage.action?&repositoryName=&siteNodeId=515&CurrentFolderID=1966&ItemID=13168&BackToFolderID=1523>
- Herald Sun online: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au>
- The Age online: <http://www.theage.com.au>

Books

- *AFL Record guide to season 2008: The official statistical history of the AFL*, AFL Publishing, Melbourne, 2008
- Atkinson, Graeme, *The Complete book of AFL Finals*, Five Mile Press, Canterbury, 2002
- Blainey, Geoffry, *A Game of Our Own: the origins of Australian Football*, Information Australia, Melbourne, 1990
- Hess, Rob; Stewart, Bob, *More than a Game*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1998
- Slattery, Geoff *The Australian Game of Football Since 1858*, Geoff Slattery Publications, Melbourne, 2008

WRITING SPORTS