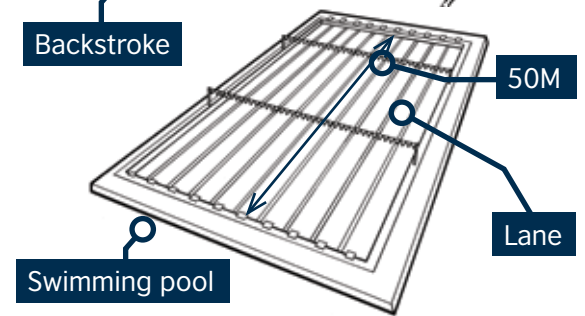
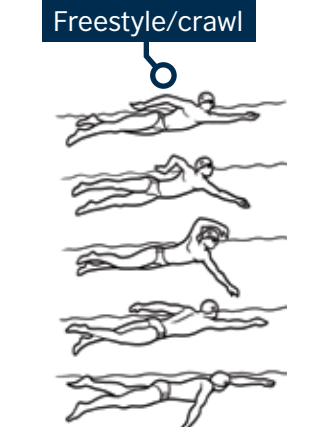
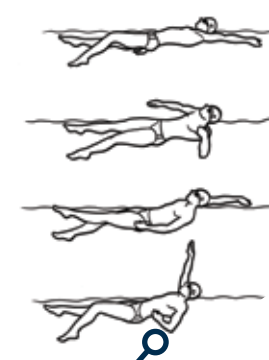
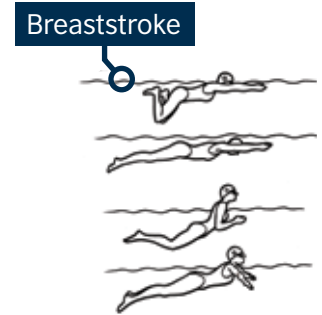
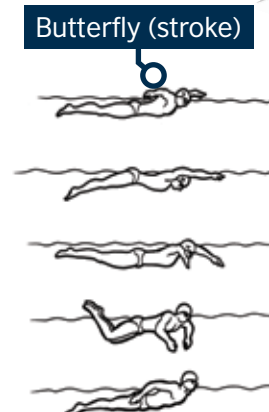
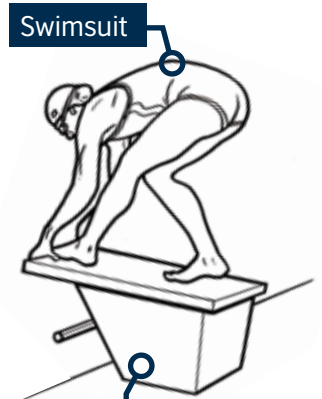
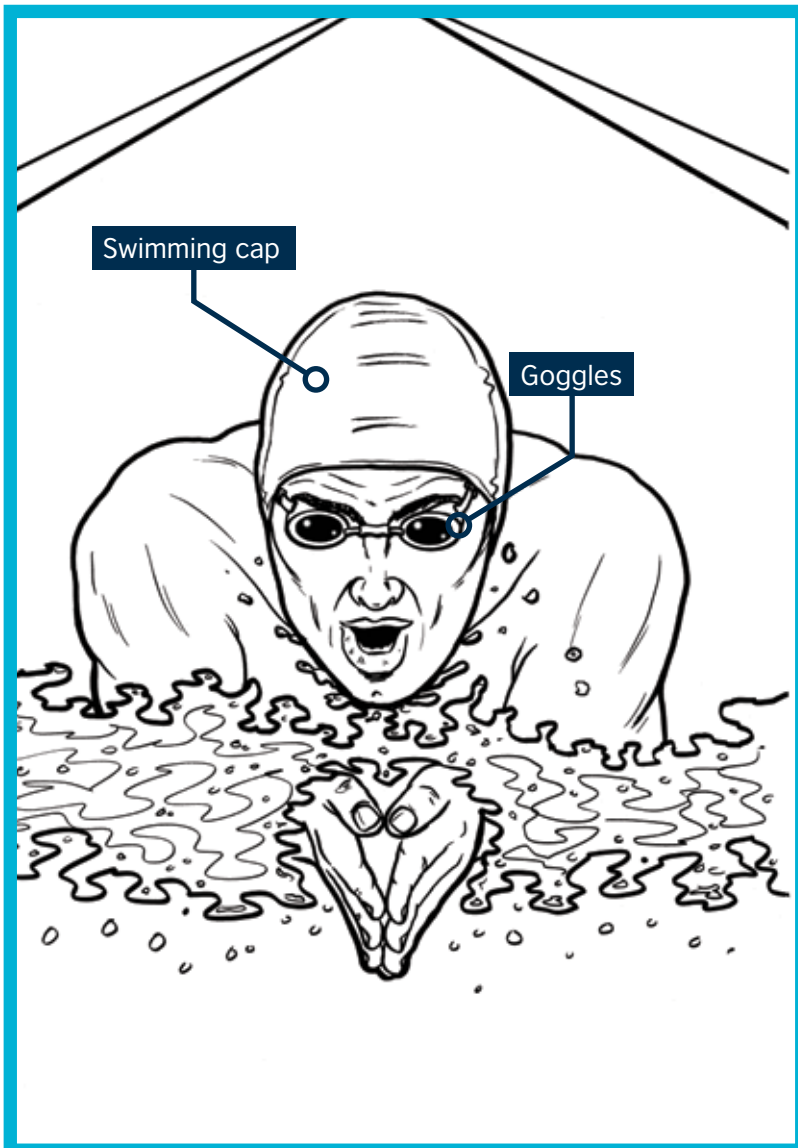


Swimming

When athletes come together from around the world to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, they are fulfilling their dreams and competing at the highest level. Billions of people across the globe join in; watching, listening to and reading about the greatest global celebration of sport. To celebrate the London 2012 Games, the British Council is making a wide range of classroom resources available for learners of English worldwide.

The sport of swimming dates from Ancient Egyptian and Ancient Greek times, and it has featured at every modern Olympic Games. Do you know how to swim? If so, have you ever been in a race? Find out more about the history of swimming and learn some vocabulary and useful language.



1. Vocabulary

a. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

a. butterfly (stroke)	b. backstroke	c. swimsuit	d. freestyle/ crawl	e. swimming cap
f. lane	g. breaststroke	h. goggles	i. swimming pool	

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2. The rules of Swimming

- The Olympic pool is 50m long and 21m wide. Floating lines, called lane lines, divide the pool into eight lanes.
- Each swimmer must stay in his lane.
- The different ways of swimming are called 'strokes'.
- There are four strokes that swimmers can use: crawl or freestyle, breaststroke, butterfly and backstroke.
- Races can be:
 - Individual but using the same stroke e.g. 50M freestyle or 200M breast stroke
 - Relay which means a race between teams of swimmers. Each swimmer swims one leg (length of the pool) of the event.
 - Medley which means swimmers or relay teams swim a combination of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle.
- In most races swimmers begin by diving into the water from starting blocks.
- In the backstroke swimmers begin the race in the water.
- They swim down their lanes to the end of the pool and touch it. A touch pad records their time. Then they turn and swim back.
- Backstroke and freestyle swimmers use tumble turns.
- Breaststroke and butterfly swimmers use open turns.
- In long races a lap card shows the swimmers how many laps remain.

a. Match the words in the table with their definitions below.

a. starting block	b. medley	c. relay	d. lane line
e. tumble turn	f. touch pad	g. lap card	h. lane

1. Swimmers use four different strokes in this event.
2. This is a team swimming event.
3. Backstroke and freestyle swimmers use this turn.
4. Swimmers must swim only in this part of the pool.
5. An electronic device which records a swimmer's time when she touches it.
6. The swimmers dive off these at the start of the race.
7. This card shows the swimmers how many laps they have to swim before they finish.
8. This floating line divides the lanes in the pool.

3. Questions & Answers

I love swimming. Do you?

Not really. I can't swim very well. I don't like the water.

The Ancient Greeks would say you need educating. They thought a man who couldn't swim was ignorant.

Well, I can swim a little. I can do the doggy-paddle but that's not real swimming, is it?

Actually, the doggy-paddle was probably man's first stroke. We've been swimming like that since pre-history. Then the doggy-paddle developed into the breaststroke...

What about the other strokes?

Well, some American Indians introduced the crawl to Britain in 1844.

Did it become popular straightaway?

No! The Indians splashed so much the British didn't want to learn the new stroke. They thought it wasn't polite, even though it was much faster than breaststroke.

Did everyone think so?

I don't know - but the crawl only became popular in 1902.

Why was that?

An Australian called Richard Cavill swam the crawl and set a new world record. He copied the way the people of the Solomon Islands swam. That's how modern freestyle began!

What about the butterfly stroke? That looks the hardest to me.

Perhaps that's why the first butterfly event was only in the Melbourne Games in 1956.

And how many swimming events were there in the first modern Games?

There were only four events in the first Games, but in the next Games there will be thirty-four!

That's amazing! I bet there have been other changes, too.

Yes, in the first Games only men could compete. And there wasn't a heated, indoor pool - the athletes had to swim in the sea!

Really? Lucky it was a Summer and not a Winter Olympics event!

a. Match the correct answer from the table to the questions below.

a. Thirty-four	b. No	c. Solomon Islanders	d. In the sea
e. American Indians	f. Breaststroke	g. Four	h. 1956

1. What stroke developed from the doggy-paddle?
2. Who first introduced the crawl to England?
3. Which people did Richard Cavill copy to develop the crawl?
4. When was the first butterfly event?
5. How many swimming events were there in the first Games?
6. How many swimming events will there be in 2012?
7. Were women allowed to swim in the first Games?
8. Where did the athletes swim in the first Games?

b. Choose the correct verb form to fill the gaps.

a. had to swim	b. swam	c. couldn't swim	d. will be swimming
e. have been swimming	f. can't swim	g. swimming	h. can swim

1. I love _____.
2. I _____ very well. I don't like water!
3. The Greeks thought if you _____ you were ignorant.
4. I _____ a little. I can do the doggy-paddle!
5. We _____ the doggy-paddle since pre-history.
6. Richard Cavill _____ the crawl and set a new record.
7. In the first Games there wasn't a pool - the athletes _____ in the sea.
8. Now athletes _____ in the new Aquatic Centre.

Answers**Exercise 1a**

1. e; 2. h; 3. a; 4. g; 5. b; 6. d; 7. c; 8. f; 9. i

Exercise 2a

1. b; 2.c; 3. e; 4. h; 5. f; 6. a; 7. g; 8. d

Exercise 3a

1. f; 2. e; 3. c; 4. h; 5. g; 6. a; 7. b; 8. d

Exercise 3b

1. g; 2. f; 3. c; 4. h; 5. e; 6. b; 7. a; 8. d