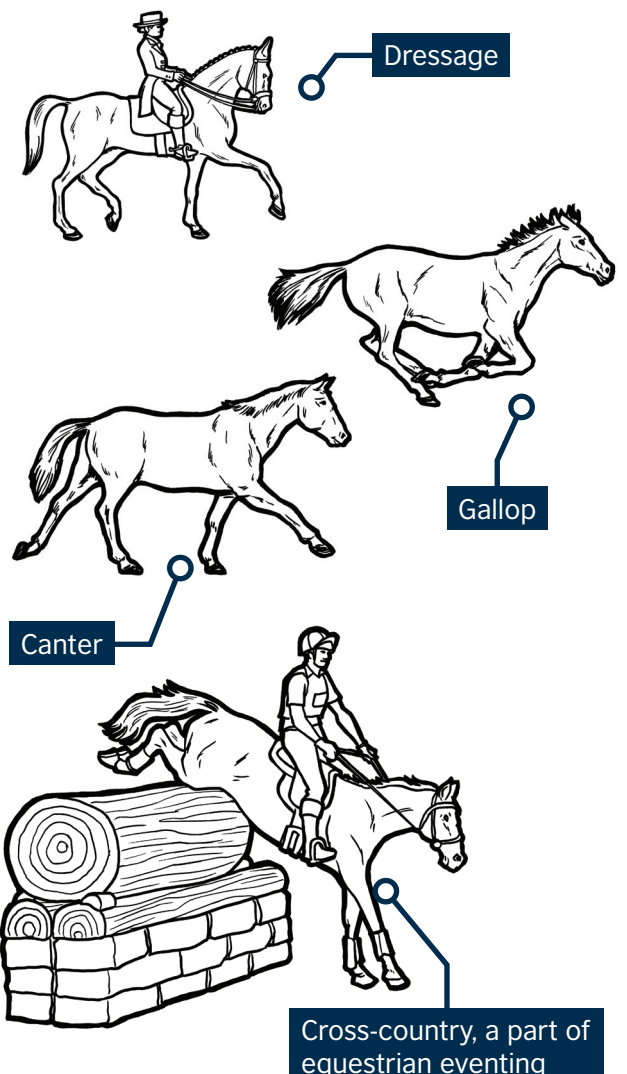
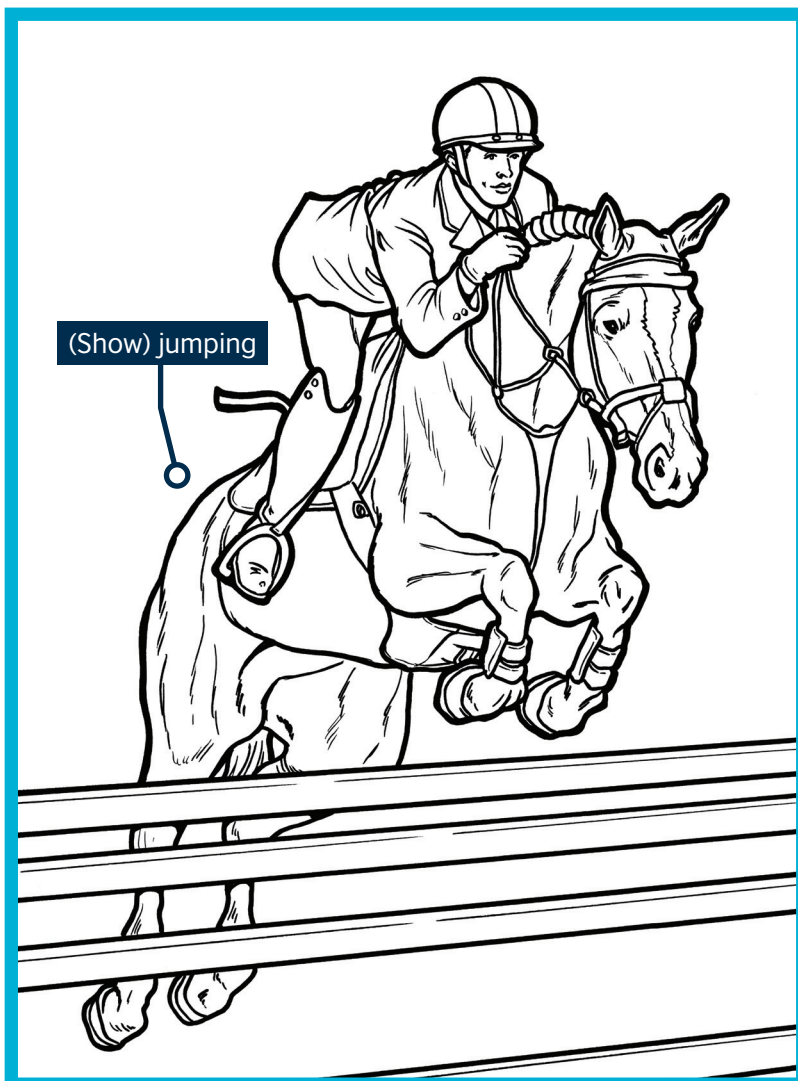
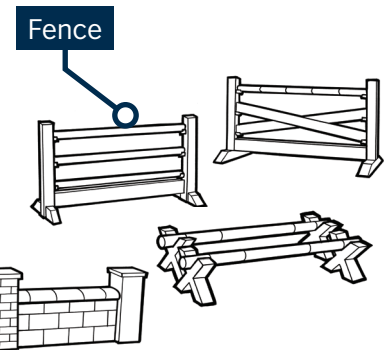


Equestrian

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.

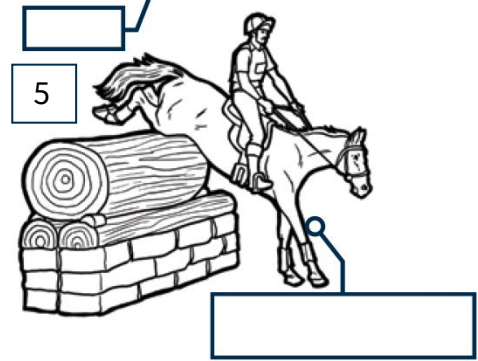
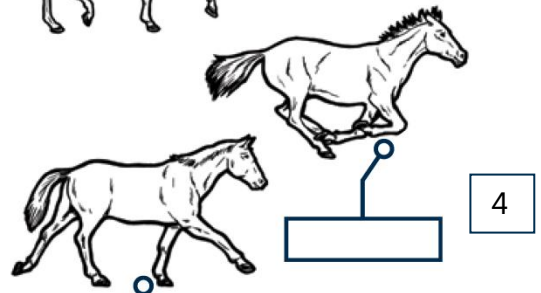
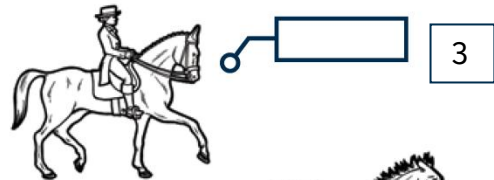
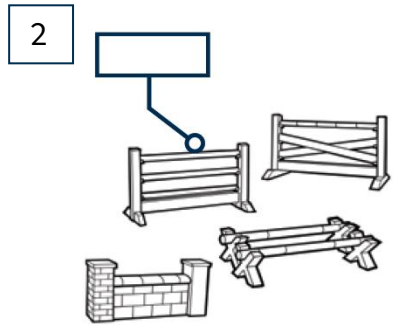
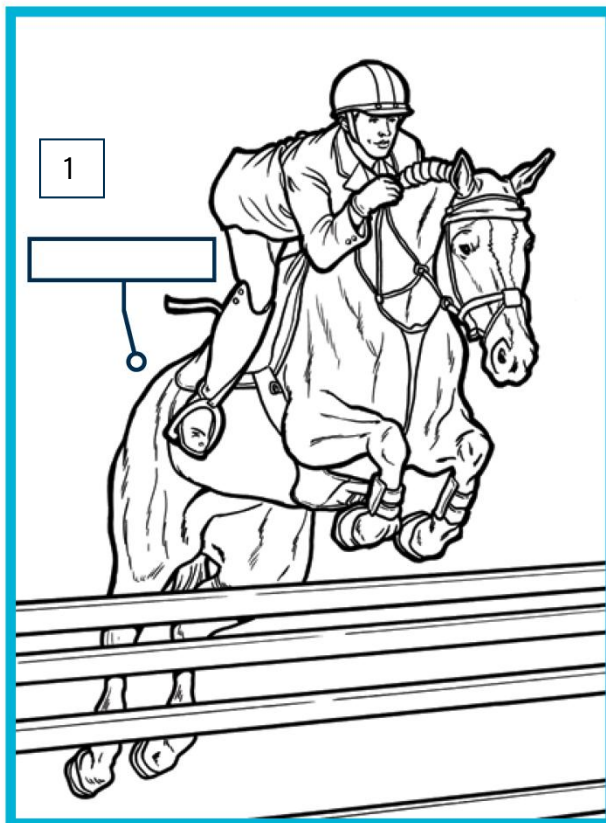
What do you know about the equestrian events at the Olympics? Did you know that equestrian is the only Olympic sport in which men and women compete against each other on equal terms? There are three different events – jumping, eventing and dressage. Have you ever seen these in action? Have you ever participated or wanted to participate? Find out more about the differences and learn the vocabulary and useful language.



1. Vocabulary

a. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

a. Dressage	b. Show jumping	c. Cross-country
d. Fence	e. Canter	f. Gallop



2. The rules of equestrian

There are three Olympic equestrian events: dressage, jumping, and eventing.

- In each event, there are individual and team medals.
- Men and women compete against each other.
- Riders must be at least 16 years old.
- Horses must be at least 7 years old and must have a health inspection.

Dressage

- The horses/riders perform a special series of movements known as a dressage test.

Jumping

- Each horse/rider has a maximum of 45 seconds to complete the course containing 12 to 14 obstacles.
- A horse/rider gets penalties if they commit faults, such as knocking down a fence.
- The horse/rider who finishes the course in the fastest time, with the least number of penalties, is the winner.

Eventing

- There are three parts in the eventing competition: dressage; cross-country riding; and jumping.
- In dressage each horse/rider performs one dressage test.
- Cross-country takes place on a course containing up to forty five obstacles. Each horse/rider gets penalty points for jumping errors and time penalties.
- There are two jumping tests, one for teams and one for individuals.
- Penalty points from all three tests are added up to decide who wins the medals.

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

a. cross-country	b. dressage	c. eventing
d. fence	e. jumping	f. penalty

1. A disadvantage (loss of points) imposed on a rider when s/he makes an error
2. A part of eventing where horses/riders must jump over obstacles on a course in the countryside
3. An event that combines dressage and jumping
4. An event where horses/riders jump over a series of obstacles as fast as they can
5. An event where the rider guides the horse to make the natural movements that it does without thinking in the wild
6. An obstacle that horses must jump over

3. Questions & Answers

You know the horse-riding events at the Olympics? Do the horses get medals?

No, they don't, only the men and women.

Men and women?

That's right. Equestrian is the only Olympic sport in which men and women compete against each other.

Really?

Yes, and it's also the only Olympic sport, along with modern pentathlon, where humans and animals compete together.

Well, people have ridden horses since the beginning of time, haven't they?

I don't know, but horses have played an important role in human history all over the world, in war and peace.

And when did they start using horses for sport?

Hard to say, but there were horses at the ancient Olympics, in the chariot events.

Did anyone famous take part?

Well, the Roman emperor Nero competed in the Games in AD 67. He nearly died when he raced a ten-horse chariot. He also performed as an actor and a singer.

Is that right? What about the modern Olympics? They don't have chariot races nowadays, do they?

No, nor acting or singing, either. But equestrian first appeared in the modern Olympic programme in 1900. Nowadays there are three events: dressage, jumping, and eventing.

What's the difference?

Well, in dressage the rider guides the horse to make the natural movements that it does without thinking in the wild. In jumping they jump over a series of obstacles as fast as they can, and eventing is a combination of these, with cross-country jumping as well.

It sounds to me like the horse should get the medal.

I agree. How about *Nautical*, also known as *Injun Joe*? He not only competed at the Olympics, but also starred in the Walt Disney film called 'The Horse With The Flying Tail'. The film won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature Film in 1960.

I bet they didn't give the horse the Academy Award either.

a. Choose the correct answer to each of the following questions and statements.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. How many sports are there on the Olympic programme where men and women compete against each other? | a. 1
b. 2
c. 3 |
| 2. How many sports are there on the Olympic programme where humans and animals compete together? | a. 1
b. 2
c. 3 |
| 3. How many things did the Roman emperor Nero do at the Games in AD 67? | a. 1
b. 2
c. 3 |
| 4. How many equestrian events are there in the modern Olympic programme? | a. 1
b. 2
c. 3 |
| 5. How many parts are there in eventing? | a. 1
b. 2
c. 3 |
| 6. How many names did the horse that starred in 'The Horse With The Flying Tail' have? | a. 1
b. 2
c. 3 |

b. Choose the correct preposition to complete each of the sentences.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Equestrian is the only Olympic sport (.....) which men and women compete against each other. | a. at
b. in
c. on |
| 2. People have ridden horses (.....) the beginning of time, haven't they? | a. by
b. for
c. since |
| 3. Horses have played an important role (.....) human history all over the world. | a. at
b. in
c. on |
| 4. There were horses at the ancient Olympics, (.....) the chariot events. | a. at
b. in
c. on |
| 5. In jumping, they jump (.....) a series of obstacles as fast as they can. | a. on
b. over
c. through |
| 6. The film won the Academy Award (.....) Best Documentary Feature Film in 1960. | a. as
b. for
c. in |

4. Solution

Exercise 1a

1. b; 2. d; 3. a; 4. f; 5. e; 6. c

Exercise 2a

1. f; 2. a; 3. c; 4. e; 5. b; 6. d

Exercise 3a

1. a; 2. b; 3. c; 4. c; 5. c; 6. b

Exercise 3b

1. b; 2.c; 3. b; 4. b; 5. b; 6. b