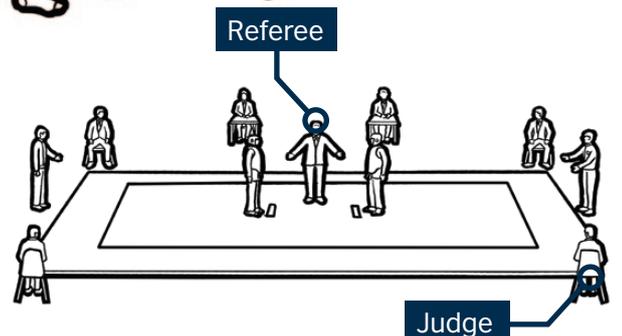
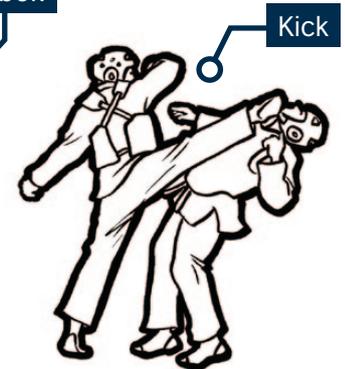
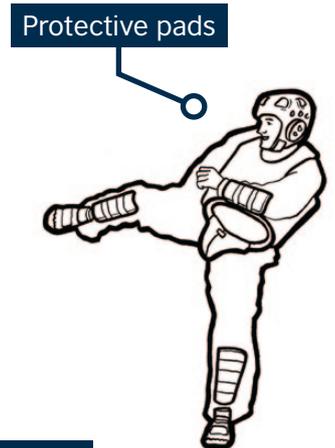
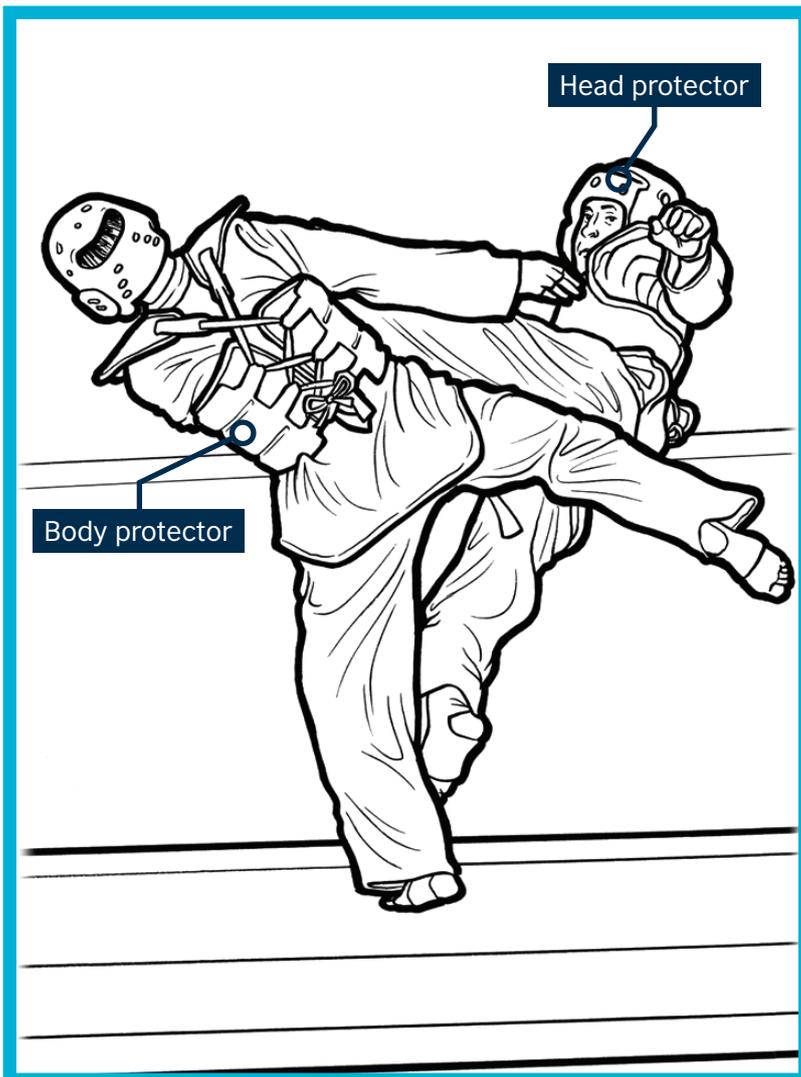


Taekwondo

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.

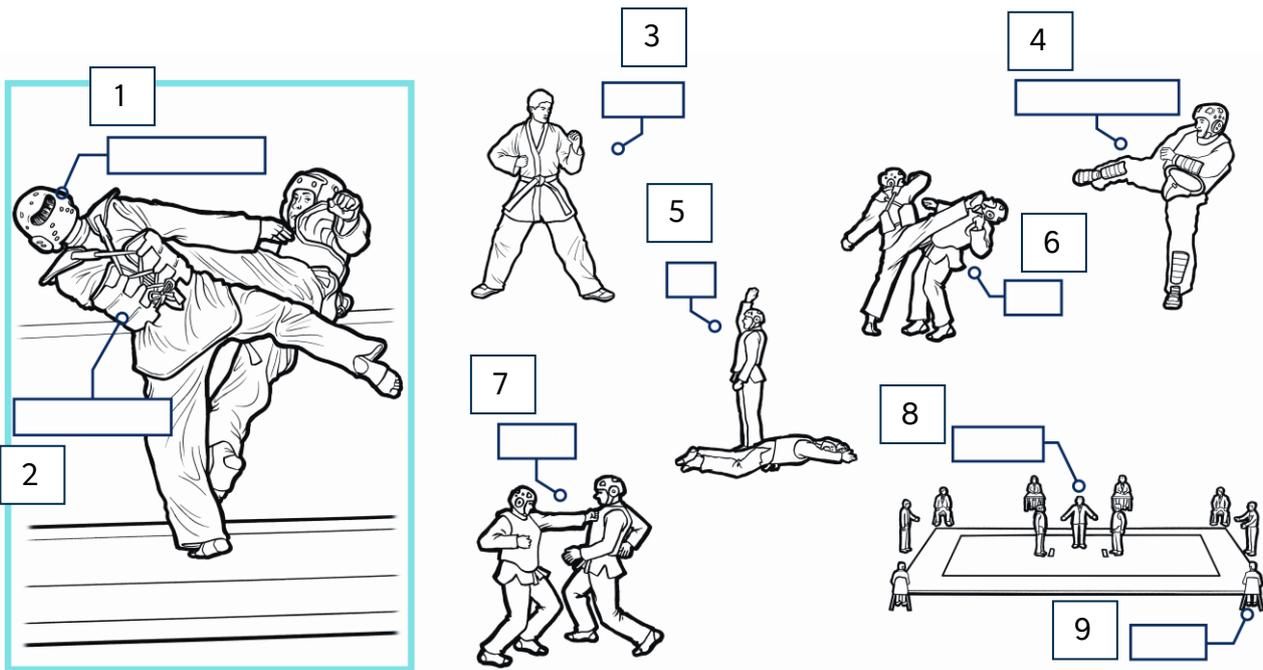
'Taekwondo' means 'the way of foot and fist'. It is best known for its combination of kick movements although both hands and feet can be used. Taekwondo is one of two Asian martial arts included in the Olympic programme, the other is judo. It originated in Korea around 2,000 years ago but it was not until the 20th century that it began to be promoted around the world. Taekwondo is now practised in more than 180 countries. Have you ever tried taekwondo, or another martial art?



1. Vocabulary

a. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

a. Judge	b. Referee	c. Head protector
d. Dobok	e. Punch	f. Protective pads
g. Kick	h. KO	i. Body protector



2. The rules of Taekwondo

- Taekwondo comes from Korea, and means “the way of the foot and the fist”. It is a martial art – a form of fighting – using both hands and feet.
- There are four weight categories for both men and women.
- The aim of the sport is to get more points than your opponent. Contestants can also win by a knock-out.
- Contestants get points for punches and kicks. There are different systems, but normally they get one point for any hit to the chest or side, as well as for a knock-down. They get two points for a kick to the head – they must hit the face or side of the head. “Turning kicks” get double points.
- Foul play – like punching the face, hitting below the belt or holding an opponent – leads to penalty warnings and point deductions.
- Judges watch the competition and give points. In some competitions, contestants have electronic equipment in their clothing that sends scores to the scoreboard.
- Each competition or “bout” has three rounds of two minutes each, with a minute’s break in between.
- A draw normally means there is an extra round and a “sudden death” finish – the first to score is the winner.

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

a. bout	b. fist	c. foul play	d. kick
e. martial art	f. punch	g. sudden death	h. turning kick

1. A closed hand.
2. A kick after briefly showing your opponent your back.
3. A sporting name for one fight inside a bigger competition.
4. Breaking the rules of the sport.
5. Sporting form of fighting.
6. The next point decides the winner.
7. To hit something or someone with your fist.
8. To hit something or someone with your foot.

3. Questions & Answers

I've heard Taekwondo is both an ancient and modern sport. Why is that?

Tomb paintings from 50 BC show men practising forms known as Taek Kyon.

And the modern aspect?

It became really popular as part of increasing Korean self-confidence in the 1950s.

Taekwondo is more than just fighting, isn't it?

Yes, the Olympic sport we see is only the "sparring" - or controlled fighting - side of Taekwondo. There are other aspects which include self-defence, board-breaking, etiquette, and spirit.

Spirit?

Yes, Taekwondo is strongly influenced by Buddhism.

Kicking people doesn't seem very spiritual...

Taekwondo started with a young military group whose training was spiritual as well as physical.

And you said something about breaking wooden boards?

Yes, breaking wooden boards with the feet is an exercise in personal development.

It looks as if it hurts, though...

As one of the fathers of Taekwondo, Choi Hong Hi, said, "Pain is the greatest teacher, yet no one likes his class"...

They don't need to do that in the Olympics though?

No, they don't. They just need to score lots of points and very quickly! In fact these days many competitions use automatic scoring.

What do you mean, 'automatic'?

Competitors wear sensors - electronic devices - on their hands and feet which score points when they touch the right places on their opponent's protective gear.

Sensors? That seems strange.

Stranger still, in the 2010 Asian Games a competitor was disqualified because officials said she had worn extra sensors in her socks to score extra points. But films showed that, during the bout, she hadn't worn the sensors. It caused an international argument.

An international argument about socks? I don't get it.

Ah! As the classic text Tao Te Ching says, "The more you know, the less you understand."

a. Decide if the following statements are true or false according to the text.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Taekwondo became popular in the middle of the 20th century. | a. True |
| | b. False |
| 2. Modern Taekwondo started as part of army training. | a. True |
| | b. False |
| 3. Olympic competitors have to break wooden boards by kicking them. | a. True |
| | b. False |
| 4. A teacher said that pain helps you to learn Taekwondo better. | a. True |
| | b. False |
| 5. A sensor is a device for telling when competitors make contact with scoring areas. | a. True |
| | b. False |
| 6. A competitor was eliminated because she was wearing socks. | a. True |
| | b. False |

b. Can you match the two halves of the sentences below?

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. It looks as if... | a. someone is sitting on my chest – I can't breathe. |
| 2. It sounds as if... | b. the fire started here – there's a cigarette butt on the ground. |
| 3. It smells as if... | c. our next-door neighbour is learning the violin! |
| 4. It tastes as if... | d. someone has added salt instead of sugar! |
| 5. It feels as if... | e. someone has burnt the dinner! |

4. Solution

Exercise 1a

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

Exercise 2a

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

Exercise 3a

1. True (T); 2. (T); 3. False (F); 4. T; 5. T; 6. F

Exercise 3b

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