

IT'S A HIT!



PICKLEBALL CRAZE

Pickleball is the country's fastest-growing sport. And the players are getting younger.

LEXILE: 940L (780L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Time, Continuity, and Change; Culture

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.6, RI.6-8.8, SL.6-8.1, W.6-8.2

ENGAGE THE READER

Ask students: Have you heard about pickleball? How is it played? How does it compare with tennis or ping-pong? Why do you think it has become so popular lately? Encourage students to share any experiences they've had with pickleball. As they read the article, have them note details that add to their understanding of the game and its popularity.

QUESTIONS FOR CLOSE READING AND DISCUSSION

- Why has pickleball's popularity come as a surprise? How might Ed Pluskota's or Elizabeth Pavon's experiences help us explain that?
- Do you think professional pickleball leagues will be successful? Explain, using details from the article. What can pickleball tell us about how crazes start and develop?
- Why did the author include Olivia Sutton in the article? How does the final section support the article's purpose?

EXTEND LEARNING/WRITING

Challenge students to write an essay about how a craze or industry gets started and grows, using pickleball as a central example.

Start by having students do additional research on pickleball, gathering two or three more reputable sources. Students can find information on the basics of the sport and its tournaments on U.S.A. Pickleball's [site](#). Then have students think of other crazes in American culture—for example, in music, games and toys, or sports—that might offer another illustration of how popular culture develops. Students could do a little more research into that trend, then brainstorm ideas for their essay by comparing and contrasting it with the pickleball craze. After breaking them into small groups, give students time to discuss ideas and offer suggestions on how to develop those ideas in their essays.

COVER STORY QUIZ + ANSWER KEY

The cover quiz can be found on page 3 of this guide.
For the Google Forms quiz, click [here](#).

- 1. B** (RI.5) **2. C** (RI.1) **3. C** (RI.1) **4. B** (RI.8) **5. C** (RI.6)
6. D (RI.3) **7. Answers will vary.** (W.8)



CALIFORNIA STORMS

For weeks, the state has been battered by severe wind, heavy rain, and snow.

LEXILE: 1080L (930L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: People, Places, and Environments

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.5, RI.6-8.6

BEFORE READING

Ask students: What do you know about the storms in California? Why do you think the storms have been so frequent and so destructive? Tell students they'll learn that the storms are being caused by atmospheric rivers. Ask: What is an atmospheric river? For information on atmospheric rivers, you can direct students to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's page [here](#). As they read, have students write down any questions or standout details.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- For how long have the storms in California been happening? What has made them so frequent?
- What makes the storms in California become national news?
- Who is quoted in the article? How are these sources different from one another? How do they help you understand the storms?



SIX SURPRISING THINGS YOU THINK ARE MAKING YOU HAPPY

But are doing the opposite.

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Individual Development and Identity

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.8, W.6-8.1

BEFORE READING

Ask students: How would you define happiness? What makes people happy? Should the things that make one person happy do the same for another person? Explain.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- According to the article, why shouldn't people quash negative emotions, like fear and anger? Do you agree?
- Have you ever believed that the things on the list made you happy? Explain.
- Do you think articles like this one can help people be happier? Why or why not?

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Have students create their own happiness guides. First, have them list a few of the things that make them happy. Then, for each item, have them write down 1) why it makes them happy, 2) how it might help others be happy, and 3) how information in the article might explain the happiness students feel. Then have students compile their writing into a booklet with an illustration for each item. Invite them to share their happiness guides with their classmates.

Name _____ Date _____

Use this week's cover story, "Pickleball Craze," to answer the questions below. For questions 1–6, circle the letter next to the best answer. If you need more space to write your response to question 7, you may use the back of this page.

<p>1. Which sentence best states the main idea of the article's first paragraph?</p> <p>A. Kids do not like pickleball, especially when it's taught in school.</p> <p>B. Pickleball's popularity has risen so quickly that many still have no experience with the sport.</p> <p>C. Ed Pluskota wanted to teach his students the basic skills required for pickleball.</p> <p>D. Every school in America is teaching the sport.</p>	<p>4. According to U.S.A. Pickleball's Jim Berger, the sport is popular because</p> <p>A. the equipment is cheap.</p> <p>B. it's fun and easy to learn.</p> <p>C. its visibility has increased since it became a professional sport.</p> <p>D. retirees prefer it to tennis.</p>
<p>2. Around how many people were playing pickleball in the United States, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association report?</p> <p>A. 2 million</p> <p>B. 4 million</p> <p>C. 5 million</p> <p>D. 10 million</p>	<p>5. The author mentions that the women's pro pickleball champion is 15, in order to</p> <p>A. emphasize that mostly women play the sport.</p> <p>B. show how pickleball has developed into a professional sport.</p> <p>C. show how young people are driving the sport's growth.</p> <p>D. provide a statistic that illustrates pickleball's growth.</p>
<p>3. Pickleball has been around</p> <p>A. since 1963.</p> <p>B. since 2019.</p> <p>C. for more than 50 years.</p> <p>D. for more than 100 years.</p>	<p>6. How does a pickleball compare with a tennis ball?</p> <p>A. It has evenly spaced holes.</p> <p>B. It is made out of the same hard plastic.</p> <p>C. It is more bouncy.</p> <p>D. It is bigger and less bouncy.</p>

7. How would you explain pickleball's rapid rise in popularity?
