

### Quidditch rules

Oliver opened the crate. Inside were four different-sized balls. 'Right,' said Wood. 'Now, Quidditch is easy enough to understand, even if it's not too easy to play. There are seven players on each side. Three of them are called Chasers.' 'Three Chasers,' Harry repeated, as Wood took out a bright red ball about the size of a football. 'This ball's called the Quaffle,' said Wood. 'The Chasers throw the Quaffle to each other and try and get it through one of the hoops to score a goal. Ten points every time the Quaffle goes through one of the hoops. Follow me?' 'The Chasers throw the Quaffle and put it through the hoops to score,' Harry recited. 'So – that's sort of like basketball on broomsticks with six hoops, isn't it?' 'What's basketball?' said Wood curiously. 'Never mind,' said Harry quickly. 'Now, there's another player on each side who's called the Keeper – I'm Keeper for Gryffindor. I have to fly around our hoops and stop the other team from scoring.' 'Three Chasers, one Keeper,' said Harry, who was determined to remember it all. 'And they play with the Quaffle. OK, got that. So what are they for?' He pointed at the three balls left inside the box. 'I'll show you now,' said Wood. 'Take this.' He handed Harry a small club, a bit like a rounders bat. 'I'm going to show you what the Bludgers do,' Wood said. 'These two are the Bludgers.' He showed Harry two identical balls, jet black and slightly smaller than the red Quaffle. Harry noticed that they seemed to be straining to escape the straps holding them inside the box. 'Stand back,' Wood warned Harry. He bent down and freed one of the Bludgers. At once, the black ball rose high in the air and then pelted straight at Harry's face. Harry swung at it with the bat to stop it breaking his nose and sent it zigzagging away into the air – it zoomed around their heads and then shot at Wood, who dived on top of it and managed to pin it to the ground. 'See?' Wood panted, forcing the struggling Bludger back into the crate and strapping it down safely. 'The Bludgers rocket around trying to knock players off their brooms. That's why you have two Beaters on each team. The Weasley twins are ours – it's their job to protect their side from the Bludgers and try and knock them towards the other team. So – think you've got all that?' 'Three Chasers try and score with the Quaffle; the Keeper guards the goalposts; the Beaters keep the Bludgers away from their team,' Harry reeled off. 'Very good,' said Wood. 'Er – have the Bludgers ever killed anyone?' Harry asked, hoping he sounded offhand. 'Never at Hogwarts. We've had a couple of broken jaws but nothing worse than that. Now, the last member of the team is the Seeker. That's you. And you don't have to worry about the Quaffle or the Bludgers –' '– unless they crack my head open.' 'Don't worry, the Weasleys are more than a match for the Bludgers – I mean, they're like a pair of human Bludgers themselves.' Wood reached into the crate and took out the fourth and last ball. Compared with the Quaffle and the Bludgers, it was tiny, about the size of a large walnut. It was bright gold and had little fluttering silver wings. 'This,' said Wood, 'is the Golden Snitch, and it's the most important ball of the lot. It's very hard to catch because it's so fast and difficult to see. It's the Seeker's job to catch it. You've got to weave in and out of the Chasers, Beaters, Bludgers and Quaffle to get it before the other team's Seeker, because whichever Seeker catches the Snitch wins his team an extra hundred and fifty points, so they nearly always win. That's why Seekers get fouled so much. A game of Quidditch only ends when the Snitch is caught, so it can go on for ages – I think the record is three months; they had to keep bringing on substitutes so the players could get some sleep. 'Well, that's it – any questions?' Harry shook his head. He understood what he had to do all right; it was doing it that was going to be the problem. 'We won't practise with the Snitch yet,' said Wood, carefully shutting it back inside the crate. 'It's too dark, we might lose it. Let's try you out with a few of these.' He pulled a bag of ordinary golf balls out of his pocket, and a few minutes later, he and Harry were up in the air, Wood throwing the golf balls as hard as he could in every direction for Harry to catch. Harry didn't miss a single one, and Wood was delighted. After half an hour, night had really fallen and they couldn't carry on.

## **True or false**

|   | <b>TRUE</b> | <b>FALSE</b> |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| Quidditch is easy to understand                                 |             |              |
| Quidditch is easy to play                                       |             |              |
| There are eight players in each team                            |             |              |
| The names of the balls are: Quaffle, Bludgers and Golden Snitch |             |              |
| They practiced with the golden snitch                           |             |              |
| Harry didn't miss a single ball.                                |             |              |
| They had to stop because they were tired                        |             |              |

**Watch the video and write three differences with the book**