

Learning English Through Japan – Undokai

Focus: Vocabulary (Sports), Reading (Comprehension).

PART 1 - Reading

1) Read about Undokai and answer the questions.

In 1874, The Imperial Japanese Naval College held the first sports event. In the following years, more and more public schools across Japan started to hold Sports Days. The main purpose of holding a sports day was to promote the physical development of students. In 1885, Undokai was officially held at Tokyo University, the most prestigious university in Japan which was established in 1877.

Undokai is a Japanese term for Sports Day. It is a traditional annual event that is generally held in spring or fall. On Sports Day, all students participate in a variety of sports activities. This event teaches children about the importance of working together, working hard, and competing for the whole team.

a) What is Undokai?

A sports party food and dance

A sports event with activities

Lectures about sports

b) When did Undokai become official?

1874

1877

It is not official.

c) Undokai aims...

to encourage kids to work as a team.

to encourage kids to win always.

to teach kids the importance of competition.

PART 2 - Sports

2) Match the words in the box with their concepts.

baton

chase

hung

perform

roll

rope

split

throw

1		to divide or separate
2		a strong, thick line or cord
3		hollow rod of wood
4		to move along a surface by revolving
5		to execute
6		to project through the air
7		past form of hang (to attach)
8		to hurry after someone in order to catch him

3) Match the numbers from exercise 2 with the pictures below. You will not use all numbers.



4) Read each sports description and match the picture to the correct sport.



Tug of War	Relay Race	Obstacle Course	Oodama
Students are split into two teams, and each team pulls a long rope from the opposite side	Runners pass a baton in their team colors to the next runner	Participants run through a course that awaits them with challenging obstacles	Teams roll a huge soft ball to the goal point

Kumitaiso	Dance	Tamaire	Kibasen
Students work together as a team and create a variety of gymnastic formations with their bodies	Students perform traditional Japanese music	Students throw small beanbags into a basket hung at the top of a tall pole	Three of them hold up one student and chase the leaders of the opponent team to take off their headband

5) Discuss the following questions.

- Would you like to join Undokai?
- Are there similar events to Undokai in your country?
- What is your favorite sport in exercise 2? Why?