# Lessons 11–12 **Camel racing**

- Look at the photos. Describe what you can see. Have you ever been to a horse race or a camel race? What do you know about them? How are they the same or different?

## Reading

**1** **21st Read this article about camel racing. What is unusual about the racing? Read and find out.**

**2** **Complete the gaps in the text in Activity 1 with the correct letter.**

a … build robot jockeys!
b So, how are these robots made?
c So, how does this work?
d Robot jockeys have a further advantage over their human counterparts:
e In the past, human jockeys were used – often young children.
f It's 9 am.
g Camel racing is a popular sport in the region.
h But it's not all about giving instructions!

**3** **Read and write the answer.**

1 Why does the racing finish so early?
2 What is a robot jockey?
3 How is the remote control activated?
4 What is a push-button used for?
5 Why were child jockeys banned?
6 What other devices do some robot jockeys have?

_____[1] People are already leaving the race track after two hours of watching some of the fastest camels in the region and before the desert temperatures begin to soar.

_____[2] Some people watch the events on their TVs. But many people don't know that the camels taking part in the races have actually been ridden by robots! And how long do you think this has been going on? Well, … for the last ten years, at least!

_____[3] Instead of human jockeys controlling the animals – using whips and their voices – a dummy (robot) jockey is used, operated by a remote control. And what has been activating this remote control? The trainer's voice has been activating it – a voice that the camel recognises – so this device 'drives' the camels. So, when we have watched cars driving along the side of the race track, what have we been watching? Well, we can be quite sure that we have been watching the trainers. They have been following the race and 'talking' to their camels as they go. The camels have been responding to their owners' instructions, which are usually telling them to run faster!

_____[4] The camel is fitted with another device controlled by a push-button. This button activates a whip. So, by combining talking to the camel with controlling the whip, the owner is able to fine-tune what they want their camels to do.

_____[5] These child-jockeys were light and enabled the camel to run faster. But the racing wasn't safe for the children, so a new law was introduced that banned anyone under 16 from racing. Another issue with human jockeys was the tendency to whip the camels hard to get them to run faster. This often resulted in injuring the camels and leaving them with scars. So what could they do …?

_____[6] And through designing these, they found that the camels responded very quickly to the push-button whip. This meant the animals were hit less and not so forcefully by the human jockeys, and the camels would finish the race free from injuries or scars.

_____[7] they are much lighter and this usually means that the camels run much faster.

_____[8] Apparently, the robots can be made from almost anything. And some of them have shock absorbers and GPS trackers! But the most important factor is that they are really light.

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