

Skating into the Olympics

Skateboarding was one of the five new sports added to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. It is a very difficult and fast-paced sport. That is what makes it so exciting.

The sport was started in the 1940s in California in the USA. Surfers invented it as an activity to do when they weren't able to surf. Slowly, more and more people started to try it. It was still seen by most people as a great hobby and not a professional sport back then. In 1995, an extreme sports competition called the 'X Games' started. Video games about skateboarding were also created in the 1990s. This helped to make the sport a lot more popular. There are now millions of skateboarders around the world. Given its popularity, it is not surprising that it is finally going to be in the Olympics.

Not all skaters are happy with the decision. Some people think that skateboarding is an art that belongs on the street. They do not believe that there should be big competitions for it. These critics worry that adding skateboarding to the Olympics will make it less unique and fun. Other athletes are very happy about the news as it will allow them to show the best of their sport to the whole world.

There are two main types of skateboarding. They are called 'park' and 'street'. In street skateboarding, competitors skate within public spaces. Their routines include things like stairs and park benches. This is the most popular form of skateboarding across the world. In park skateboarding, competitors skate in specially designed skate parks. They look a bit like an empty swimming pool with steep sides. There are fewer places that you can do this, so it is not quite as popular. Both types of skateboarding are very skillful.



Skateboarders have to perform jumps, flips and spins in the air. The winner is decided by a team of five experienced judges. They award each competitor with a score between 0 and 100 based on a lot of different things. This includes things like their speed and the amount of time they are in the air. Skateboarders are also judged on the creativity of their skateboarding.



Questions

03

- 1** How many new sports were added to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics?

- 2** Who invented skateboarding?

- 3** When were the first X Games held?

- 4** 'These critics worry that adding skateboarding to the Olympics will make it less unique and fun.'

What is a critic? ([tick](#))

- ☐ Someone who doesn't know enough information about someone or something.
- ☐ Someone who hates skateboarding.
- ☐ Someone who loves skateboarding.
- ☐ Someone who shares their opinions about something.

- 5** In what type of skateboarding would you skate over park benches? ([tick](#))

- ☐ Street
- ☐ Park
- ☐ Downhill
- ☐ Vert

- 6 Why is park skateboarding less popular than street skateboarding? (tick)

- ☐ Park skateboarding is less skillful.
- ☐ Skateboarders do not like to skate in skate parks.
- ☐ Park skateboarding is done in skate parks that look like empty swimming pools.
- ☐ There are more places where you can practise street skating than park skating.

- 7 How many judges are involved in the competition?

- 8 Which word could be used instead of 'experienced' without changing the meaning of the sentence below? (tick)

'The winner is decided by a team of five experienced judges.'

- ☐ novice
- ☐ champion
- ☐ expert
- ☐ amateur

- 9 What is the highest possible score that a skateboarder could receive in the competition?

- 10 Here are short summaries of each paragraph.

Write the numbers 1-5 in the boxes to put the paragraphs in order.

- ☐ Not everyone thinks that skateboarding should be in the Olympics.
- ☐ Skateboarding started in the 1940s and has grown in popularity.
- ☐ Skateboarding is a new Olympic sport.
- ☐ Skateboarders have to perform tricks and the winner of the competition is decided by five judges.
- ☐ 'Park' and 'street' are the two main types of skateboarding.

Score:

Answers

A

- 1 How many new sports were added to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics?

five

- 2 Who invented skateboarding?

Surfers

- 3 When were the first X Games held?

1995

- 4 'These critics worry that adding skateboarding to the Olympics will make it less unique and fun.'

☒ Someone who shares their opinions about something.

What is a critic? (tick)

- 5 In what type of skateboarding would you skate over park benches?

☒ street

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☒ There are more places where you can practise street skating than park skating.

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