

Undokai: Japanese Sports Day

Helen Kerray with The Japan Society (2020)

Lesson 2: Communication in Pair Work

Learning Objectives:

- To understand how communication affects partner work by playing a typical Japanese sports day game, 'What a Racket'.

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify the benefits of communication in pair work
- Select and apply communication strategies to a problem
- Perform with improving control the pairs tasks demonstrating good communication

Curriculum Links:

Physical Education

Keywords:

Radio Taiso, undokai (sports day)

Resources:

- Japanese Sports Day Pack: What a Racket Game Card
- Sports Day Background Notes

Additional Resources:

- [Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcI7OI): Radio Taiso (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xfDmrcI7OI>)
- Radio Taiso Movements Card
- NHK Video explaining Sports Days in Japan (see: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7mnenm>)

Task 1

- Ask students if they remember where Radio Taiso is performed? Explain to/remind students how undokai are different from UK school sports days using the **Background Notes** or the NHK video (the section from '2:00 – '4:20 gives a comprehensive overview): the entire school is normally split into either Red/White team and the emphasis is not on individual attainment or prizes, but group work, humour, and doing one's best. This lesson will focus on pair work.
- Students pair up for a warm-up activity. Choosing any of the Radio Taiso movements previously learnt, partner A chooses 1 movement for both of them to repeat 8 times. Partner B then chooses the next movement and so on. The **video** or **movements card** can be used as a reminder.

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Task 2

- Teacher to facilitate another pair activity (pairs can be switched or stay the same).
- Students stand 15 big paces apart from their partner. Teacher gives Partner A a command e.g. 'run to Partner B, give them a high five, and run back to your start point.
- For the next command, the teacher adds to the sequence. E.g. Partner B is to run to A, give a high five, and complete five star jumps.
- The next 'add on' is for Partner A. (E.g. Run to partner B, complete high five, five star jumps, plus crawl through their legs before returning to their start point.
- Keep adding to the sequence and remove the reminders so pairs have to remind and help each other (by communicating verbally and non-verbally)
- Hold a mini plenary. In pairs, students must complete the sentence "We worked well together because we..."
- Teacher to pull out lots of the communication (verbal and non-verbal) tactics students employed in the task and highlight successes

Estimated Time: 10 -15 minutes

Task 3

- Students will practice for the main activity (What a Racket Game) by navigating a set course in pairs whilst being careful not to drop a ball/bean bag sandwiched between two rackets/bats.
- Teacher to set out a variety of equipment (all kinds of rackets/bats and a variety of balls/bean bags) and a course on the floor (using benches, mats, cones and hoops) that the students will navigate.
- Students choose from the selection of equipment and complete the course.
- Progress the activity as the course gets completed again by each pair. Teacher can add in constraints such as: verbal communication only, non-verbal communication only, eye contact only, one partner to use verbal and one non-verbal communication.

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Task 4

- Refer to the 'What a Racket' game card in the **Japanese Sports Day Pack**. Students will play and compete in 2-4 large teams. (You make like to split into the Red Team and White Team as in a Japanese undokai).
- Play several times, altering the equipment used in each race.
- Hold a plenary. Class discussion on the evidence the students saw of how communication improved their performances.

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Extension Activities

- Students can use mini white boards and note down in teams their top 5 tips for effective pair work that they would give as advice to the 'hypothetical next class' completing the activity.