

EXPLORE A unique sports tradition

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WAY 1

1. Look at the photograph to learn about polo. Use all these words in a sentence to explain what this sports consists in: *horseback, rider, mallet, goal, field, score, ball, team.*

Polo is a team.....
sport played on.....
horseback, where..
riders use a long...
mallet to hit a ball..
and try to score...
goals.....

Polo, often dubbed¹ as the "Sport of Kings," boasts a rich tapestry of history, extending back over 2,000 years. It's a game entwined² with nobility, strategic prowess³, and most importantly, the enduring partnership between horse and rider. Let's journey back in time to explore the fascinating origins of this equestrian sport.

10 Around the 6th Century BC, in the expansive grasslands of Central Asia, the earliest forms of polo took root. Nomadic tribes, ancestors to the modern Mongols and Persians, played a rudimentary form

15 of the game [...]. Fast-paced, physical, and requiring supreme equestrian skill, it was a means for warriors to hone⁴ their cavalry skills, improve teamwork, and provide entertainment during times of peace.

But it was the British who globalized polo. British tea planters discovered the game in Manipur, India, in the 19th Century. Intrigued by this dynamic sport, they established 20 the first polo club in Silchar in 1859. The sport, modified and codified, was transported back to England, where it took off among British aristocracy and military, becoming an emblem of the Empire's power and sophistication.

Today, polo is played in over 77 countries, and while it retains an air of exclusivity, the sport has become more accessible to a broader audience. It's more than a game; it's a 25 cultural phenomenon that embodies skill, strategy, and an unspoken bond between horse and rider. Its rich history accentuates its appeal, rooting it in traditions that span⁵ continents and millennia.

polovalley.com, 2023



▲ Prince William, Jerudong Park trophy, 2017.

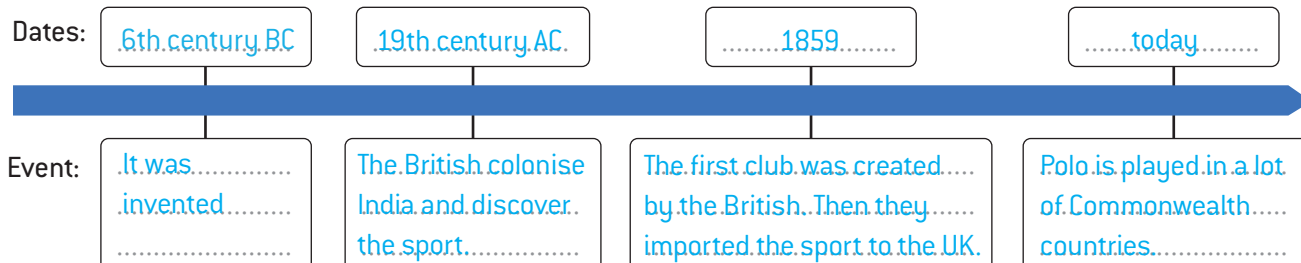
- 1. call
- 2. combine
- 3. capacity
- 4. improve
- 5. s'étendre sur

2. a. Read the text focussing on numbers and highlight those that express a date.

2000 – ...6th... – ...19th... – ...1859... – ??

b. Focus on the end of the text and pick out a date expressed through a word instead of a number.

c. Complete the timeline below rephrasing the elements from the text.



3. a. Read both the text and the culture spot and **focus on** names of places and countries.

Colour the map as follow.

● **Green:** Where Polo was born.

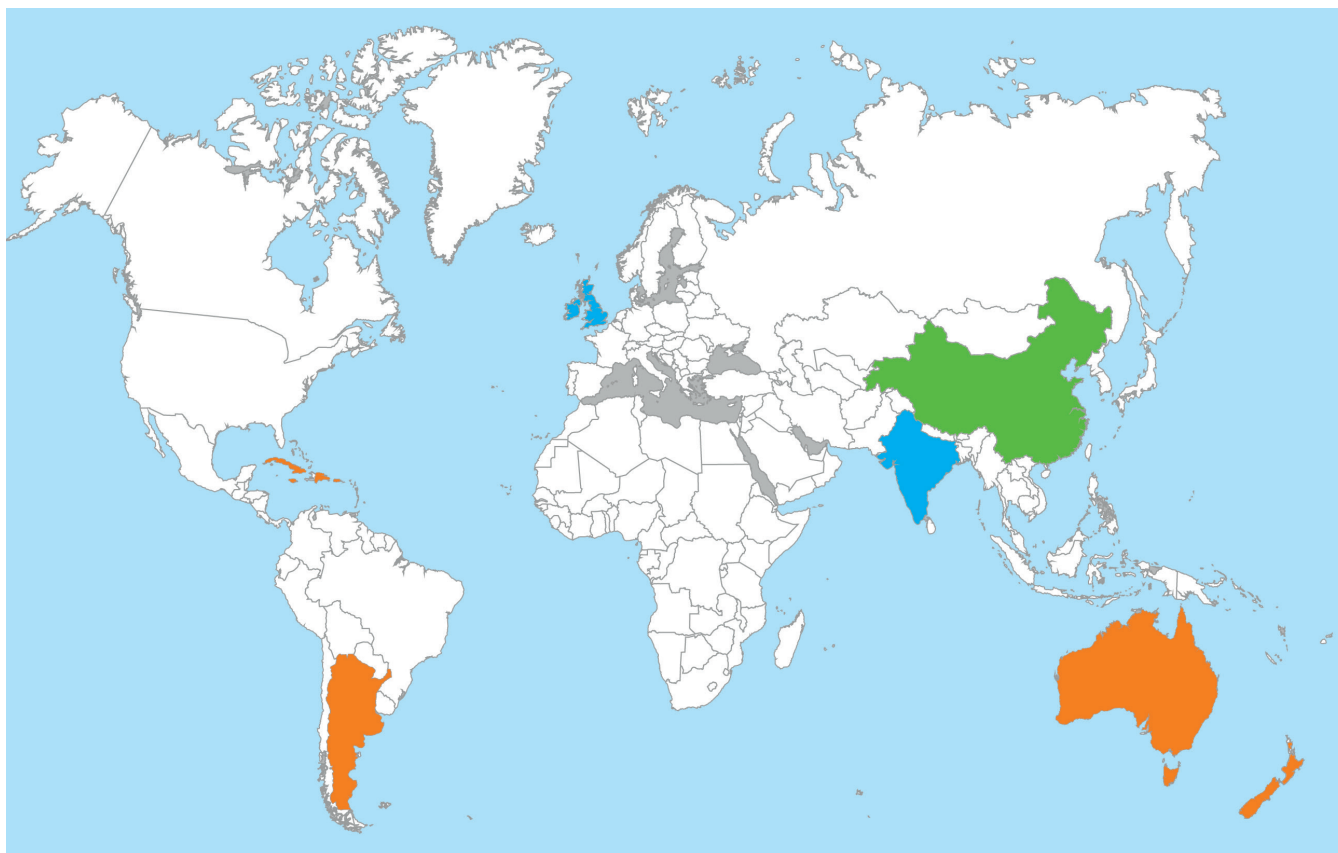
> Central Asia (“modern mongols and persian”)

● **Blue:** Where it developed in the 19th.

> India, the UK

● **Orange:** Where we play it today.

> New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, Argentina, the Carribean.



b. What do you notice about Argentina? What can you conclude?

Argentina is not part of the Commonwealth. The popularity of the sport extends beyond the British world nowadays.

4. Recap the importance of polo in the Commonwealth **using** comparative forms.

a. Use popular, big, or large to **talk about** the countries where we play polo.

The number of countries where we play polo has become bigger and bigger with time.
The sport is becoming more and more popular.

b. Use symbolic, proud or strong, to **talk about** the meaning of the tradition.

British people cannot be prouder to play polo as this sport is more symbolic of British culture than any other one.

5. Pick out elements from the text to **justify** Prince William's passion for polo.

It's a popular game among the British aristocracy, and it stands for the British empire.

1. Look at the photograph and **explain** simply what polo consists in.

Polo is a team sport played on horseback, where riders use a long mallet to hit a ball and try to score goals.

2. Read the text focusing on the evolution of the place of polo in the world.

a. List the different time and space references:

...time: over 2,000 years, around the 6th century BC in the 19th century, in 1959, today, millennia.....
...space: in the expansive grasslands of Central Asia, in Manipur, India, in Silchar, back to England, in over 77 countries, continents.....

b. Recap the different steps. **Make sure** to include where and when it was invented, when it started to spread, and today's situation.

It was invented more than 2,000 years ago in Central Asia. When the British colonised India at the time of the British Empire, they discovered the game and participated in making it more codified. Then transported it back to England and to the four corners of the Empire. Today, it is played in a lot of countries, mainly Commonwealth countries.

3. Explain why polo is "more than a game" (l.24).

It's not just about sports, it's about culture and a connection between the different countries of the Commonwealth.

4. a. Pick out elements to **justify** that polo is "an emblem of the Empire's power" (l.22).

We play polo where the British Empire ruled and it has become a symbol of the kingdom.

b. Comment on the choice of photo to illustrate the article.

It's not surprising as the nickname of the sport is "Sport of King" which shows it's also associated to the aristocracy.