
Darts

WORKSHEET A

The player, a 37-year-old American nicknamed “Big Daddy,” walks forward to the line on the floor and looks at the target. He will win the \$15,000 first prize if he can guide the object between his fingers to a small area on the edge of the circular board in front of him. The crowd in the casino in Connecticut has spent most of the game shouting and cheering, but now falls silent. A much bigger audience is watching live on British TV, this being one of the most popular televised sports in the UK. He throws, and the crowd erupts – he did it!

The sport described above is called “darts.” Although the game was developed as a casual recreation in pubs in the UK, darts has also been a serious professional sport, with professional associations and a world championship in which players from more than 30 countries now compete. The PDC World Championship is usually still dominated by British players, the most successful of whom is Phil “The Power” Taylor; but Americans such as the aforementioned Darin “Big Daddy” Young have qualified in recent years, too, and a Canadian player, John “Darth Maple” Part, has even won it a few times. Almost 20 million Americans play the game at least occasionally.

The traditional sport involves throwing pointed metal darts, from a distance of around 2.5 meters, at a circular board (dartboard) with a diameter of about 45 centimeters. Games are usually contested by two players, who take turns throwing three darts at the board. The darts are usually around 15 centimeters in length and have very thin pieces of plastic (flights) attached to their tails that allow them to fly well, while most dartboards are made of a special fiber that allows the darts to penetrate and yet doesn't get damaged by them. In North America, soft-tip darts are often used with an electronic dartboard, for safety reasons.

The board is divided into sections, numbered 1 to 20, for which the players score a corresponding number of points when they hit them with their darts. Low numbers are usually next to high numbers in order to punish players who are inaccurate when aiming for a high number. Within each of the 20 sections there is also a small “double” and an even smaller “triple” area.

The most popular variations of the game in North America are “Cricket” and “501.” In Cricket, players have to hit all three areas of the numbers 20 through 15, plus the “bull’s-eye,” to “open” those numbers, and their opponent has to hit all three areas of an open number to “close” it. In 501, the players start with 501 points and race to be the

first to score 0: a player subtracts 20 points from their score for hitting the double area of the “10” section, for example, and 30 points for hitting the triple area. The maximum score with one dart is 60, achieved by hitting the triple “20.” Good players often achieve this, even though each triple section is less than one centimeter wide, and professional players sometimes do it with three consecutive darts, which always brings a roar from the crowd and an excited shout of “One hundred and eighty!” from the referee.

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WORKSHEET B

Exercise 1

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), or if the text doesn't determine (D).

1. Professional darts games are televised in lots of countries.
2. British players usually do well in the most important international darts championships.
3. Phil Taylor is British.
4. Few people in America play darts any more.
5. It is possible to score over 100 points with one dart.
6. Dartboards are usually made of wood.
7. The highest numbers are grouped together on one side of the dartboard.
8. Players from more than 30 countries try to earn money from playing darts.
9. Traditional darts are made of plastic.
10. Every number on the dartboard has a "double" and a "triple" area.
11. A game of darts finishes when each player has thrown 15 darts.
12. The triple "20" section is less than one centimeter wide.

Exercise 2

Answer the questions below.

1. How many darts does a player throw at the board before it is the other player's turn?
2. What are "flights," and why are they important?
3. How far away from the board are the players when they throw their darts?
4. When would a darts referee shout "One hundred and eighty"?
5. What is special about the material traditional dartboards are made from?
6. Besides the USA, which two other darts-playing countries are mentioned in the text?

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WORKSHEET C

Exercise 3

The text from Worksheet A has been copied below, but contains some mistakes. Twenty of the words in bold are incorrect, and five are correct. Decide which are incorrect, and correct them.

The player, a 37-year-old American (1) **nicknamed** “Big Daddy,” walks forward to the line on the floor and looks at the target. He will win the \$15,000 first (2) **size** if he can guide the object between his fingers to a small area on the edge of the circular board in front of him. The crowd in the casino in Connecticut has spent most of the game shouting and (3) **sheering**, but now falls silent. A much bigger audience is watching (4) **alive** on British TV, this being one of the most popular televised sports in the UK. He throws, and the crowd (5) **rupts** – he did it!

The sport described above is called “darts.” Although the game was developed as a (6) **cazual** recreation in pubs in the UK, darts has also been a serious professional sport, with professional associations and a (7) **word** championship in which players from more than 30 countries now (8) **competition**. The PDC World Championship is usually still (9) **dominated** by British players, the most successful of whom is Phil “The Power” Taylor; but Americans such as the (10) **formentioned** Darin “Big Daddy” Young have qualified in recent years, too, and a Canadian player, John “Darth Maple” Part, has even won it a few times. Almost 20 million Americans play the game at least occasionally.

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The board is divided into sections, numbered 1 to 20, for which the players score a (17) **corresponding** number of points when they hit them with their darts. Low numbers are usually next to high numbers in order to (18) **punesh** players who are (19) **accurate** when aiming (20) **to** a high number. Within each of the 20 sections there is also a small “double” and an even smaller “triple” area.

The most popular variations of the game in North America are “Cricket” and “501.” In Cricket, players have to hit all three areas of the numbers 20 through 15, plus the (21) **“ball’s-eye,”** to “open” those numbers, and their opponent has to hit all three areas of an open number to “close” it. In 501, the players start with 501 points and race to be the first to (22) **score 0:** a player subtracts 20 points from their score for (23) **hit** the double area of the “10” section, for example, and 30 points for hitting the triple area. The maximum score with one dart is 60, achieved by hitting the triple “20.” Good players often achieve this, even though each triple section is less than one centimeter wide, and professional players sometimes do it with three (24) **executive** darts, which always brings a (25) **raw** from the crowd and an excited shout of “One hundred and eighty!” from the referee.