

In a Pickle

One of the fastest growing sports is pickleball. In 2022, almost five million Americans played the game. Just a few years ago, not many people had heard of it. Now the fun is spreading around the world.

Pickleball is a cross between tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. The goal is to hit a ball over the net. You play it on a tennis court with a plastic wiffle ball and giant ping-pong paddles.

Pickleball was invented in Washington State in 1965. The inventors made it up to entertain their kids who were bored. Some people say they named it after their dog, Pickle. Other people think it was named after the term pickle boat, which is the last boat to finish a race.

There's not a lot of running in pickleball. That means that older people and kids can do just as well as younger adults. In fact, older people were the first group to make pickleball popular. Grandparents around the United States love to play.

During the pandemic, more and more families started playing pickleball. Athletes and celebrities also began to play. There are now professional pickleball tournaments around the country. Some people even think it could become an Olympic sport.



One person who hopes pickleball will be at the Olympics is Anna Leigh Waters. She is a 15-year-old pickleball professional. She used to play soccer. But when she tried pickleball, she was hooked.

Now that the sport is becoming so popular, Anna Leigh is a rising star. She has played with famous people like the swimmer Michael Phelps. She gets money from sports companies to advertise their clothing.

Anna Leigh is glad to see people becoming more interested in pickleball. She is happy that she discovered the sport. She practices a lot. And she travels often to get to games. But she says, "it doesn't really feel like work. It just kind of feels like fun."



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

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 - a. Badminton
 - b. Racquetball
 - c. Tennis
 - d. Ping-pong

2. What is a pickle boat?
 - a. A green boat
 - b. A boat that sails in salt water
 - c. The last boat to finish a race
 - d. A move in pickleball

3. Who was the first group to make pickleball popular?
 - a. Athletes
 - b. Celebrities
 - c. Kids
 - d. Older people

4. What does the author mean by “Anna Leigh is a rising star”?
 - a. She is becoming famous
 - b. She is a good athlete
 - c. She wakes up early
 - d. She makes money

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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