

LEARN THE NEWS

(Formerly: The Times I Am Living In)

English Edition

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Dear Readers,

This Tuesday edition carries a worksheet compiled by Hazel Stanley of the education consultancy, Bissley Enterprises. (bissley@metroweb.co.za)

Today we visit:

India, where a farmer has created a new type of mango in honour of a cricket star;

Tanzania, where a soccer ball is on its way up Mount Kilimanjaro ahead of Africa hosting the World Cup;

The Philippines, where there are efforts to replace much-loved mini-busses that send out dirty smoke;

China, where the Little Mermaid statue from Denmark is a popular hit at an international fair; and

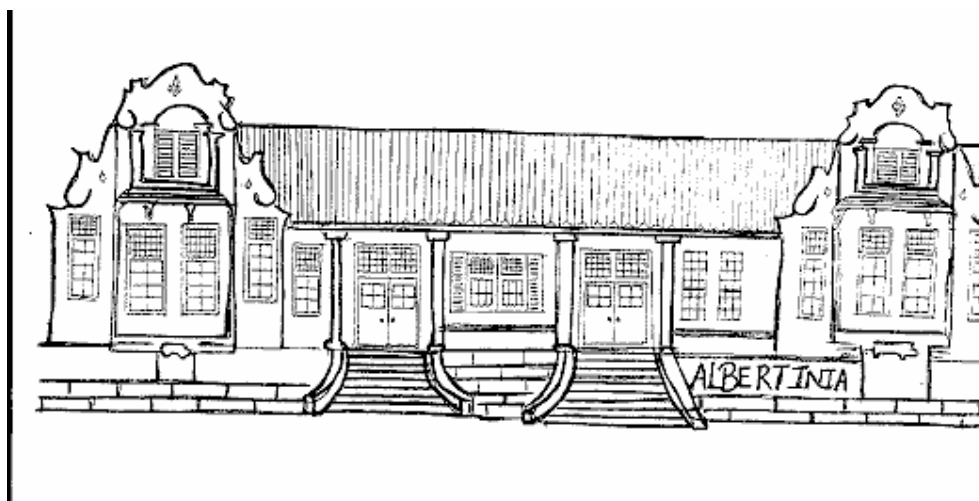
Britain, where the world's top snooker player is in trouble over allegations of match-fixing.

All the best,
Duncan Guy

www.learnthenews.com

Thanks also to the investment fund company, Brait, for assisting in funding Learn the News. (www.brait.com)

Many thanks to the pupils of **Hoërskool Albertinia** in the Western Cape, and their teacher **Evelyn Visagé**, for illustrating this newspaper.



Alishja Spangenberg (Gr. 11)

NOTICE

Once again, please make an extra print out of this FREE publication if you can to pass on to people without access to e-mail. It's also available in **AFRIKAANS** and **isiZULU**.

WORLD NEWS

A farmer in India likes to mix his mango trees to make new types of mangoes.

He's a big fan of Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and he's made a special, new type of mango for him. He's even named his new mango the Sachin mango.

Quick quiz ... Why does farmer Kalimullah Khan not wish to make money from the Sachin mango?

What makes Sachin Tendulkar such an amazing cricketer?

CRICKET: MANGO TRIBUTE TO INDIA'S TENDULKAR

NEW DELHI Sapa-AFP

A new variety of mango has been named after India's record-breaking batsman Sachin Tendulkar in honour of his cricketing success, an Indian television channel reported.

Farmer Kalimullah Khan told India's NDTV news channel that he has created a **hybrid version** of the creamy, sweet-tasting fruit by combining two of the finest Indian varieties, including the Chausa.

"There is no player like Sachin Tendulkar in the whole world and that's why I have named this mango Sachin," the elderly farmer, from Malihabad in Lucknow district, northern Uttar Pradesh state, told NDTV.

Tendulkar, 37, is widely regarded as one of the world's greatest batsmen and has **iconic** status in India. He is also the first Indian sportsman to have a waxwork figure at London's famous **Madame Tussauds museum**.

India is the world's largest producer of mangoes. The Alphonso mango, grown in Tendulkar's home state of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital, is seen by locals as the "king of fruits." The Sachin mango, though, will not go on sale.



Brandon Manho (Gr. 9)

"Our Sachin is a world hero and he is priceless and not a saleable commodity," said Khan, who plans to donate a tree of Sachin mangoes to the cricketer "so he can enjoy them with his friends." Khan has produced nearly 300 new mango varieties and won India's top civilian award for his work on mango **grafting** and cultivation. He told the news channel he is working on a new hybrid fruit to be named after the legendary Bollywood singer Lata Mangeshkar.

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WORLD NEWS

GLOSSARY

Farmer Kalimullah Khan told India's NDTV news channel that he has created a **hybrid version** of the creamy, sweet-tasting fruit by combining two of the finest Indian varieties, including the Chausa.

A hybrid is a living plant or animal, which has two very different parents. In the case of animals, an example would be mixing a Labrador dog with a boxer. The Labrador-boxer cross it produces would be a hybrid. An example in the case of plants would be two different types of mangoes mixing with one another to make a new type of mango, as is the case in this story.

Tendulkar, 37, is widely regarded as one of the world's greatest batsmen and has **iconic** status in India.

An icon is something, or in this case someone, that is famous and makes you think of the place where it comes from. In this case, Sachin Tendulkar has become so famous as an Indian cricketer that when people all over the world think of him, they also think of India, just as the famous Taj Mahal building may make also make them think of India.

He is also the first Indian sportsman to have a waxwork figure at London's famous **Madame Tussauds museum**.

Madame Tussauds is a famous museum with statues of famous people made from wax. It was named after the French woman who started it. She had inherited wax models from a doctor whom her mother had worked for and also made them herself. She used to travel around Europe showing her statues, the first of which were of people who had lived through the French Revolution. Today the figures of all sorts of famous people stand cast in wax at Madame Tussauds Museum. (Note: The museum is known as Madame Tussauds, not Madame Tussaud's!)

Khan has produced nearly 300 new mango varieties and won India's top civilian award for his work on mango **grafting** and cultivation.

When people graft plants they do things to encourage plants to grow, either by placing parent plants close to one another, or by attaching pieces of plants to one another.

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WORLD NEWS

WORKSHEET

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of the same sounds or letters at the beginning of a word.

THE NAME OF THE FARMER IN
THIS STORY IS
KALIMULLAH KHAN.
HIS NAME IS AN EXAMPLE OF AN
ALLITERATION.



can make up. For example, Kind Kerri, Nice Nonjabulo.

- Can you make a WHOLE sentence using alliterations? E.g. Annie always ate apples.

Unjumble the letters below to form alliterations:

r c t e f i r i

_____ Tendulkar scored lots of runs for India.

v c e r l e

_____ Khan has produced nearly 300 new mango varieties.

t l e y r x m e e

The Sachin mango will be _____ enjoyable.

- Using your name, and those of your friends, see how many alliterations you

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AFRICA NEWS

You may remember Robby Kojetin who last year sent letters to this newspaper as he climbed Mount Everest.

This week he's climbing Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro. With him are two people who have survived a type of cancer called non-Hodgkins lymphoma. They are taking a football with them to the top of "Kili" because this year the World Cup is being held in Africa.

Quick quiz ... What is the special message that Robby and his team want people to receive when they hear about their expedition?

Can you work out the difference in altitude between the top of Mount Kilimanjaro and the Millennium Camp?

KOJETIN CLIMBS FOR CANCER, ONCE AGAIN

JOHANNESBURG Sapa

South African mountaineer Robby Kojetin is leading an expedition up Africa's highest mountain equipped with a soccer ball to mark the 2010 Fifa World Cup being held on the continent. Written on the ball are messages written by lymphoma survivors.

In Kojetin's "Team of Hope" are two **lymphoma** survivors Ilse-Mari Hanekom of Big Brother South Africa fame and Comrades and Two Oceans marathons veteran, Lionel Greenberg. Last year Kojetin became the seventeenth South African to reach the summit of Mount Everest, the

world's highest peak, also in solidarity with lymphoma suffering.



Jonathan Arnolf (Gr. 8)

The ascent of the Kilimanjaro's summit at 5895 metres by the "Team of Hope" will be up Machame Route, via the Umbwe Caves and the Karanga Valley while their descent will be along the Machame path, via the Millennium Camp at 3800 metres.

"The Team of Hope is a dynamic team of ordinary, yet courageous and inspirational people... to raise public awareness of the symptoms of lymphoma and the importance of early detection of this type of cancer," the expedition website read.

They are scheduled to fly into Johannesburg on Monday next week.

Visit the expedition at www.teamofhope.co.za

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AFRICA NEWS

GLOSSARY

In Kojetin's "Team of Hope" are two **lymphoma** survivors Ilse-Mari Hanekom of Big Brother South Africa fame and Comrades and Two Oceans marathons veteran, Lionel Greenberg.

Lymphoma is a type of cancer that attacks a type of white blood cell called lymphocytes. These lymphocytes have the job of helping to fight illnesses that attack the body.

WORKSHEET

PROBLEM SOLVING

1. How many South Africans reached the summit of Mt Everest before Kojetin?
2. Imagine that the 'Team of Hope' expedition has 8 people in it. They all walk in single file with 1 metre between them on the way UP the mountain. If the first person is currently at 1 200m, where would the last person in line be standing?
3. Imagine that the 'Team of Hope' walks in the following order (with 1.5m between them) on the way up Mt Kilimanjaro:
Robby Kojetin, Ilse-Mari Hanekom, Lionel Greenberg, Johann Enslin
 - a. When Lionel is at 2 968 m, where will Robby Kojetin be?
 - b. If Ilse-Mari stops at 3 455,5 m for a sip of water, where will Johann be?
 - c. How many metres are there between Robby and Johann?

These people are going on this hike to make people aware of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Write a message to them on the ball below:



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ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Long ago, during World War 2, the United States took over the Philippines.

The Americans brought lots of army jeeps with them, which they left behind after they went home.

The people in the Philippines, who are called Filipinos, turned them into mini-buses, which they called "jeepneys".

Now, sixty years later these "jeepneys" let out lots of dirty smoke.

Now, a cleaner "jeepney" has been made. It runs off electricity.

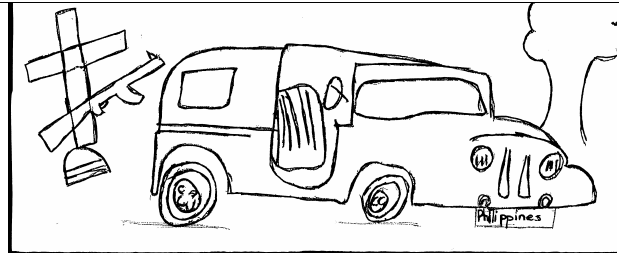
Quick quiz ... Why are Filipinos so proud of their "jeepneys"?

How does Red Constantino see the "e-jeepney" as a success when there are so few of them while there are so many "jeepneys" that give off dirty smoke?

PHILIPPINES' DIRTY JEEPNEYS STARTING TO TURN GREEN

MANILA Sapa-AFP With exhausts that belch out dark clouds of fumes, drivers who **arrogantly** break road rules and **sardine-can-like** interiors, "jeepney" mini-buses are an unlikely source of pride in the Philippines.

The iconic vehicles with their **flamboyant** paint designs are much loved as a symbol of **national ingenuity** because Filipinos created them from **surplus** US military jeeps after American forces left at the end of World War II.



Nathan Janson (Gr. 3)

However, six **decades** later, they are also becoming known as environmental vandals because their huge diesel-powered motors are one of the major contributors to air pollution and ensuing health problems in Philippine cities.

"Because the old jeepneys are all diesel fed and so inefficient, they produce a lot of pollution," said Red Constantino, director of the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, a Manila-based non-government organisation.

Constantino, along with a small collection of politicians, business groups and other NGOs, has embarked on a campaign to turn the Philippines' main form of public transport **green** by replacing them with so-called "e-jeepneys".

The e-jeepneys look like little more than glorified golf carts, but they are an emissions-free form of transport powered by electricity that carry a dozen people each.

After charging for between six and eight hours, the e-jeepneys can travel about 70 kilometres at speeds of up to 60 kilometres an hour, according to their manufacturer, Philippine Utility Vehicle. Makati, **Metro Manila's financial district** and arguably its most orderly city, introduced the e-jeepneys on two so-called "green routes" late last year.

"Because of the e-jeepney we were able to reduce smoke-belching problems... and that was able to give an answer to our problems of air pollution," Makati mayor Jejomar Binay told AFP on board one of the mini-buses recently. 4/5/10

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

With only 15 servicing Makati, compared with 60,000 licensed traditional jeepneys across all of Metro Manila, Binay may have been overstating the environmental benefits in his enthusiasm for the project.

Nevertheless, Constantino, a former climate change campaigner for **Greenpeace**, said the Makati project was crucial in offering a showcase for the future.

"It's very important to have solutions on the ground to show people that these types of things are **viable**," he said.

GLOSSARY

With exhausts that belch out dark clouds of fumes, drivers who **arrogantly** break road rules and **sardine-can-like** interiors, "jeepney" mini-buses are an unlikely source of pride in the Philippines.

People who are arrogant have little or no respect for other people because they believe they are more worthy than others.

If you buy a tin of sardines, you'll see when you open them that there are many little fish packed tightly inside. Whenever people talk about "being packed like sardines", they mean that as many of something as possible are squeezed into a small space.

The iconic vehicles with their **flamboyant** paint designs are much loved as a symbol of **national ingenuity** because Filipinos created them from **surplus** US military jeeps after American forces left at the end of World War II.

Flamboyant means very brightly coloured.

Ingenuity is about being clever and creative about inventing something; national ingenuity is to do

with a whole nation being clever and creative about inventing something.

Surplus means left over; in other words if there is more of something than is needed, that extra amount is the surplus.

However, six **decades** later, they are also becoming known as environmental vandals because their huge diesel-powered motors are one of the major contributors to air pollution and ensuing health problems in Philippine cities.

A decade is a period of ten years. The word comes from the Latin word "decem", which means "ten"; just as "century", which means a period of a hundred years, comes from the Latin word "centum", which means "a hundred".

Constantino, along with a small collection of politicians, business groups and other NGOs, has embarked on a campaign to turn the Philippines' main form of public transport **green** by replacing them with so-called "e-jeepneys".

Green means friendly towards the environment.

Makati, **Metro Manila's financial district** and arguably its most orderly city, introduced the e-jeepneys on two so-called "green routes" late last year.

The financial district of a city is the area where you find most banks and other businesses to do with money lending and making big deals.

While Manila is the capital city of the Philippines, Metro Manila is an area that includes Manila as well as a number of nearby cities.

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ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Nevertheless, Constantino, a former climate change campaigner for **Greenpeace**, said the Makati project was crucial in offering a showcase for the future.

Greenpeace is an environmental organisation, known for being very outspoken and active in issues to do with the destruction of the planet.

"It's very important to have solutions on the ground to show people that these types of things are **viable**," he said.

If something is viable, it can be done.

WORKSHEET

Foundation Phase – Word Categories

Jeepneys are a form of transport. Look at the words below and put them into their correct groups .

orange	zebra
pear	taxi
train	rhinoceros
mango	aeroplane
elephant	jeepney
banana	snake
lion	strawberry
buck	bus
car	apple

Fruit

Transport

Animals

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BUSINESS NEWS

There is a big fair in China to which people have brought things to display from all over the world. Sometimes countries get the things they produce very well known by displaying at these fairs. The display of things from Denmark is very popular at the fair in China because people can see a famous state of a little mermaid, which has been brought there.

Quick quiz ... Why would children in China be so interested in the statue of the little mermaid?

For what fraction of a year will the World Expo take place in China's city of Shanghai?

TOURISTS IN COPENHAGEN LAMENT LOSS OF LITTLE MERMAID

SHANGHAI Sapa-AFP

Tourists trekking to Copenhagen hoping to see an iconic statue of The Little Mermaid were left considerably unimpressed on Saturday after being confronted by a still image on a giant video screen.

The installation allows tourists to view live footage of the sculpture from her temporary new home, the Danish pavilion at Shanghai's Expo 2010, but the first visitors were not at all happy at what they saw.

"The screen is funny. The place looks like a memorial for The Little Mermaid, like she had died," said Floor Vos of the Netherlands.

"It's a lousy picture. It's a technical **fiasco**," added American Anna Maja.



Egnesia Peterson (Gr. 3)

Others were taken aback as they were not even aware of the new arrangement.

"I'm really surprised that she is not here and to only find a screen," said Jurgen Meyer from Germany.

The 175-kilogram statue by Edvard Eriksen was inspired by a character created by **Hans Christian Andersen** in an 1837 fairytale.

She has been one of Denmark's main tourist attractions since 1913.

The Little Mermaid is considered a national treasure in Denmark and the decision to send her to Shanghai for the six-month World Expo was **contentious**.

In China, however, the move has made the Danish pavilion one of the Expo's most talked-about attractions in a country where schoolchildren avidly read Andersen's stories.

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BUSINESS NEWS

GLOSSARY

"It's a lousy picture. It's a technical **fiasco**," added American Anna Maja.

A fiasco is an embarrassing failure.

The 175-kilogram statue by Edvard Eriksen was inspired by a character created by **Hans Christian Andersen** in an 1837 fairytale.

*Hans Christian Andersen was a Danish writer who wrote many children's story books, including **The Ugly Duckling** and **Thumbelina**. He lived long ago, from 1805 to 1875, and is a national hero in Denmark. The Little Mermaid statue was made of a character from one of his stories, called **The Little Mermaid**, who fell in love with a human prince.*

The Little Mermaid is considered a national treasure in Denmark and the decision to send her to Shanghai for the six-month World Expo was **contentious**.

If something is contentious people have different opinions about it and feel very strongly about these opinions. Things that are contentious are therefore often the causes of quarrels and fights.

WORKSHEET

Comprehension

Study read the article and then look carefully at the rubric below before answering the questions.

Self assessment Rubric	I did well!	Not too good here.	Still a way to go.
Sentence Comprehension			
Dictionary work			
Study reading			
Understanding the questions			
Answering the questions			

A. Sentence Comprehension

Read the sentence below and then write *true* or *false* in your books.

The 175-kilogram statue by Edvard Eriksen was inspired by a character created by **Hans Christian Andersen** in an 1837 fairytale.

1. Hans Christian Andersen created the statue.
2. The statue weighs 175 kilograms.
3. Edvard Eriksen created the fairytale.
4. Hans Christian Andersen was born in 1837.
5. Edvard Erikson was inspired by Hans Christian Andersen.

B. Now look for any words which you do not know and look up the meanings in your dictionary. Write these words and their meanings in your books.

BUSINESS NEWS

- C. Study read the article, read the questions below and then answer these questions in your books.
1. Why were visitors to Copenhagen unimpressed?
 2. Why was the statue moved?
 3. For how long has the statue been one of Copenhagen's main tourist attractions.
 4. What is a fiasco?
 5. Who did the little mermaid fall in love with?
 6. What can contentious issues lead to?
 7. Why is the Danish pavilion one of the most talked about attractions at the Expo?
 8. If you are 'taken aback' by something, what does it mean?



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SPORT NEWS

The world's top snooker player is in trouble.

His name is John Higgins.

People say he made a deal with someone to lose part of a match in exchange for money.

John Higgins says he never did such a thing.

This sort of deal is known as match-fixing.

Quick quiz ... How did someone claim to catch John Higgins performing a match-fixing deal?

Who played whom in the recent World Championship final?

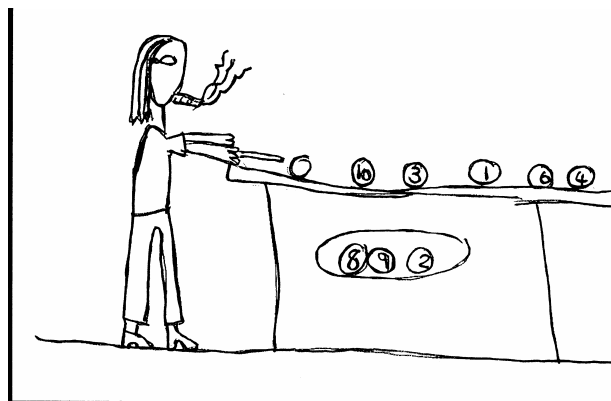
SNOOKER: HIGGINS'S FUTURE IN QUESTION OVER MATCH-FIXING CLAIMS
LONDON Sapa-AFP

The world of snooker was left **reeling** on Sunday after world number one John Higgins was suspended over claims he agreed to take a huge bribe in return for fixing matches.

Britain's News of the World released a video showing what it said was Higgins and his manager Pat Mooney agreeing to lose **frames** in four matches later this year in return for a 300,000-euro (400,000-dollar) bribe.

Higgins denied the claims, suggesting he may unwittingly have been caught up in a Russian **mafia** racket. But snooker's governing body suspended him from all its tournaments **pending** a **probe**, warning he could face a long ban.

"Whilst we're not saying he's guilty of anything... these revelations are such there's a case he has to answer," Barry Hearn, chairman of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA), told the BBC.



Elizke Foxcroft (Gr. 3)

"Clearly if allegations were founded you would be talking about a very, very, very lengthy ban."

He indicated a decision on Higgins's future could be taken within days or weeks.

The revelations emerged on the biggest day in snooker's calendar -- the World Championship final between Scotland's Graeme Dott and Australia's Neil Robertson at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield, northern England.

Snooker legend Steve Davis, who unexpectedly knocked 34-year-old Higgins out of the tournament's second round, described it as "the darkest day I've ever experienced in snooker".

In a statement, Higgins insisted his conscience was "100 percent clear" and said he had been "very worried" about the discussion reported by the paper, which took place in Kiev, Ukraine.

"I think the **integrity** of the game has effectively evaporated overnight," Higgins told BBC radio.

"It's the lowest ebb it's ever been. What a terrible wake-up call. It's just too awful to contemplate."

"When it was suggested that I throw frames in return for large sums of money, I was really spooked. I just wanted to get out of the hotel and on to the plane home," he said. 4/5/10

SPORT NEWS

"I didn't know if this was the Russian mafia or who we were dealing with. At that stage I felt the best course of action was just to play along with these guys and get out of Russia".

A secretly-shot video posted on the News of the World's website appeared to show Higgins discussing losing frames and missing shots during a meeting with Mooney and an undercover reporter.

According to the newspaper, the millionaire three-time world champion boasted that "it's easy" to lose frames deliberately without being detected. There is no suggestion that Higgins has thrown any matches up until now and the footage apparently indicates that any deal would apply to the "world series only".

The video ends with the men seeming to seal a deal, shaking hands and toasting each other with a shot of alcohol.

GLOSSARY

The world of snooker was left **reeling** on Sunday after world number one John Higgins was suspended over claims he agreed to take a huge bribe in return for fixing matches.

To be left reeling over something means that it's such a shock and a surprise that it's difficult to believe.

Britain's News of the World released a video showing what it said was Higgins and his manager Pat Mooney agreeing to lose **frames** in four matches later this year in return for a 300,000-euro (400,000-dollar) bribe.

A frame in snooker is a game; a number of frames are played in a snooker match.

Higgins denied the claims, suggesting he may unwittingly have been caught up in a Russian **mafia** racket.

A mafia is a secret gang that commits crimes. In recent years, a number of such gangs have become very powerful in Russia and other countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union. Ukraine is one such country.

But snooker's governing body suspended him from all its tournaments **pending a probe**, warning he could face a long ban.

A probe is an investigation.

Pending a probe means "while an investigation is going on and depending on the result of that investigation."

"I think the **integrity** of the game has effectively evaporated overnight," Higgins told BBC radio.

The integrity of snooker is its good name, and reputation, for being a sport in which people who play it generally obey its rules.

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SPORT NEWS

WORKSHEET

Sayings

Study read the article and then do the following exercise.

Match-fixing has been a problem in sport, all because of people being greedy for money. Below are some sayings to do with money. Your task is going to be to match the correct meanings with the sayings by filling in the correct letter on the lines next to the meanings.

- A. Money is the root of all evil.
- B. penny wise and pound foolish.
- C. A fool and his money are easily parted.
- D. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves.
- E. to make ends meet.
- F. Money makes the world go around.

_____ Someone who is reckless and doesn't look after his money will lose it easily.

_____ Money causes bad things to happen.

_____ Without money, nothing would happen.

_____ If you are careful with the small amounts, the bigger amounts will be taken care of.

_____ You look after the small amounts but you squander bigger amounts.

_____ you manage to do what you have to with the money you have.



Have you ever been asked by your parents if you think that money grows on trees?

I am sure that you know what it means!!

TODAY IN HISTORY

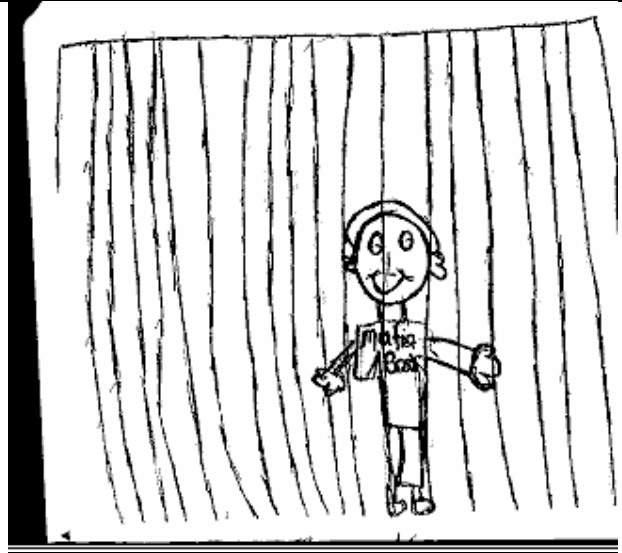
4 May

PANAMA CANAL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS (1904)

On May 4, one-hundred-and-six years ago, in 1904, the United States started to build a canal across a narrow piece of land, known as an isthmus, in Panama. Ever since it was opened, in 1914, the Panama Canal has made it possible for ships to take a short cut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Before the canal was built, ships would have to travel through the cold seas between the Antarctic and the bottom of South America. Today, work is going on in the Panama Canal so that bigger ships will be able to pass through it. Can you find the Panama Canal on a map?

MAFIA BOSS GOES TO JAIL (1932)

On this day seventy-eight years ago, in 1932, American gangster Al Capone began serving his prison sentence for not paying tax. He had been involved in all sorts of crimes but the only one on which the authorities managed to catch him out was tax evasion.



Michael van Tonder (Gr. 3)

GREAT US WRITER RECEIVES PRIZE (1953)

On May 4, fifty-seven years ago, in 1953, American writer Ernest Hemingway was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for one of his books. Pulitzer Prizes are awarded every year to people who have done remarkable things in newspaper journalism, literature and music. Among the books he wrote was "The Old Man and the Sea", about a Cuban fisherman.

TODAY IN HISTORY

4 May

WOMEN TEAM SET MOUNTAIN HIGH RECORD (1974)

On this day thirty-six years ago, in 1974, an all-female Japanese team reached the top of the Himalayan Mountain Manaslu, becoming the first women to climb an eight-thousand metre peak. A woman from South Korea has just claimed to be the first female to have climbed to the top of world's highest fourteen peaks. However, another woman from Spain who is about to climb her final peak of the fourteen, doubts that the South Korean climber reached the top of one of the mountains.

THATCHER BECOMES FIRST UK PRIME MINISTER (1979)

Thirty-one years ago, on this day in 1979, British politician Margaret Thatcher became the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. She was nicknamed "the Iron Lady" because she had a reputation for being tough. Today she is elderly and retired.

If it's your birthday today, you share it with Hosni Mubarak, the President of Egypt. He turns 82 today.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
HOSNI MUBARAK ... AND
TO YOU!**

WORKSHEET

Newsworthy

Read the Today in History page and then answer *true* or *false*

1. A canal built across a narrow piece of land is called an isthmus. _____
2. Al Capone began serving his prison sentence eighty-seven years ago. _____
3. Margaret Thatcher was the first female politician in Britain. _____
4. Ernest Hemingway did remarkable things in journalism. _____
5. Hosni Mubarak is the president of Egypt. _____
6. Manaslu is part of the Himalayan mountain range. _____
7. The Panama Canal allows ships to take a shortcut between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. _____
8. Al Capone was sent to jail for not paying tax. _____

The teacher needed to clear the air after the boy was accused of stealing.

This means: The teacher needed to remove any doubts about the boy the children accused of stealing when he did not do it.