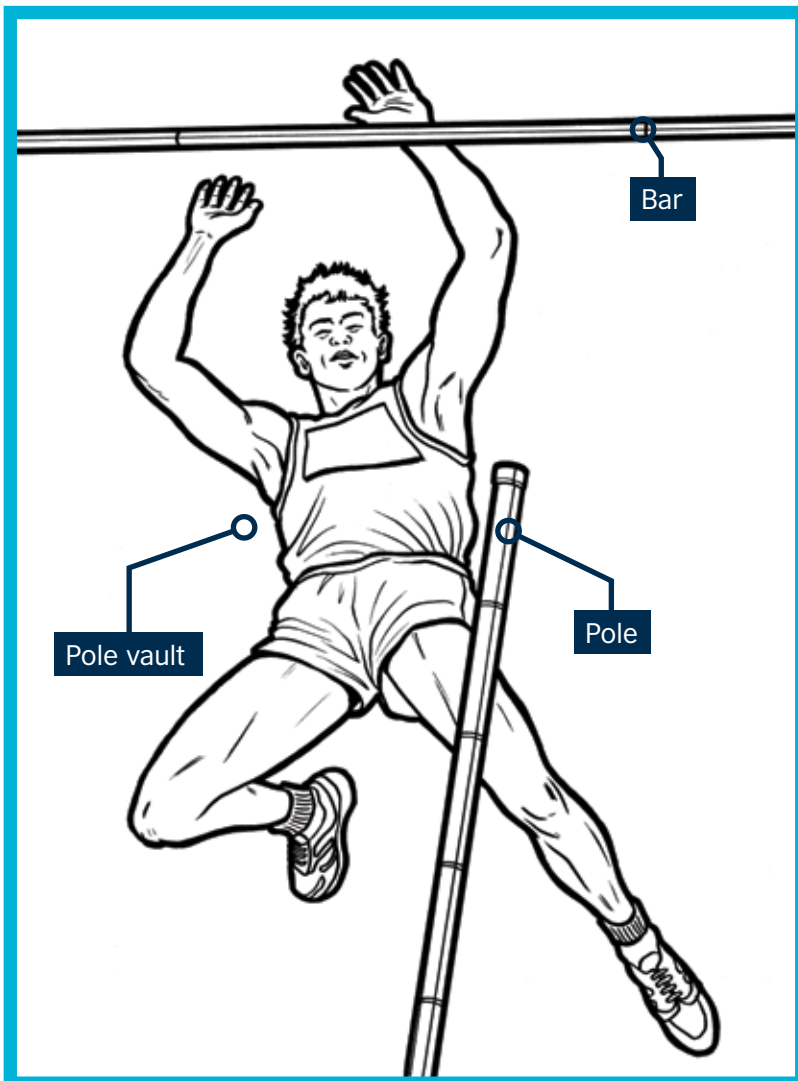


# Athletics (field)

When athletes come together from around the world to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, they are fulfilling their dreams and competing at the highest level. Billions of people across the globe join in; watching, listening to and reading about the greatest global celebration of sport. To celebrate the London 2012 Games, the British Council is making a wide range of classroom resources available for learners of English worldwide.

The Olympic motto 'Citius, Altius, Fortius' ('Faster, Higher, Stronger') was proposed by the founder of the modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin. Perhaps he was thinking of athletics. Have you ever thrown a javelin, discus, shot or hammer? Have you ever tried the long, triple or high jumps, or even the pole vault? Do you know the difference between the decathlon and the heptathlon? Find out about these and more.



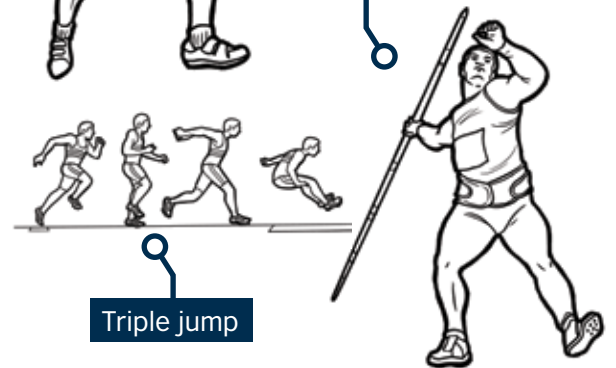
Hammer throw



Discus throw



Javelin



Triple jump



High jump



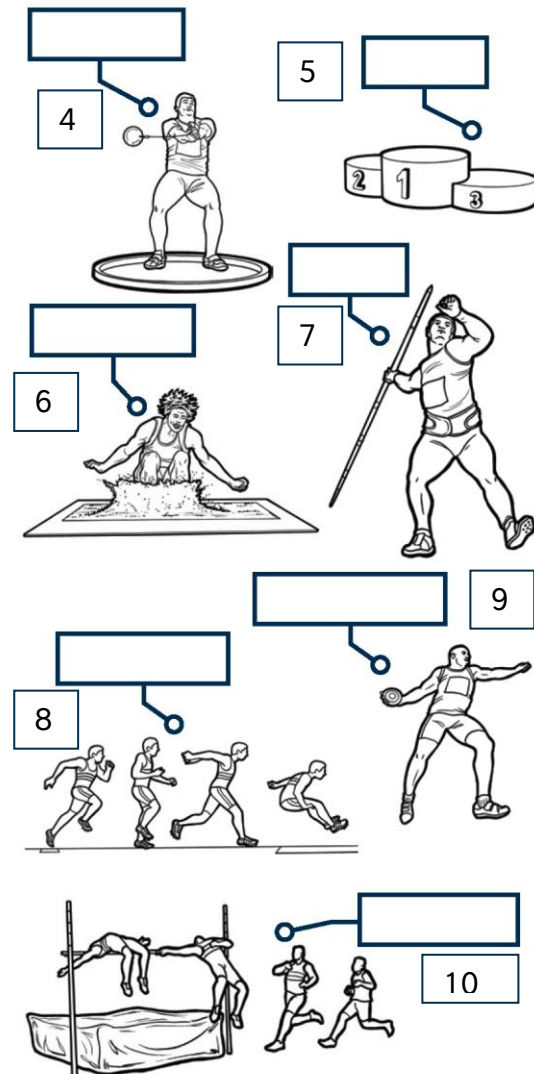
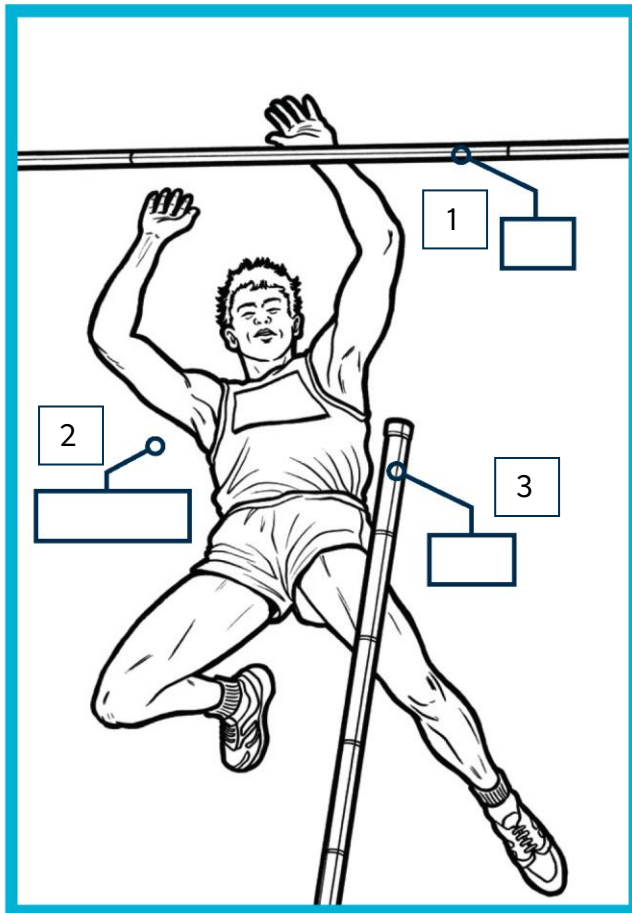
Long jump



**1. Vocabulary**

a. Write the correct words in the spaces provided.

a. Triple jump	b. High jump	c. Hammer throw	d. Javelin	e. Pole vault
f. Bar	g. Podium	h. Pole	i. Long jump	j. Discuss throw



## 2. The rules of athletics – field events

The rules of athletics field events are simple: the athlete who jumps the longest or highest, or throws the furthest, is the winner.

### In the vertical jumps (high jump and pole vault):

- An athlete must clear (go over) the bar without knocking it down.
- An athlete is eliminated if she has three failures at the same height.
- An athlete can pass her attempt.
- The bar is raised (made higher) after all athletes have either cleared, passed or failed their attempts at a height.
- When one athlete remains, she can choose how much to raise the bar.
- If two athletes have cleared the same height, there is a 'tie'. The winner is the athlete who has needed the fewest attempts to jump the highest height, and then, by the total number of failures at all heights.

### In the horizontal jumps (long jump and triple jump) and all throwing events:

- All jumps and throws must be made from behind a line.
- All jumps and throws must land in a specified area.
- Crossing the line or landing outside the specified area makes the jump or throw invalid.
- Each athlete gets three attempts. The top eight athletes then get three more attempts.

### a. Match the words in the table with their definitions below.

a. pole vault	b. discus throw	c. triple jump	d. hammer throw	e. high jump
f. javelin	g. long jump	h. podium	i. bar	j. shot put

1. The event in which athletes try to jump over a high bar using a long stick to push them off the ground.
2. A raised area on which the best three athletes in each event stand to receive medals.
3. A straight stick made of metal, which high jumpers and pole vaulters try to jump over.
4. The event in which a heavy metal ball is thrown from the shoulder as far as possible.
5. The event in which a heavy metal ball joined by a wire to a handle is thrown as far as possible.
6. The event in which a heavy plate-shaped object is thrown as far as possible.
7. The event in which a long stick with a pointed end is thrown as far as possible.
8. The event in which athletes try to jump as far forward as they can in three jumps.
9. The event in which athletes try to jump as far forward as they can in one jump.
10. The event in which athletes try to jump over a bar supported on two poles.

### 3. Questions & Answers

**So I see that on the athletics programme they have field events – that sounds like a picnic!**

If they were in a 'field' maybe but here it means the events that take place in the area inside the running track.

**The jumps and throws?**

Yes, there are four jumping and four throwing events for both men and women. The jumps are the high jump, long jump, triple jump and pole vault.

**And the throws?**

Javelin, discus, shot put and hammer throw.

**But anyone can jump or throw!**

Exactly! At the ancient Olympics the most important event was the pentathlon, and three of the five events were field athletics events - the long jump, and the javelin and discus throws, as well as a running race and wrestling. The winner would be crowned *Victor Ludorum*, "the winner of the games."

**Wow! So field athletics is big time?**

Yes! Some of the biggest stars in Olympic history have been field athletes. Jesse Owens and Carl Lewis were both long jumpers, for example.

**Not so many famous throwers, though?**

That's true, but many deserve to be. And don't forget Dick Fosbury.

**Who?**

Dick Fosbury. He revolutionised the high jump with a new style – the Fosbury flop.

**Doesn't 'flop' mean a failure? That doesn't sound very successful!**

But it was, and is! He won the gold medal in Mexico City in 1968. Since then it's the style that all jumpers use.

**Anyone else?**

How about Sergei Bubka – the greatest pole vaulter of all time? He broke the world record 35 times!

**Speaking of pole vaulting, I know a joke. Two athletes meet in the Olympic village.**

**"Are you a pole vaulter?" one asks. "No, I'm German, but how did you know that my name was Walter?" (groan)**

**a. Choose the correct answer for each question.**

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. How many field events take place in the area inside the running track?            | a. all of them          |
|  | b. only jumping events  |
|  | c. only throwing events |
| 2. How many athletics men's field events are there in total?                         | a. 4                    |
|  | b. 8                    |
|  | c. 16                   |
| 3. How many events did the <i>Victor Ludorum</i> compete in at the Ancient Olympics? | a. 3                    |
|  | b. 5                    |
|  | c. 8                    |
| 4. How many events in the pentathlon at the Ancient Olympics were not field events?  | a. 2                    |
|  | b. 3                    |
|  | c. 5                    |
| 5. How many famous throwers are mentioned?   | a. None                 |
|  | b. 1                    |
|  | c. 4                    |
| 6. How many famous field athletes are mentioned?                                     | a. 2                    |
|  | b. 3                    |
|  | c. 4                    |

**b. Each sentence contains ONE error. Find the errors and correct them.**

1. He break the world record 35 times!

.....

2. How did you knew that my name was Walter?

.....

3. He wonned the gold medal in Mexico City in 1968.

.....

4. And don't forgot Dick Fosbury.

.....

5. Three of the five events was field athletics events.

.....

## 4. Solution

### Exercise 1a

1. f; 2. e; 3. h; 4. c; 5. g; 6. i; 7. d; 8. a; 9. j; 10. b

### Exercise 2a

1. a; 2. h; 3. i; 4. j; 5. d; 6. b; 7. f; 8. c; 9. g; 10. e

### Exercise 3a

1. a; 2. b; 3. b; 4. a; 5. a; 6. c

### Exercise 3b

1. He **broke** the world record 35 times!
2. How did you **know** that my name was Walter?
3. He **won** the gold medal in Mexico City in 1968.
4. And don't **forget** Dick Fosbury.
5. 3 of the 5 events **were** field athletics events.