

The Highland Games

What Are the Highland Games?

The Highland Games are a gathering of traditional sporting events. The Scottish games take place every weekend in Scotland during May to September. Over 80 Highland games are held at different locations throughout Scotland and visitors can see a variety of events and Scottish traditions such as pipe bands and highland dancing.

What Can You See and Do at the Highland Games?

The Highland Games is a serious sporting event and thousands of competitors take part from all over the world. World records are regularly broken at the games.



Tug o' war

Eight men pull against another team of eight. The aim is to pull the other team across the line.



Shot put

Competitors throw a large stone weighing 20-26lbs as far as they can.



Tossing the caber

Competitors throw their caber; the aim is for the caber to land in the 12 o'clock position.



Hammer throw

Competitors spin a metal ball attached to a handle around their heads, then hurl it as far as they can.

When Did the Highland Games Begin?

There are different stories about the origins of the Highland Games. Some say, centuries ago, clan chieftains held Highland games as a competition to find the fittest fighters and toughest warriors for battle. They also wanted to find entertainers, such as Highland dancers and musicians.



The Braemar Gathering

The Braemar Gathering is the most famous Highland Games in the world. Tradition dictates that it takes place on the first Saturday in September. It is a unique gathering because the royal family attend - The Queen is the clan chieftain. Queen Victoria started the tradition when she attended the gathering in 1848.

Highland Games Facts

- At some games, there is a haggis hurling event.
- Highland Games are held all over the world from Brazil to New Zealand.
- A caber is a log from a larch tree. It is almost six metres long!
- Highland dancing was originally a male-only event until the 19th century. Nowadays, 95% of competitors are female.



Questions

1. What are the Highland Games?

2. Why do you think the games take place from May to September?

3. Name three traditional sports you might see at Highland games.

4. Describe how to play one of the sporting events.

5. Use three adjectives to describe the competitors at the games.

6. Why did the first Highland Games begin?

7. Why is the Braemar Gathering unique?

8. What do you think haggis hurling involves?

9. If you could compete in an event, which event would you choose and why?

10. Write three facts you have learnt about the Highland Games.

Challenge:

Design a poster to advertise this year's Braemar Gathering.

Remember to include: the date, time and place; the different sporting events and customs; bright colours and headings to make it easy and interesting to read.

