Kelly Almeida

Study Abroad Final

1. What Makes a sport a sport in the UK? Discuss 3 sports.

 Sport in the UK might not be sport as we think about it. Softball and Baseball, as well as MMA would not be considered sport in the UK, although those would largely be considered sport in America. Since it is specific to country, it is evident that sport is rooted in social institutions and also has widespread social impacts. Sports in certain areas are used to help children develop social skills and build character. Schools also have similar impacts on children, so the schools use sports to build relationships between students, build character, and control students behaviors. Football is one example of a sport in the UK. It is a sport that was often used to embed the idea of masculinity in boys so that they grow up to act like men, which was the norm. Later, it was used to encourage health through exercise and good behavior for boys. Now, the popularity of the sport glamorizes the top athletes and the money they make. Now, young boys dream about becoming a professional footballer and making a lot of money and being famous, but they also start to portray the top athletes as also behave well so that the kids will also want to act like them.

 Golf is a sport which is known to be class specific, since the equipment needed and attire for the game is and always has been expensive, as are most memberships today. However, when you see golf players, they are always acting in a professional manner. If someone grows up with money in their family, it is more likely that they are able to play a sport like golf and cricket and this is probably why the professionals act in the manner that they do-because this is what was expected of them as they grow up, in general.

 Tennis is also thought to be an upper class sport, and at Wimbledon, to be in the club, it is not based on how much money you have, they choose the members based on their tennis abilities. They even watch you play a match, so you have to be a good player to get in. If they choose you, there is only a small membership fee to pay. However, in order to be good at tennis, it requires some equipment, and normally a lot of lessons and coaching. The more you can pay for lessons and a coach, the more likely it is that you will be good at the sport, so it is still class specific, and a place for social events.

1. Pick a sport we played in scotland. How would you teach it to children ages 8-10? Create a lesson plan to teach both the skills and rules.

If I were to teach children ages 8-10 how to play curling, I would take a similar approach to how they taught us when we learned, but change a few things because they are younger. Because they are younger, they are probably not going to be as strong as us, and they may have less knowledge of the game or similar games (we were familiar with bowls and could transfer some skills). First, I would have them practice the motions required for the sport where they are not distracted by other factors of the game. I would have them practice the sweeping while just standing, making sure they learn the proper technique. Then, I would have them sweep while moving, and to make it more interesting to the kids, I would make it a competition. After this, I would add the rock and have them sweep while the rock is moving.

Next, I would teach them how to deliver the stone by having them slide them to a partner at close range. I would have them practice the turn of the rock and their hand positioning, and then have them go further and further apart and practice the weight, turn, and line, and eventually have them aim at the rings. Eventually we would build into a game, which adds a fun competitive aspect, practice on the technical side, and also practice on the tactical and strategic side. I would talk them through what the next move would be, and make sure they understand by giving them some freedom in deciding what to do next.

1. Scotland doesn’t like England. Take 3 sports and discuss how this ideology manifests itself in sport.

 We heard on multiple occasions in Scotland (not so much England) that there is some historical tension between the two countries. Although there are historical reasons for the rivalry, they are also embedded in their sports. In Rugby, they have the Six Nations Championship, where England and Scotland are just two of the countries that participate in the tournament. England and Scotland have their own rivalry as well, as they play for the Calcutta Cup during the Six Nations, as we learned at Murrayfield Stadium. They also remarked that Rugby is an ugly game played by gentlemen. The sport looks brutal to play, but at the end of the game, they shake hands, and are gentlemen. Even though it is a game played by gentlemen, and the rivalry is particular to the sport, the geographical proximity and historical background is also in the roots of the rivalry, as Scotland is very prideful to be their own country, not under power of England in a sporting sense, and like to assert this through sport when they can.

 Football, however, is thought to be a beautiful game played by ugly men. While the game itself is *the* beautiful game, the character of the players is at a much lower standard than that of Rugby players. While England is historically more dominant in the sport, and has especially in recent years been dominant in the rivalry, the rivalry is still rooted in Scottish pride. Since they are the underdog, it is more favorable when they win, and a little bit of an embarrassment for England if they lose. Again, this traced back to England’s dominance of Scotland, and Scotland’s thirst to beat England on the field.

 Lastly, Cricket is also an upper class sport, and is seen as a gentlemen’s sport. This was evident in many of the features of Lords in London. Scotland, along with Wales, was part of the English National team, and only separated into the Scottish Cricket team in the 90s. This Also creates a rivalry because not only do they feel they have independence as a nation, but also as a cricket team.

1. Discuss 3 “must keeps” from this experience and 3 “gotta go”/gotta do differently

 I really enjoyed the activities that we did on the trip, but if I had to choose three “must keep” activities, one would be track cycling. Although it could be challenging to get the hang of, once you got going it was so much fun, and it felt amazing when you conquered the fear of going on the top of the track. We conquered our fears just like professional athletes do, and it was also amazing that we got to use the same track that they used in the olympics. Another activity that I really enjoyed was cricket. I had a lot of fun learning about the game because I have heard of the game, but it is not as big of a part of the culture in America as it is in England. Lastly, (since I am only supposed to choose 3) I really liked the highland games. The whole class was involved, and we got pretty competitive. I loved the friendly competition, all the events we did, and I also liked the background information behind the games.

 While I did enjoy this, there are a few minor things that I think you should consider changing for the next trip. First, I think that we thought that we would need nicer attire for London, but the main thing was just to stay warm. While the goal was to not look like tourists, I think that anywhere we went, we were covered in enough layers (and so was everyone else), so you couldn’t really tell. Second, while I loved all of the activities, I wish I had known to plan better for food. Many times, we were on the go, and I either had to pack a snack (although, sometimes I forgot), and I also felt like we had to rush for lunch or dinner. Lastly, it took me a few days to really get close to all of my classmates on the trip, I thought that if I had known them beforehand, I would have been closer with them on the first few days of the trip. I think that this is partially on us as a whole, because we could have taken initiative and spoke with each other beforehand, but sometimes it can be awkward. I feel that if there was a day where we all got to know each other before the trip, this would have helped.