



Preparation

You may like to select some passages from the following list to put alongside a display on a sports theme as well as the big questions that this topic prompts, such as:

- Do you have to win, to be a success? Why play if you can't win?
- How can sport bring people together to compete in peace?
- When does healthy competition go sour?
- What's the point of having national flags and teams?
- What is a positive mental attitude, and where can I find it?
- Is life just a race, with winners and losers?
- What relation does sport have to real life?
- What helps people to work as part of a team?
- Should winning a trophy be the highlight of someone's life?
- What will it cost if I want to succeed, and will it be worth the effort?
- How is life like a race?
- What's the most important thing for me about the race or journey of life?
- Who comes first in life?

Development

Here are the Bible passages:

As the saying goes, 'Exercise is good for your body, but religion helps you in every way. It promises life now and forever.' These words are worthwhile and should not be forgotten.¹ Timothy 4:8 - 9, CEV

No one wins an athletic contest without obeying the rules.² Timothy 2:5, CEV

The LORD gives strength to those who are weary. Even young people get tired, then stumble and fall. But those who trust the LORD will find new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring upward on wings; they will walk and run without getting tired. Isaiah 40:29 - 31, CEV

Jesus then said, 'So it is. Everyone who is now first will be last, and everyone who is last will be first.' Matthew 20:16, CEV

You know that many runners enter a race, and only one of them wins the prize. So run to win! Athletes work hard to win a crown that cannot last, but we do it for a crown that will last forever. I don't run without a goal. And I don't box by beating my fists in the air.¹ Corinthians 9:24 - 26, CEV

Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us! So we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially the sin that just won't let go. And we must be determined to run the race that is ahead of us. We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete... Hebrews 12:1 - 2, CEV



Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see. Hebrews 11:1, CEV

Here's something else I've seen on this earth. Races aren't always won by those who run fast. Battles aren't always won by those who are strong. Wise people don't always have plenty of food. Clever people aren't always wealthy. Those who have learned a lot aren't always favoured. God controls the timing of every event. He also controls how things turn out. Ecclesiastes 9:11, NIRV

Who has made that happen? Who has carried it out? Who has created all of the people who have ever lived? I, the Lord, have done it. I was with the first of them. And I will be with the last of them. Isaiah 41:4, NIRV

When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead person. But he put his right hand on me and said: Don't be afraid! I am the first, the last... **Revelation 1:17, CEV**