

Odd Sentence Out (U.S. Sports Mascots)

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Instructions: Read the sentences about U.S. sports mascots. Choose the **odd sentence** (*the one that is different*) and say why or how it is different.

Example answer: “Number ____ is different because...”

Set 1

1. Dolphins can swim.
2. Sharks can swim.
3. Hawks can swim.
4. Penguins can swim.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 2

1. Jazz is strong.
2. Bulls are strong.
3. Bears are strong.
4. Lions are strong.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 3

1. Eagles can fly.
2. Ravens can fly.
3. Cardinals can fly.
4. Krakens can fly.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 4

1. Cowboys are people.
2. Timberwolves are people.
3. Knights are people.
4. Guardians are people.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 5

1. Tigers are quiet.
2. Thunder is loud.
3. Lightning is bright.
4. Avalanche is powerful.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 6

1. Blue Jays live in trees.
2. Diamondbacks live on land.
3. Rangers live in the ocean.
4. Hurricanes live in the ocean.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 7

1. Spurs can help a rider.
2. Angels can drive a car.
3. Rockets can fly.
4. Devils can scare people.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

Set 8

1. Heat is energy.
2. Magic is an idea.
3. Wild is nature.
4. Pirates are energy.

Your answer: _____

Why? _____

See Answers on page 48

U.S. Sports & Team Mascots

Sports are an important part of life in the United States and are a source of national pride. Many people watch or play games like football, baseball, basketball, and hockey. Professional teams compete in major leagues such as the National Football League (NFL), Major League Baseball (MLB), National Basketball Association (NBA), and National Hockey League (NHL). These teams are often connected to specific cities, and fans support their local teams with strong pride, enthusiasm, and a spirit of excellence that is central to American sports culture.

An important part of American sports culture is the team **mascot**. A mascot is a symbol for a team, such as an animal, a person, or a natural force, and it represents qualities like strength, speed, energy, and determination. At games, mascots often appear as costumed characters who entertain fans, lead cheers, and create a fun atmosphere. Mascots help build team identity and make sports events more exciting and memorable, especially for younger fans.

“Odd Sentence Out” & ELT

Activities like “Odd Sentence Out” support communicative, student-centered language practice by encouraging learners to read for meaning, compare information, and identify differences within a clear and structured task. Because each set contains a small number of simple sentences, learners can focus on key language features such as vocabulary, verb forms, and factual meaning without becoming overwhelmed.

When working in pairs or small groups, students discuss their choices, explain their reasoning, and listen to alternative ideas. This interaction promotes negotiation of meaning and helps learners develop confidence in expressing opinions using accessible language (e.g., “Number 3 is different because...”). The activity works as a warm-up, a review task, or a short fluency activity across proficiency levels when sentence complexity is controlled.

After completing the activity, teachers can lead a brief whole-class check to confirm answers and highlight useful language. This stage provides an opportunity to clarify vocabulary, correct misunderstandings, and draw attention to patterns (such as ability, category, or factual accuracy). To extend learning, teachers may ask students to correct the “odd” sentence, create their own sets, or adapt sentences to reflect their own experiences. In this way, “Odd Sentence Out” moves beyond simple identification to support explanation, interaction, and meaningful language use.

Answer Key:

Set 1 Your answer: Hawks 1. Dolphins can swim. 2. Sharks can swim. 3. Hawks can swim. 4. Penguins can swim. Why? Hawks cannot swim. The others can swim.	Set 3 Your answer: Krakens 1. Eagles can fly. 2. Ravens can fly. 3. Cardinals can fly. 4. Krakens can fly. Why? Krakens cannot fly. The others are birds and can fly.
Set 2 Your answer: Jazz 1. Jazz is strong. 2. Bulls are strong. 3. Bears are strong. 4. Lions are strong. Why? Jazz is not an animal. The others are animals.	Set 5 Your answer: Tigers 1. Tigers are quiet. 2. Thunder is loud. 3. Lightning is bright. 4. Avalanche is powerful. Why? Tigers are animals. The others are natural events. <i>(Alternative acceptable answer: "Tigers are not quiet." [Focus on meaning vs. category.])</i>
Set 4 Your answer: Timberwolves 1. Cowboys are people. 2. Timberwolves are people. 3. Knights are people. 4. Guardians are people. Why? Timberwolves are animals. The others are people.	Set 6 Your answer: Rangers 1. Blue Jays live in trees. 2. Diamondbacks live on land. 3. Rangers live in the ocean. 4. Hurricanes live in the ocean. Why? Rangers are people. The others are animals or natural things. <i>(Alternative acceptable answer: "Hurricanes do not live anywhere." [abstract concept])</i>
Set 8 Your answer: Pirates 1. Heat is energy. 2. Magic is an idea. 3. Wild is nature. 4. Pirates are energy. Why? Pirates are people. The others are ideas or natural things.	Set 7 Your answer: Angels 1. Spurs can help a rider. 2. Angels can drive a car. 3. Rockets can fly. 4. Devils can scare people. Why? Angels cannot drive a car. The others describe possible or believable actions. <i>(Alternative acceptable answer: Students may question "Devils." [Allow discussion.])</i>

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