

# Hockey

A Reading A-Z Level R Leveled Book  
Word Count: 1,019

LEVELED BOOK • R

## Connections

### Writing

What do you think is the most difficult aspect of playing hockey and why? Write a paragraph including information from the book to support your answer.

### Math

Research to find the Stanley Cup winners from the beginning of the competition to today. Work with a partner to collect and organize the data in a graph to show which teams have won the most Stanley Cups.

# Hockey

Reading A-Z

Visit [www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)  
for thousands of books and materials.

Written by Louanne Silver

[www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)



# Hockey



Written by Louanne Silver

[www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)

## Focus Question

What is hockey, and what makes it a unique sport?

## Words to Know

crease	penalties
dangerous	puck
defense	referee
neutral	zones
offense	

Front cover, back cover: The Boston Bruins play the Detroit Red Wings.

Title page: A Los Angeles Kings goalie keeps his eyes on the puck during the Stanley Cup playoffs in 2014.

Page 3: Children play hockey at a community rink.

### Photo Credits:

Front cover, back cover: © Jerry Coli/Dreamstime.com; title page: © Chris Williams/Icon Sportswire/AP Images; page 3: © Radius Images/Alamy Stock Photo; page 4: © AP Images; page 5: © Lucy Nicholson/Reuters/Landov; page 7: © Bygone Collection/Alamy Stock Photo; page 8: © Elvira Gomolach/123RF; page 9: © Shingo Ito/AFLO/Nippon News/Corbis; page 10: © Luca Santilli/Dreamstime.com; page 11: © Rainer Lesniewski/123RF; page 12: © Laszlo Szirtesi/123RF; page 13: © Photodisc/Photodisc/Thinkstock; page 14 (left): © Bettmann/Corbis; page 14 (right): © Christopher Morris/Corbis; page 15: © Tim Clayton/30153460A/Corbis

Hockey  
Spectacular Sports  
Level R Leveled Book  
© Learning A-Z  
Written by Louanne Silver

All rights reserved.

[www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)

## Correlation

### LEVEL R

Fountas & Pinnell	N
Reading Recovery	30
DRA	30





## Table of Contents

Miracle on Ice .....	4
Playing to Win .....	5
Hockey Around the Globe .....	6
The Dawn of Hockey .....	7
Playing the Game .....	9
Hockey Greats .....	14
Getting Involved .....	15
Glossary .....	16



Team USA is overjoyed after unexpectedly beating the Soviet team in the 1980 Winter Olympics.

## Miracle on Ice

The date is February 22, 1980. The location is Lake Placid, New York, at the Winter Olympic Games. The U.S. national hockey team faces the Soviet Union national team, which has won gold in six of the last seven Olympic Games. Everyone thinks the Soviet team will win. The U.S. team is ahead 4-3 with only ten minutes left in the game. As television newsman Al Michaels counts down the last seconds on the clock, he says, “Do you believe in miracles? YES!” Team USA beats the Soviets and then beats Finland to win Olympic gold.

The energy of these types of exciting wins, the speed of the game, and the talent of its players are what make hockey a thrilling global sport.

## Playing to Win

The National Hockey League (NHL) began in 1917 with five Canadian teams. It now has thirty teams, with about one-fourth based in Canada. Hockey is the sixth most popular team sport in North America. Teams in the NHL compete for a chance to win the highest award in men's hockey—the Stanley Cup.

Women have their own leagues. Since 2007, Canada has had the Canadian Women's Hockey League. The United States formed the National Women's Hockey League in 2015.



The Los Angeles Kings with the Stanley Cup after defeating the New York Rangers in 2014.

## Where Hockey Is Played



Countries in both hot and cold parts of the world play hockey.

## Hockey Around the Globe

Hockey is played in over seventy countries. As of 2013, there were over a million and a half hockey players around the world. Canada and the United States have by far the most hockey players.

Hockey is usually played indoors so the ice can stay frozen all year long. However, in cold parts of the world, it can also be played outdoors on frozen ponds and lakes.

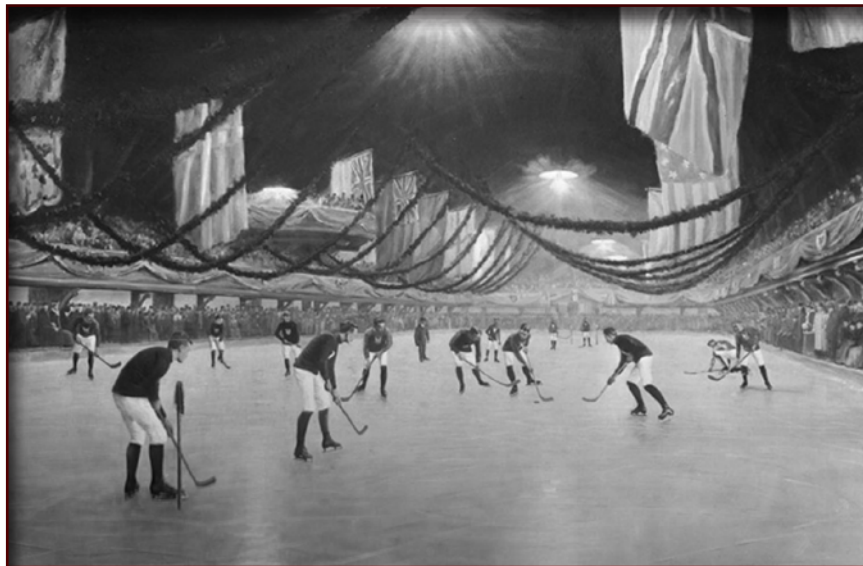
Men's hockey has been part of the Olympic Winter Games since 1924. Women's hockey was added in 1998.



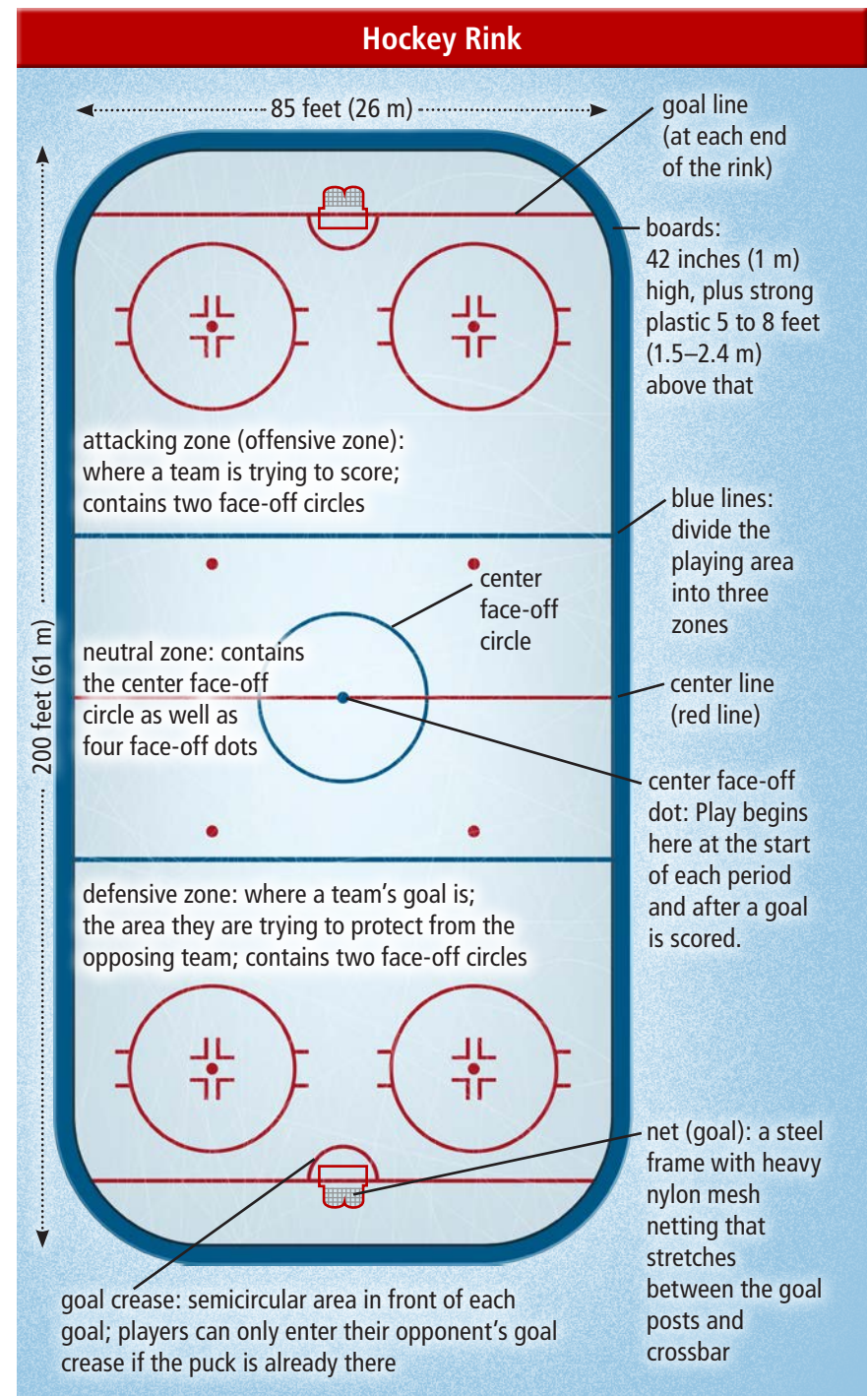
## The Dawn of Hockey

Modern hockey is played on ice with a hard rubber **puck**, but the game didn't start out that way. Long ago, the sport was played with a ball, which was **dangerous** because the ball was hard to control on ice.

The first hockey rules were created in eastern Canada. On March 3, 1875, the first hockey game with a puck was played in the city of Montreal. Hockey soon became popular across Canada. The game later spread south into the United States.



Early hockey games using a puck were played at Victoria Skating Rink in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.



## Playing the Game

Hockey is a fast and exciting team sport played on a smooth ice rink with a rubber puck and a long, thin stick. Players use their sticks to stickhandle (control), pass, and shoot the puck. Imagine doing that while skating at 20 miles per hour (32 kmph) or more! Players score goals by getting the puck into the other team's net. The team with more goals at the end of the game wins.

Each team is always trying to gain control of the puck so they can score goals. The team that has the puck is on **offense**, and the other team is on **defense**.



Strong stickhandling skills are an important part of playing hockey well.



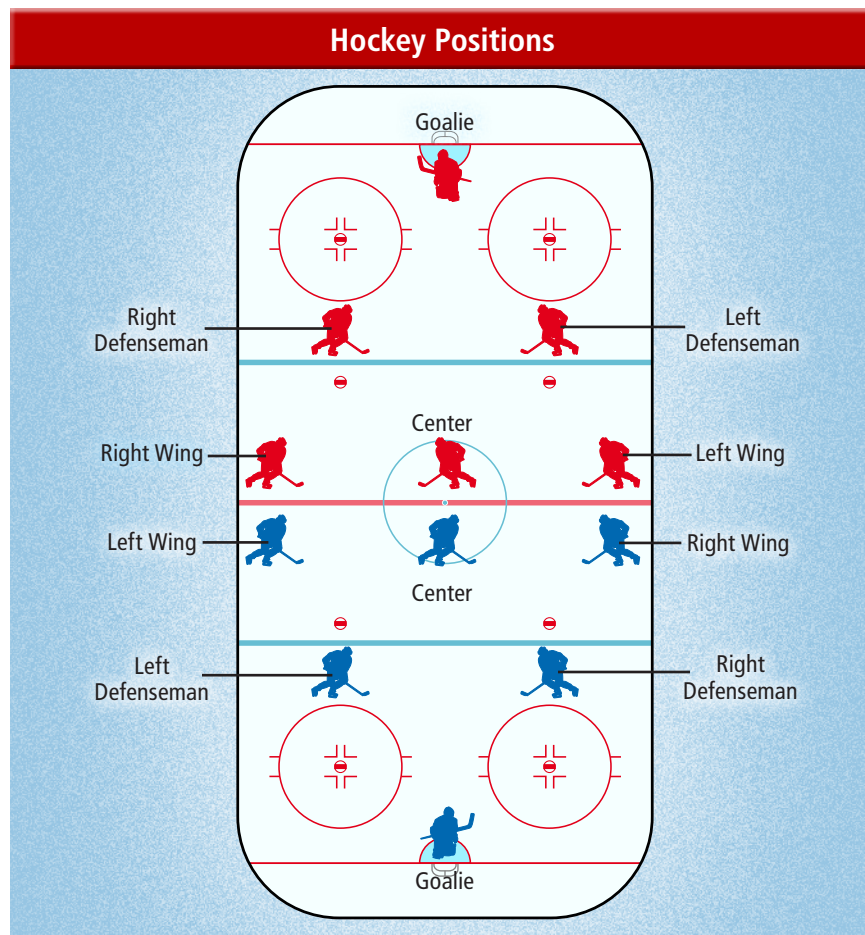
Goalies wear special leg pads and gloves. They wear a blocker on the hand that holds the stick and a catching glove for catching fast-moving pucks. Pucks can travel more than 100 miles per hour (161 kmph)!

Two blue lines on the ice divide the playing area into three **zones**. The middle section is the **neutral** zone. There are two defending zones, one for each team, at opposite ends of the rink. An offensive player cannot enter the other team's defending zone unless the puck has crossed the blue line.

A hockey team usually has six players on the ice at a time. The goalie guards the net and is the main player in charge of keeping the other team from scoring. The goalie is the only player allowed to use his or her hands or other body parts to stop the puck in the **crease**.



The other five players move all over the ice. The center and two wings mainly try to score, and the two defensive players mainly try to keep the other team from scoring. All five players try to gain control of the puck if the other team has it. They switch back and forth between offense and defense, depending on which team has the puck.



A hockey game has three periods, each one twenty minutes long. (Youth hockey has shorter periods.) If the score is tied at the end of the third period, one or more overtime periods are added. The first team that scores during overtime is the winner.

Each period starts with a face-off inside the center circle. The **referee**, along with one player from each team, stands inside the circle. The referee drops the puck, and the two players battle for control of it. Face-offs also happen at other times during the game, including after goals are scored or **penalties** are given. Those face-offs can happen at any of the nine face-off dots on the ice.

Hockey can be a rough sport, and penalties are given for bad behavior, including fighting or jabbing a player with a stick. Penalties are also given for elbowing, kneeing, and stopping another player with a stick or body part.

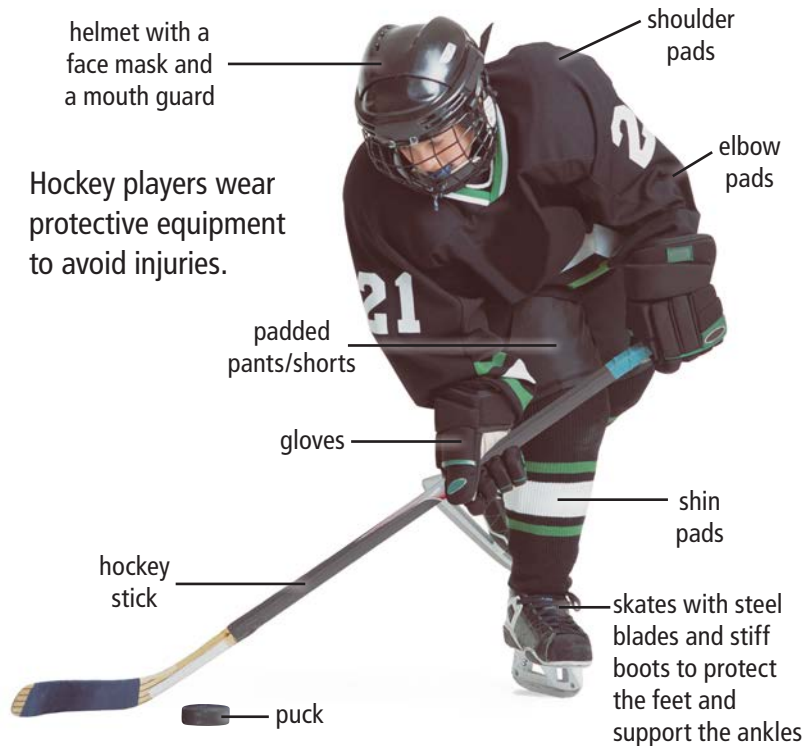
When a penalty is called, the player must leave the ice and sit in the penalty box. The team plays with fewer players until a certain amount of time has passed.



Wayne  
Gretzky

Hayley  
Wickenheiser

### Clothing and Equipment



### Hockey Greats

Wayne Gretzky is perhaps the best hockey player of all time. His amazing hockey talents earned him the nickname “The Great One.” He started playing in 1979 and led the Edmonton Oilers to Stanley Cup wins in 1984, 1985, 1987, and 1988. He set many records during his hockey career.

Hayley Wickenheiser joined Canada’s National Women’s Team in 1994, when she was fifteen. She has led the team to seven medals at the Women’s World Hockey matches and five Olympic medals. She has also helped women’s hockey become more popular.



## Getting Involved

Would you like to play hockey? Find out if your city or town has a youth hockey league. It's great if you already have some hockey skills, but if you've never played before, that's fine, too. Most leagues have programs for all ages and skill levels. Once you're ready, you can join a team. A coach will help you learn the rules, and you'll build skills and make friends along the way.

Hockey is an action-packed sport that involves speed, skill, quick thinking, and teamwork. What's the best way to describe hockey in only two words? Nonstop fun!



A coach instructs his junior hockey team during a match in Connecticut.

## Glossary

<b>crease</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	a marked area immediately in front of or surrounding the goal in certain sports, such as hockey or lacrosse (p. 10)
<b>dangerous</b> ( <i>adj.</i> )	able or likely to cause harm (p. 7)
<b>defense</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	the action of attempting to keep an opposing team from scoring; players who attempt to keep an opposing team from scoring (p. 9)
<b>neutral</b> ( <i>adj.</i> )	not supporting or connected with either side in a conflict or contest (p. 10)
<b>offense</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	the action of attempting to score against an opposing team; players who attempt to help their team score against an opposing team (p. 9)
<b>penalties</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	punishments for breaking rules (p. 12)
<b>puck</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	a hard rubber disk used in hockey (p. 7)
<b>referee</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	a judge of a game or match who makes sure the rules are followed (p. 12)
<b>zones</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	areas with special purposes or sets of rules (p. 10)