



Combat Hopak

- 1** What do you know about martial arts? Do you practise or would you like to practise a martial art? Why/Why not? Tell the class.

Reading

- 2** a) What do you know about combat hopak? What would you like to know? Write three questions. Read to see if your questions are answered.

b) Read the text again. Five sentences are missing. Match the sentences (A-F) to the gaps (1-5). There is one extra sentence.

- A Combat hopak has seven official levels of difficulty.
- B It's not just a man's sport, either.
- C He trains in combat hopak seven days a week.
- D He saw that the hopak dance featured many fighting techniques.
- E This is a kind of dance you do on your own to show your combat hopak skills.
- F However, ever since the 1980s, there is another kind of hopak: combat hopak.

CHECK THESE WORDS

martial art, brainchild, master, similarity, acrobatic, knock off, knock out, nationwide, version, train, technique, skill

When people hear the word 'hopak' they may think of Ukrainian men in loose-fitting red or blue trousers dancing and kicking their legs to the side. Hopak is a traditional Ukrainian Cossack dance which goes back centuries.

1 This is also known as boyovy hopak or fighting hopak, and it is a modern type of martial art in Ukraine.

Combat hopak is the brainchild of Volodymyr Pylat, a former karate master. **2** He found, for example, that there were similarities between the famous hopak acrobatic jumps and the movements Cossack fighters made when they had to knock enemies off their horses or knock out two enemies at the same time. "I created combat hopak so that the Ukrainians have their own martial art; like the Koreans have tae kwon do and the Chinese have kung fu," Pylat said.



In 1996, the first nationwide competition of combat hopak was held in Ukraine, and in 1997, it became a Ukrainian national sport. **3** To get through the first one, you have to work hard for two years and win 12 fights in Ukrainian competitions. You also have to do an 'odnotan'.

4 Combat hopak is very popular in Ukraine and there are almost 10,000 athletes all over the country. There are also combat hopak clubs in Canada, the USA and other countries. **5** It is very popular with children and there is even a special version of hopak for women, called 'asgar'.

Combat hopak is an amazing way to train your body, but also to learn some things about the history and culture of Ukraine.



Vocabulary

3 Replace the words in bold with: *version, skills, brainchild, train and techniques.*

- 1 Some moves seen in the hopak dance are a lot like **ways** used in fighting.
- 2 Combat hopak, which is Volodymyr Pylat's **original idea**, is extremely popular in Ukraine.
- 3 Asgar is a **form** of combat hopak for women.
- 4 Combat hopak is an excellent way to **exercise** your body and become strong.
- 5 Combat hopak requires athletes to show their **abilities** in dancing as well as fighting.

Speaking & Writing

4 **THINK!** Work in pairs. Write a quiz based on the text with ten true/false questions. Exchange your quiz with another pair and answer each other's questions. Correct the false statements.

- 1 *Hopak is a modern Ukrainian fighting style. False – Hopak is a traditional Ukrainian Cossack dance.*

5 **ICT** Look up information on the Internet on a martial art that, like combat hopak, combines dance and fighting moves (e.g. the Brazilian Capoeira, the Korean Taekkyeon or the Cuban Juego de Mani). Write a short article about this martial art, comparing and contrasting it to combat hopak.