

## A Referee Makes History

Have you got a favourite sport – football, netball, rugby or something else? Every game needs someone to keep it fair. In rugby league (a fast, high-energy team sport where players run, pass and try to score points) that person is called a referee. Now, Tara Jones has made history by becoming the first female to referee a men’s rugby Super League match! The 29-year-old, from Warrington, England, has been involved in rugby for many years. Tara began refereeing at the age of 12 after she could no longer play in a boys’ team. She joined a girls’ team, but at the time there were fewer opportunities for girls to play, so Tara took on a different



**Pictured:** Tara Jones  
**Source:** Tara Jones, Facebook

role in the sport – becoming a referee. Since then, women’s rugby has grown, with more teams and more opportunities. Tara went on to play at a high level as an adult, before becoming a top referee. She said, ‘I just do what I do, and I hope I can inspire young girls.’ Tara has also just received an MBE from Prince William at Windsor Castle, which is a special award for her work in rugby league. **Would you like to inspire others through sport?**

## Rain, rain... stay or go?

In parts of Northern Europe, April is known for its showers. One minute it’s raining, the next the sun is shining! But what if a weather app on a phone makes it look wetter than it really is? Some popular places to visit, including Chester Zoo, say this is happening. They say a simple rain cloud symbol on a phone can make it seem like the whole day will be rainy, even if it is only a short early morning shower. This can sometimes lead to families changing their plans and staying at home. For places like zoos, theme parks and gardens, this can make a



**Pictured:** A warm, sunny day on a weather app.  
**Source:** Canva.

big difference. Some places say they can lose lots of visitors, even on days when the weather turns out to be bright and dry. Many people check the weather before going out, so these symbols can have a big impact. The Met Office says it is working on ways to make forecasts clearer. So next time a rain cloud appears, it might not tell the whole story – the day could still turn out sunny! **Would you still go out if rain was forecast?**

### What should represent a country?



I think animals and nature are really important!

**Bethan**

## Beautiful Blossoms

Many people have been sharing their photos of Japan's famous cherry blossoms in full bloom. Cherry blossom plays a large role in Japanese culture, symbolising renewal and hope and showing a visual sign that spring has truly arrived. The blossoms (called *sakura*) appear in late March and April, and have inspired art, poetry, and festivals for many years! During the spring season, families and friends get together in parks and gardens to have picnics or parties while appreciating the flowering trees.



**Pictured:** A child with cherry blossom.  
**Source:** Canva



**Pictured:** Kawazu cherry trees in bloom.  
**Source:** The Gov't of Japan @JapanGov on X.

This custom is called *hanami*, which translates to cherry blossom viewing, has been observed for centuries. There are many varieties of cherry tree, and they produce delicate blossoms of pinks, whites, and even yellows. Blossom is the name for the flowers produced by stone fruit trees, like plums, cherries, apples, and hawthorns. The blossoms are colourful and sweet-smelling flowers, which attract insects that pollinate the trees and help them reproduce.

**Do you enjoy seeing blossom on the trees?**

**What other signs of spring have you seen?**

## Bringing the Zoo to You!

A 24-hour, 7-days a week animal streaming service is now reaching an estimated 25 million viewers every year! The San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Wildlife Explorers Channel allows viewers all over the world to experience the sights and sounds of the zoo through their screen. The channel is streaming all the time, showing zoo animals as well as educational programmes. The initiative began so that children who could not leave Rady Children's Hospital didn't miss out on the zoo experience. 'Many of our patients have weakened immune systems, so they're unable to go to places like the zoo and the channel has brought the zoo to them,' said Margaret Fitzgerald, from Rady Children's Hospital. 'It has had a huge impact, on our patients. I do recall one time there



**Pictured:** A Panda at San Diego Zoo.  
**Source:** San Diego Zoo on Facebook.

was a little girl who was about 3 and her mum had to go to work, and she was sad because her mom had to go, but then we turned on the zoo channel and she just lit up!

The virtual alternative has expanded to more than 400 hospitals and facilities across 48 states and 12 countries.

**Would you like to watch this channel?**

### What should represent a country?



I think that we should have wildlife because it might help people think about nature more.  
**Willow**

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