Testing for truth

Narrow down the truth-conditions of the following expressions by creating hypotheses and testing them with stimuli. Be sure to employ positive and negative evidence to test your hypotheses. Do be careful of ambiguities.

1. a sport

Hypothesis: A sport is a competition involving an athletic event

Positive evidence: find a context where something is a competition and involves an athletic event, and it’s true to say it’s a sport.

Context: Tom and Sara played in a soccer game yesterday. They played against their neighbors, running and kicking the ball all over the yard.

Target: Soccer is a sport.
Expected judgment: TRUE
Observed judgment: TRUE

Negative evidence 1: find a context where something is not a competition but involves an athletic event, and it’s false to say it’s a sport.

Context: Tom and Sara ran to their grandma’s house. They ran as fast as their little legs could carry them, but hoped to arrive at the same time.

Target: Running to grandma’s house is a sport.
Expected judgment: FALSE
Observed judgment: FALSE

Negative evidence 2: find a context where something is a competition but does not involve an athletic event, and it’s false to say it’s a sport.

Context: Tom and Sara played in a chess tournament yesterday. They played against their neighbors, winning most of their matches.

Target: Chess is a sport.
Expected judgment: FALSE
Observed judgment: FALSE

The reason we have two sets of negative evidence is because our hypothesis has two conditions: It is a competition, and it involves an athletic event. If we are right, they both have to be true for sport to be true, and either one could be false for sport to be false. (Technically we should also test to see what happens if both conditions are false.)

2. The Jayhawks are the champions.

3. college

4. at

5. over