

Oxford vs Cambridge

Read the text.

There is fierce academic rivalry between Oxford and Cambridge. The *Oxbridge** rivalry is most frequently enacted on the sports field with two famous competitions: the **Varsity Rugby match** and the **Boat Race** which has become a national institution and is watched by millions on television.

The **Varsity Rugby match** has been held annually since 1872, except during the two World Wars. It is played in December. The **Boat Race** is a titanic clash over 6.5 km on the River Thames and dates back to 1829. The event has been held annually since 1856, except during the 2 World Wars. So far, Oxford has won the race 77 times, and Cambridge 81 times. The race usually takes between 15 and 20 minutes to complete.

*A word made from the names of the two most prestigious British universities – *Oxford* and *Cambridge*.

Language focus

The name Oxford comes from the Old English Oxnaforda, which means ford used by oxen (guado per i buoi).

The name Stratford means ford on a Roman road. Ford is of Old English origin. It means guado; strat comes from Latin and means via strata (strada lastricata).

Cambridge comes from the Old English term Grontabricc which means bridge on the River Granta, a Celtic river name. The change from *Granta* to *Cam* is due to Norman influence.

These sentences contain some mistakes. Can you find them? Rewrite the sentences with the correct information.

- 1) Oxbridge is a word made from the names of the two most prestigious Irish universities – Oxford and Cambridge.
- 2) The Varsity Rugby match is more popular than the Boat Race
- 3) The Boat Race is a titanic clash over 6.5 km on the River Cam and dates back to 1829.
- 4) The Boat Race usually takes between 15 and 25 minutes to complete.
- 5) *The name Oxford comes from the Old English Oxnaforda, which means ford used by men.*
- 6) Cambridge comes from the Old English term Grontabricc which means bridge on the River Thames.
- 7) Granta is a Roman river name.