

## Football



### Introduction

Football is a game where players kick a ball into a goal. It can be played by both men and women, but at a professional level teams are not mixed. *Stafford Heginbotham* describes football as "the opera of the

people". There are a few versions of football, Rugby Football, Gaelic Football, Australian football, American football and the number 1 game in the world Associated Football. (Called Soccer in the US.)

### History

Ball games with our feet have been around for many thousands of years and almost certainly existed before people were able to write about them. The first set of rules was written in a Chinese military manual written and the rules to Kick Ball (蹴鞠) were standardized in the Han Dynasty.



Meanwhile in Europe there was plenty of evidence of football games in Greek and Roman times. In fact the games became so violent and troublesome that on 13 April 1314, Edward II banned the games. Despite such bans the game continued to be very popular throughout Europe and in the 1800's Cambridge University created a set of rules that form the basis of the modern game. On Parker's Piece Cambridge there is a Plaque, saying: "...students established a common set of simple football rules emphasising skill above force..."

Cambridge is now considered "the home of football" and from these rules an international association was formed in Paris on May 21, 1904 and they called it *Fédération Internationale de Football* (FIFA)

The greatest moment in Football for the English was in 1966 when they won the world cup and it is still remembered today with the famous quote from Kenneth Wolstenholme "...they think it's all over. It is now!"

### The Modern Rules

There are seventeen rules for the modern game

- 1) The Field of Play
- 2) The Ball
- 3) The Number of Players
- 4) The Players' Equipment
- 5) The Referee
- 6) The Assistant Referees
- 7) The Duration of the Match
- 8) The Start and Restart of Play
- 9) The Ball In and Out of Play
- 10) The Method of Scoring
- 11) Offside
- 12) Fouls and Misconduct
- 13) Free Kicks
- 14) The Penalty Kick
- 15) The Throw-In
- 16) The Goal Kick
- 17) The Corner Kick

Most people agree the rules are easy to understand except for the Offside rule, which is designed to stop players waiting near their opponent's goal.

## Scanning Challenge

You have 30 seconds to answer the following question:

Who banned Football?

## Reading Comprehension

*Mark True, False or Not Given*

1. Soccer is the same game as Associated Football T / F / NG
2. Football was played before people could write T / F / NG
3. Soccer is popular in the United States T / F / NG
4. The first of rules was written by the Romans T / F / NG
5. Football was unpopular during the Middle Ages T / F / NG
6. England won the world cup in 1966 T / F / NG

## Discuss

1. Why do you think football is the most popular game in the world?
2. Do you believe that football should only be played by men? Why / Why not?
3. Why do you think people support Football Teams?

## Further Reading

BBC Football - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/football/>

Wikipedia - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Football\\_\(soccer\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Football_(soccer))

FIFA - <http://www.fifa.com/>

Rules Of Football - <http://www.soccer-fans-info.com/soccer-rules.html>

## Teacher's Notes

Skimming Question: Edward II

1. Soccer is the same game as Associated Football  
True, also called footy and football in British English
2. Football was played before people could write  
True ...almost certainly existed before people were able to write...
3. Soccer is popular in the United States  
Not Given – This is not in the text
4. The first of rules was written by the Romans T / F / NG  
F – The first rules were written by the Chinese, but there was evidence that the game existed in Roman times.
5. Football was unpopular during the Middle Ages T / F / NG  
F - very popular (Note the use of the word Middle Ages, not the same word as in the text. This may need to be explained to weaker students.)
6. England won the world cup in 1966 T / F / NG  
T – Considered essential knowledge for student visiting England.

### English Used in South East Asia

Please note that the English Premiere League is often called EPL in South East Asia. In England it is simply referred to as the Premiership.

### Fantasy Football League

A fantasy Football league maybe a very useful way to encourage students to talk more in English. A good place to set it up is: <http://fantasy.premierleague.com/index.html>

### Valuable Social Interaction

Learning about Football will help students to come together, because not only is it the most common sport in the world it is also a very common speaking topic one which is followed throughout most of the world.