

'SOCCER' TO ME!

Have a ball studying geography with a popular sport!



Throughout history, humans have played some version of a kicking game. The NGS map, *Soccer Unites the World*, contains graphs and facts about the history and the geography of the recent amazing spread of soccer, the number one sport in most countries of the world.

OBJECTIVES: The students will be able to:

- Locate areas of the world where soccer is the number one sport
- Compare data about demographics of participants in soccer
- Explain some generalizations about soccer and the recent spread of soccer

PROCEDURES:

1) Learn about the map:

- One side of the map, *the beautiful game*, contains information on the seven countries who have won the World Cup, diagrams and information on how the game is played, and biographies of World Cup Living Legends.
- The other side, *Soccer Unites the World*, uses graphs and color-coding to share data about where soccer is played and by how many. Students may need help in finding the keys (Middle of the top area – World and Olympic champions by continent and just to the right and slightly below the picture of Mia Hamm – Popularity and participation).

2) Use the data on this side of the map

- In groups, have students use the keys and the information to complete the worksheet.
- Each group should write and illustrate (graph, timeline, other graphic) a generalization about one of the following:
 - FIFA member countries in 2005 by continent
 - Female participation by continent
 - Total participation by continent
 - Order of continents joining FIFA
 - Effect of politics on international soccer

Use the information on the NGS *Soccer Unites the World* map to answer the following questions:

1. Name one country on each of 4 different continents where soccer is the number one sport and where more than 5% of the population participates.

North America: Mexico; South America: Ecuador, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay; Europe: Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain, Italy, England, Greece, Netherlands; Africa: Mali, Zambia, Eritrea

2. Which continent is home to the highest percentage of female soccer players? Why do you think this is the case?

North America; Equal opportunity laws opened soccer to women at the university level, giving both the opportunity and the incentive for girls to participate.

3. How many more countries belong to FIFA (the international soccer association) than the United Nations?

16; FIFA has 207 member countries, only 191 countries belong to the UN.

4. Why do many African soccer stars play for European teams?

Without strong domestic leagues to keep the players, many opt to play for European teams.

5. Which continent dominates world and Olympic soccer championships?

Europe

6. What are some political/historical events that affected international soccer?

WWI; WWII; depression; apartheid; breakup of Yugoslavia /U.S.S.R.; military aggression in Bosnia.

7. Why do you think soccer players' salaries worldwide are not as high as in other sports?

Possible answers: World salaries may not be as high as the compared American salaries; endorsement opportunities may not be available in other countries

- Ⓛ In which city in the U. S. was the largest crowd ever for a women's sport?
- Ⓛ Who is home to the new champion B-67?
- Ⓛ Where does blind soccer debut, in which players follow the sound of a bell and the ball?
- Ⓛ In what city in the U. S. did the youngest professional athlete in team sports sign a contract at age 14?
- Ⓛ In which city did a losing team blame the stadium's altitude for their poor performance?
- Ⓛ In which country does recent data show that basketball and soccer are equally popular?
- Ⓛ Where does an oil tycoon spend nearly half a billion dollars on soccer players over two years?
- Ⓛ In which city do monks form their own team to play for the city's fans?
- Ⓛ Where were soccer moms of high-profile players kidnapped and held for ransom?
- Ⓛ Where have "peace" teams been created to promote cooperation and youth soccer?
- Ⓛ Where did an international youth tournament set a new record for the amount of players participating?
- Ⓛ Where was the allowance of female spectators seen as a boost for women's rights?
- Ⓛ What two countries prefer other sports, especially cricket, to soccer?
- Ⓛ When was the first world cup played?
- Ⓛ What continent has the most world and Olympic champions at all levels?
- Ⓛ Why do so many players from Brazil and Argentina end up playing for Europe?
- Ⓛ Which country loses many of its players due to lack of strong domestic values?
- Ⓛ Where was the 2006 World Cup held?
- Ⓛ Which country will host the 2010 World Cup?
- Ⓛ In what year did Australia first participate in the World Cup?
- Ⓛ Which countries are three major soccer rivals in Asia?
- Ⓛ What two poor continents have major talent when it comes to soccer?

Economics of Soccer (Sample questions and activities)

- Ⓛ What team receives the majority of revenue from commercial?
- Ⓛ Where do soccer players salaries fall, compared to other professional sports?
- Ⓛ Why aren't their salaries the highest?
- Ⓛ Why does world cup attract more viewers than NFL?
- Ⓛ Considering that soccer has the most viewers and the richest teams, why do you think other athletes from other sports generally make more money?

Graphic Organizer:

Country	Event or Occurrence	Significance
USA	Woman's World cup draws most attendance for any woman's sporting event	More \$ and recognition for women and popularity soars
Norway		More international youth play game of soccer and come together
		More woman's rights regarding sporting events in general
Zimbabwe		