

Learning English podcasts ... from the
Hellenic American Union©

Level: Advanced

Lesson: 35

Title: "Football"

Summary:

Vanessa and Nick discuss about how fans express themselves through football.

In this episode of World Report Vanessa and Nick are in the middle of a live show in a radio studio. Listen to their conversation and answer the question that follows about the main idea.

Dialogue:

VANESSA:

Are you a football fan, lover or supporter? Well Nick has got some survey scores for you. Is it a red card, Nick?



NICK:

No, it's not a red card Vanessa. In fact it's not at all red for football fans around the world.

VANESSA:

Give us the low down Nick

NICK:

According to a World Cup survey, football gives supporters a way to express their innermost thoughts and feelings. In fact, it's thought to be providing them with an experience **akin to** prayer and meditation.



VANESSA: Divine inspiration through football? Now I've heard it all!

NICK: Well, almost. Football seems to have positive effects on people's **psychological well-being**.

VANESSA: Maybe I should take up watching football Nick! I could do with **a buzz!**



NICK: Well get this, Vanessa. It also gives people a ready made topic of conversation. They exchange opinions on team selection, strategies, and players' skills. What do you say?



VANESSA: Well, I'm ready to put on my soccer boots and jersey and run down onto the field and **tackle some of my issues**.

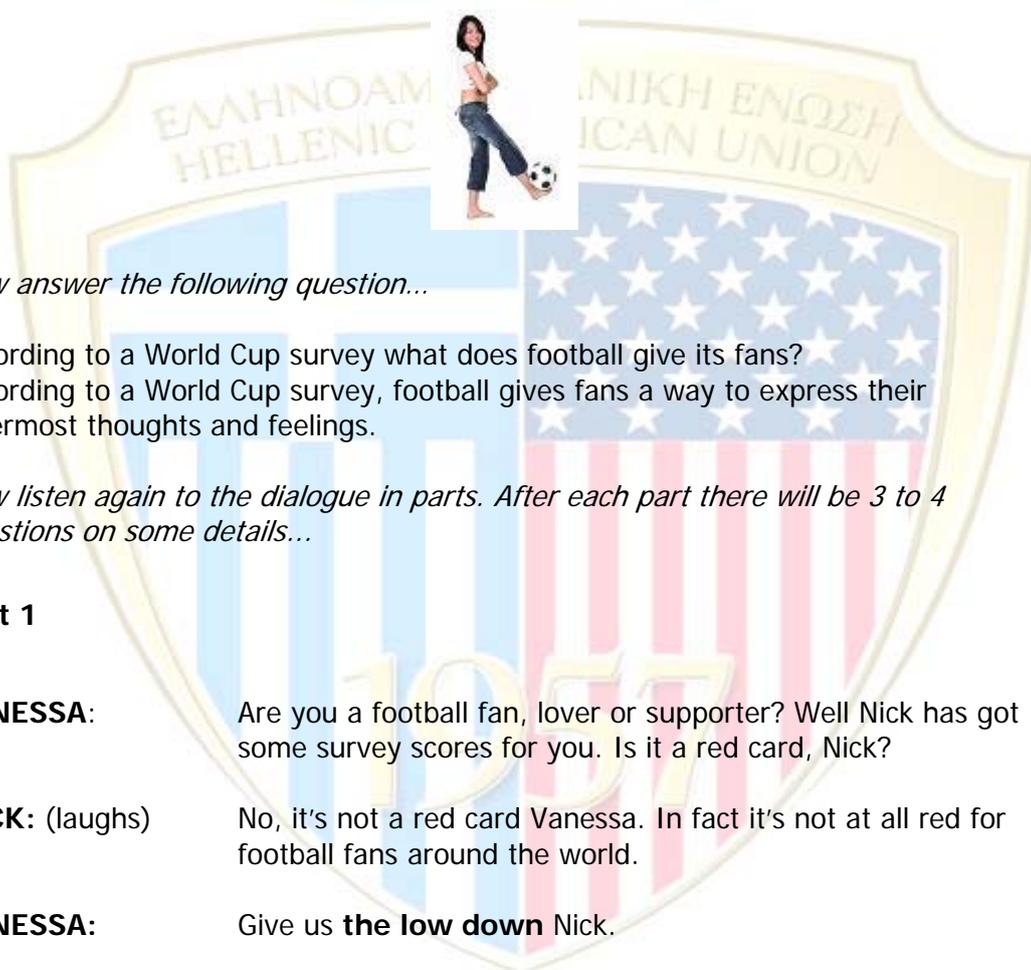


NICK: I'll make sure I'm not playing against you then. Sounds dangerous.



VANESSA: Thanks for the great soccer info Nick, it was a **real blast**.

NICK: Start kicking Vanessa. Until tomorrow. Bye!



Now answer the following question...

According to a World Cup survey what does football give its fans?
According to a World Cup survey, football gives fans a way to express their innermost thoughts and feelings.

Now listen again to the dialogue in parts. After each part there will be 3 to 4 questions on some details...

Part 1

VANESSA: Are you a football fan, lover or supporter? Well Nick has got some survey scores for you. Is it a red card, Nick?

NICK: (laughs) No, it's not a red card Vanessa. In fact it's not at all red for football fans around the world.

VANESSA: Give us **the low down** Nick.

NICK: According to a World Cup survey, football gives supporters a way to express their innermost thoughts and feelings. In fact, it's thought to be providing them with an experience **akin to** prayer and meditation.

VANESSA: Divine inspiration through football? Now I've heard it all!

NICK: Well, almost. Football seems to have positive effects on people's **psychological well-being**.

Now answer some questions...

1. Vanessa says "**Give us the low down** Nick". What does "give someone the low down" mean?

"Give someone the low down" means to provide them with information or tell them what happened.

2. Nick says "It is thought to be providing them with an experience **akin to** prayer and meditation". What does "akin to" mean?

"Akin to" is a formal word meaning similar to or like.

3. Nick says "Football seems to have positive effects on people's **psychological well-being**". What does "psychological well-being" mean?

"Psychological well-being" means positive mental health.

Now listen to the second part of the dialogue...

Part 2.

VANESSA: Maybe I should take up watching football Nick! I could with a **buzz!**

NICK: Well get this, Vanessa. It also gives people a ready made topic of conversation. They exchange opinions on team selection, strategy, and players' skills. What do you say?

VANESSA: Well, I'm ready to put on my soccer boots and jersey and run down onto the field and **tackle some of my issues.**

NICK: I'll make sure I'm not playing against you then. Sounds dangerous.

VANESSA: Thanks for the great soccer info Nick, it was a **real blast.**

NICK: Start kicking, Vanessa. Until tomorrow. Bye!

Now answer some questions...

1. Vanessa says "I could with a **buzz!**" What is "a buzz"?

"A buzz" is something that makes you feel happy or excited for a short time.

2. Vanessa says "I'm ready to put on my soccer boots and jersey and run down onto the field and **tackle some of my issues.**" What does "tackle an issue" mean?

"Tackle an issue" means to deal with a problem.

3. Vanessa says "It was **a real blast**". What does "a blast" mean?

"A blast" is an informal word for anything exciting you thoroughly enjoy doing.



GLOSSARY

A blast (N.): If an activity is **a blast** then you thoroughly enjoy doing it.

Akin to (adj.) If something is **akin to** another thing then the two things are similar or with similar qualities.

Divine (adj.) **Divine** means connected with a god, or like a god. **Divine intervention** means help from (a) God.

Innermost (adj.) **Innermost** means most secret and hidden, or nearest to the centre.

Issue (N.) **An issue** is an important topic for discussion or argument.

Jersey (N.) **A jersey** is a piece of woolen or cotton clothing with sleeves which is worn on the upper part of the body and which does not open at the front. It can also be a shirt which is worn by a member of a sports team.

Lowdown (N.) **The lowdown** is the most important facts and information about something.

Meditation (N.) **Meditation** means the action or practice of meditating - thinking deeply, usually in silence, especially for religious purposes or in order to relax.

Tackle (v): If you **tackle** some issues or a person then you deal with them.

Take up (an expression): **To take up** something meaning to start something e.g. a sport, a hobby.

Uplifting (adj.) If something is **uplifting** it lifts your spirits / makes you feel better in some moral or spiritual way.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Fill in the blanks in the sentences using words and expressions from the glossary.

1. For me it was a marvelously _____ performance.
2. They speak a language _____ to French.
3. England have fallen so far behind in the championship that their only hope of victory is _____.
4. This was the diary in which Gina recorded her _____ thoughts and secrets.
5. Let us spend a few moments in quiet _____.
6. I was going to _____ tennis but there aren't any courts in my neighborhood.
7. Our fashion editor gives you the _____ on winter coats for this season.
8. You should have come with us last night, we had a real _____!
9. I _____ him about his careless work and frequent absences.

Activity 2

A. Consider the following explanations:

Nick says 'It's **thought to** be providing them with an experience akin to prayer and meditation.' and 'Football **seems to** have positive effects on people's psychological well-being.' The phrases **thought to** and **seem to** can be used to express views and opinions that we may or may not necessarily agree with. The following words or phrases can also be used to express views and opinions.

- (be) regard(ed) as
- (be) consider(ed) (+ to be)
- according to
- in (one's) opinion
- it (be one's) opinion
- to my mind
- (I am) of the opinion that

B. Complete each of the fooling sentences in such a way that it means exactly the same as the sentence preceding it.

1. It is her opinion that football is a waste of time.

In _____

2. I am of the opinion that football violence is on the decrease.

To _____

3. It is my opinion that hooligans should not be allowed in football matches

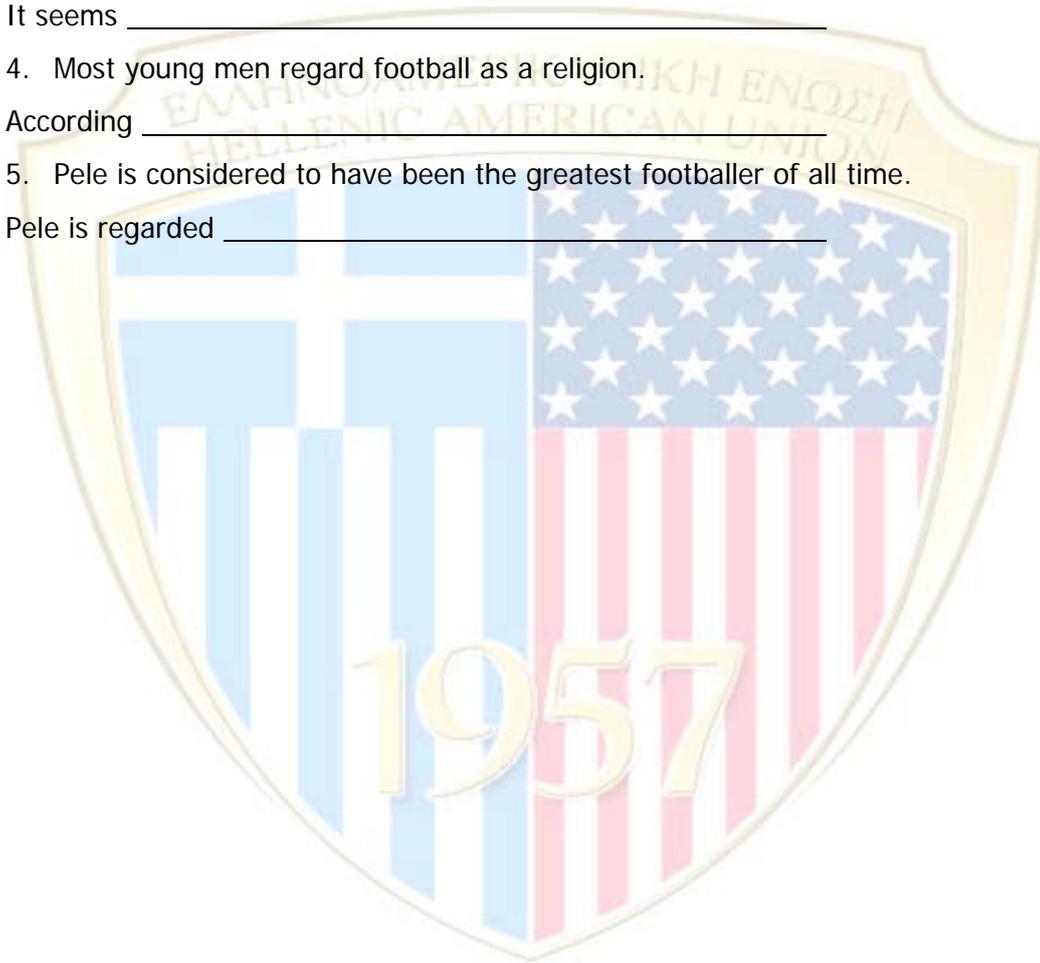
It seems _____

4. Most young men regard football as a religion.

According _____

5. Pele is considered to have been the greatest footballer of all time.

Pele is regarded _____



KEY TO ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

1. uplifting
2. akin
3. divine intervention
4. innermost
5. meditation
6. take up
7. the lowdown
8. blast
9. tackled

Activity 2B

1. In her opinion that football is a waste of time.
2. To my mind football violence is on the decrease.
3. It seems that hooligans should not be allowed in football matches
4. According to most young men, football is a religion.
5. Pele is regarded as the greatest footballer of all time.

