The Main Idea Strategy: Student Practice Lessons

Name

Date

Passage #22

**Soccer**

Every four years, people from many nations compete for the world championship of the world’s most popular sport. Most of the best players throughout the world are involved in this extravaganza. Fans of the teams will pack gigantic stadiums and enthusiastically cheer on their favorite athletes. What event do you suppose this is? Is it the World Series, Super Bowl, NBA Championship, or Stanley Cup? No, it is the *World Cup*, soccer’s premier, or most important and highest rated event.

Hundreds of millions people from around the world watch soccer. Many people are obsessed with it in European countries like England, France, and Italy, as well as in other countries including Brazil and Zimbabwe. While soccer is becoming more popular in the United States, it is still somewhat unpopular compared to the other sports. As far as viewers go, the Super Bowl, World Series, and all other major professional and collegiate championships have higher ratings than soccer in the United States.

In the past 30 years, though, these trends have changed. Many immigrants have come to the United States who love to play soccer. In addition, television has broadened the ability of people to watch soccer. Kids who have become bored with the traditional sports have discovered soccer, and more high school teams offer soccer. Then, the Olympics and World Cups in the 1990s featured star players from the United States making great plays and showings. This brought in even more viewers, and even more kids wanted to play soccer, so they could be like Mia Hamm and others.

Mention of “soccer” can bring widely varying opinions from many people. Soccer lovers talk about the tension, the tradition, and the passion that they have had since they were children.

There is an excitement of the back and forth, like a human chess match. Some people, though, say that soccer is boring; there’s just a lot of running around and not a lot of scoring. In the United States, there seems to be more people who feel soccer is boring. In many places across the globe, however, there is nothing that competes with what is often called “futbol.”

Soccer is undeniably a sport for the very fit. A full size soccer field is longer than an American football field, and players run back and forth at nearly the pace of basketball players. The heart gets pumping, and soccer players run back and forth to get in the best position to try to score or to keep the other team from scoring. There are not as many timeouts in soccer as there are in baseball or other sports, so the athletes must endure and be in great shape. Though people are torn between whether soccer is interesting to watch, it is certainly a great sport to play to keep in shape.

469/9.0

© Daniel J. Boudah