Name_____
Date_____

"Soccer"

Reading Comprehension – Informational Passages

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer questions about the passage below.

"The rules of soccer are very simple, basically it is this: if it moves, kick it. If it doesn't move, kick it until it does." *~Phil Woosnam, 1974*

Woosnam is a former soccer player and manager in Wales. He moved to the United States, where he was the coach of the American national team. He is now in the United States' National Soccer Hall of Fame. His quotation describes large ***variety*** of games that have been played for at least 3,000 years, finally resulting in the game of soccer.

Soccer seems to have ***originated*** in Asia. The Japanese played a game similar to soccer in about 1000 B.C.E., and it is documented that the Japanese played the first real soccer game in the year 611 A.D. The Chinese played against Japan with a feather or hair–filled soccer ball as early as 50 B.C.E. The Greeks played a game called *episkyros*. It was similar to soccer. The Romans played a ball game called *Harpastum*. Somehow soccer made its way to England by the 1300s. King Edward of England did not like the game; in fact, he passed laws ***banning*** it. King Henry IV and King Henry VII passed laws against soccer as well. Queen Elizabeth of England had people put in jail for a week for playing soccer, followed by religious ***penance***, or payment for sin. The game was thought to take time away from military drills and archery. At that time, it was very important for young men to practice archery, and soccer competed with archery.

However, laws, penance, and official censure did not stop the game of soccer. The game was very popular in the British Isles. It was played many different ways — sometimes it was played by kicking the ball, but often it was played by kicking members of the opposing team. Sometimes an entire village played against another village. The game was played through streets, fields, and streams. Over time, players agreed on general rules for the game. They also agreed on the size and weight of the soccer ball.

Then another problem developed. During the 1600s, the Puritans in England took a particular dislike to soccer. This religious group thought that soccer was a "***frivolous***," or time–wasting, entertainment. They also said that soccer disturbed the peace on Sunday, the Lord's Day. So, there was a new ban on Sunday soccer.

Despite the ban, soccer eventually became an accepted sport. It even became part of the school curriculum. In 1863, a meeting of eleven English soccer clubs and schools decided on the official rules of the game. This meeting was the beginning of "The Football Association". Soon other countries formed football associations. By 1912, there were 21 countries affiliated with the *Federation Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA). Today FIFA has 208 member associations.

Before the 1970s, soccer was considered to be mostly a men's game. However, FIFA established the Women's World Cup in 1991. The first Women's World Cup tournament was played in the People's Republic of China in 1991. Twelve teams played for the championship. US women's college teams have also begun to receive varsity status, mostly because of the influence of Title IX, a new law which provides more money for schools that include women's sports.

FIFA ***estimates*** that about forty million (40,000,000) women are currently playing football throughout the world. The FIFA "Big Count," a 2006 soccer ***census***, estimates two hundred sixty five million (265,000,000) male and female soccer players worldwide and five million referees, for a total of two hundred seventy million (270,000,000) people – four percent of the world's population – actively engaged in soccer.

Questions:

1) With what did the ancient Chinese fill their soccer balls?

A. hair
B. grass
C. paper
D. Both A and C are correct.
E. All of the above

2) Why was soccer outlawed in England?

A. The players made noise on Sunday.
B. The game replaced archery.
C. The game was considered to be frivolous.
D. Both B and C are correct.
E. All of the above

3) What marked the beginning of The Football Association?

A. The Title IX law
B. A village soccer game
C. A meeting of soccer clubs
D. The 2006 census of players
E. None of the above

4) How many soccer associations belong to FIFA?

A. 192
B. 203
C. 205
D. 208
E. 211

5) How many people are involved with soccer worldwide?

A. 270,000,000
B. 295,000,000
C. 370,000,000
D. 4% of the world's population
E. Both A and D are correct.
F. Both B and D are correct.

Vocabulary:

1) A ***variety*** is a group of…

A. one thing.
B. similar things.
C. different things.
D. fancy things.
E. plain things.

2) The best synonym for ***originated*** is…

A. began.
B. started.
C. ended.
D. Both A and B are correct.
E. Both B and C are correct.

3) ***Banning*** means…

A. including.
B. perfecting.
C. prohibiting.
D. explaining.
E. encouraging.

4) ***Penance*** is …

A. archery.
B. religion.
C. payment.
D. comparison.
E. entertainment.

5) If something is ***frivolous***, it is…

A. a religious ceremony.
B. worth doing.
C. a waste of time.
D. creative.
E. a law or rule.

6) If you make an ***estimate,*** you make a…

A. decision.
B. guess.
C. requirement.
D. demand.
E. Both C and D are correct.

7) What is a ***census***?

A. A law
B. A team
C. A game
D. A count
E. An association