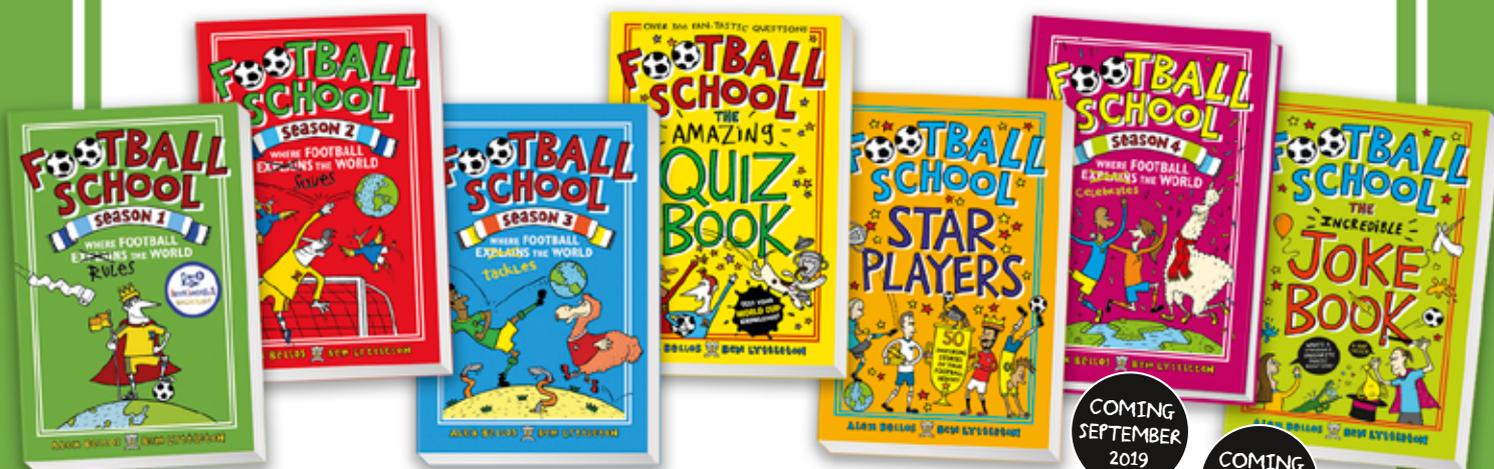


WALKER BOOKS TEACHERS' NOTES

# FOOTBALL SCHOOL

WHERE FOOTBALL EXPLAINS THE WORLD



[www.footballschool.co](http://www.footballschool.co)

[youtube.com/FootballSchoolFacts](https://youtube.com/FootballSchoolFacts)

For readers aged 7 years +



WALKER  
BOOKS

Illustrations © 2018 Spike Gerrell



ALEX BELLOS



BEN LYTTLETON

# FOOTBALL SCHOOL: WHERE FOOTBALL EXPLAINS THE WORLD

## EXCITE/SET THE CONTEXT

The following activities are designed to be carried out prior to the children seeing the Football School series of books. Children who are not fans of football may erroneously assume that they will not enjoy reading this series. Using these activities as an introduction will enable readers to approach the books with an open mind and gain greater enjoyment from them.

### ACTIVITY ONE: WHAT KIND OF BOOK?

#### Part One

This activity will introduce the wide range of content the books contain. If you ask a reader what a book about football will be like they may think of biographies of players, guides to how to be a better player or stories about fictional football teams. The Football School series is rich in information using the context of football. Share the following lines from *Football School: Season 1*. Divide the class into groups of 4–6 children. Give each group a line and ask them to discuss what kind of book it comes from. Share ideas then give out another line from the book.

When you have given all the lines out, reveal that they all come from the same book. Now what do the group think? Does their opinion change as you reveal more lines?



<b>There are two parts to planning a poo. You need to eat the right sort of food and you need to eat it at the right time. (p11)</b>
<b>You could be struck by lightning. (p33)</b>
<b>In ancient Rome the eagle represented power, freedom, wisdom and nobility. (p49)</b>
<b>Brazil has about 5,000 miles of coastline and beaches cover most of it. (p105)</b>
<b>If you are singing the same song as thousands of other fans, you feel close to them even if you don't know them. (p189)</b>

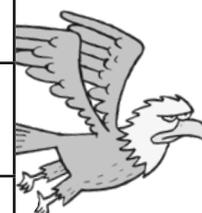


#### Part Two

Now give out these lines from the book which should make it easier to work out the subject matter of the books:



<b>There's another reason why footballers tend to poo just before games, no matter what food they have eaten: fear. (p14)</b>
<b>We're going to work out the risk of dying during a game of football – because some really unlucky things could happen to you on the pitch. (p33)</b>
<b>Talking of birds, did you know the most common animal mascot for football teams is the eagle? (p48)</b>
<b>Beach football is much harder to play than normal football because you need more energy to run on sand. (p105)</b>
<b>The oldest football song that can still be heard in the stands today was written in the 1890s for a local factory team on England's east coast. (p189)</b>



## ACTIVITY TWO: STATEMENT CARDS

Before introducing the books to the class give the following statements to pairs of children. Ask them to sort them into piles depending on whether they agree or disagree with the statement. They need to give reasons for their response. Statement cards are an excellent alternative to asking questions. In this context it will help you to find out what the children already think about football.



<b>Football is for boys.</b>
<b>Football is just about kicking a ball.</b>
<b>Footballers are paid too much money.</b>
<b>All footballers get paid a lot.</b>
<b>You don't need to be clever to play football.</b>
<b>Anyone can play football.</b>

## ACTIVITY THREE: FOOTBALL ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Give out a set of cards with the following curriculum areas on:

<b>Biology</b>	<b>Politics</b>	<b>History</b>
<b>Zoology</b>	<b>Physics</b>	<b>Chemistry</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>PSHE</b>	<b>Geography</b>
<b>Design &amp; Technology</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>Drama</b>

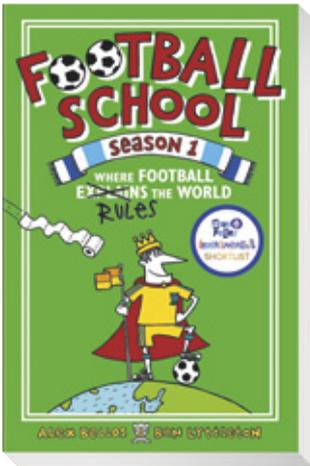


Ask the children to sort them into piles according to whether you could learn about this subject through the topic of football. You may need to clarify the meaning of some of the subjects. Does everyone agree? In groups, take each subject and think of the different ways you could learn about it through football.

## ACTIVITY FOUR: EXPLORING THE BOOKS

Football School is an extremely engaging and motivating series of books for readers to explore independently and in small groups. Children love to share their favourite facts and there is a great deal of humour with hilarious cartoons by Spike Gerrell. Giving the children time to read the books and talk about them is of great value. Giving the following questions will focus readers on aspects of the books.

- **What have you learnt from reading this page/book?**
- **What type of text is this?**
- **Why do you think the authors Alex Bellos and Ben Lyttleton, and illustrator Spike Gerrell, chose to write and draw the subject in a humorous way?**
- **How is this non-fiction book different to others that you have read on a similar subject? How is it the same?**
- **Did this book make you want to find out more?**



# FOOTBALL SCHOOL SEASON 1

## ACTIVITY ONE: GEOGRAPHY (P98-109)

Ask the class what they think you need to become a great footballer. Read p98–108 which is all about Brazil. In this section you will learn all about the reasons why Brazil is the most successful international football team in history. Some of the reasons may surprise you as there are lots of geographical factors which should make success less likely. Ask pairs or groups of children to work together to fill in a table with the headings below. They will need to identify the disadvantages to living in Brazil and consider how they are turned into advantages.

Disadvantage	How is it turned into an advantage?
<p><b>Crowded cities mean there are few large open spaces to play football on</b></p>	

## ACTIVITY TWO: PHILOSOPHY (P120-131)

On page 121 the authors say that a philosophy is *'a set of rules that guide you'*. Share Alex and Ben's philosophies:



### BEN

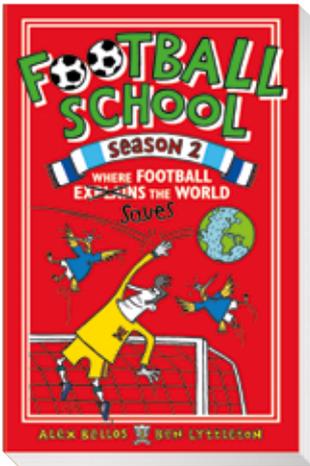
- Be yourself
- Love your family
- Tell jokes
- Eat pizza
- Take penalties

### ALEX

- Have fun
- Be a good friend
- Go cycling
- Do your times tables
- Pick your nose



Challenge each member of the class to come up with their own list of up to 5 rules for life. These should be written on a piece of paper without letting anyone see. Keeping the rules anonymous will give the opportunity to see if others can guess the owner of the rules. You could collect them in then redistribute them. Each child then reads the rules and writes down who they think they belong to before passing them on. Alternatively, read out some of the sets giving the opportunity for discussion and encouraging the children to give reasons for their guesses.



## FOOTBALL SCHOOL SEASON 2

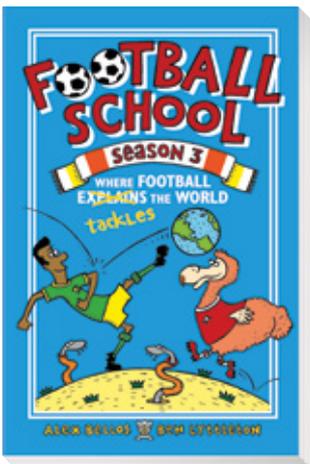
### ACTIVITY ONE: DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY (P95-108)

Read about the different stadiums on p102–5. Split the class into six groups. Give each group one of the stadiums. As a group identify the feature or features which make your stadium great. Ask each group to persuade the rest of the class to vote for their stadium. You may wish to allow the groups to carry out additional research. Have a class vote for the stadium you would most like to visit.

Next, using some of the amazing features, design your own fantastic stadium. Use the information in the section to come up with a list of essential features before embarking on your own design. Use recyclable materials to create a small-scale model of the stadium.

### ACTIVITY TWO: ART

Reading p178–188 will provide all the information needed to create your own Coat of Arms. You may wish to set a challenge to create a class coat of arms or one for the school football team (on any other school sports team). The challenge could have a competitive element where other pupils vote for their favourite. The most important element is to consider the message embodied within the coat of arms.



## FOOTBALL SCHOOL SEASON 3

### ACTIVITY ONE: PHYSICS – AGAINST THE ODDS

The section about Physics (p34–44) explores how height can affect footballers. Lionel Messi is one of the best footballers in the world but faced a struggle with his height. Read this section and ask the children to complete a table with the following headings:

<b>Problems Messi faced</b>
<b>How he overcame them</b>
<b>What can we learn from his experiences?</b>

Can you think of other sports where being taller or shorter could be an advantage or disadvantage?

### ACTIVITY TWO: DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Three separate mysteries surrounding the World Cup trophy are outlined on pages 168–9. The second mystery (1966) is the focus for this activity. Before the lesson set the scene by hiding a trophy wrapped in newspaper (in bushes if possible). Can the class find the trophy? Next, share the story of the 1966 theft and explain that you are going to use your imaginations to solve the mystery of who stole the trophy and how it ended up in the bushes. Split the class into groups of 4–6 children. Ask them to work together to invent a gang of criminals who want to steal the trophy. They could draw caricatures of their invented characters and annotate them with additional details. Can they create a news report which tells the full story? This could be re-enacted to share with the rest of the class. This activity provides an opportunity to write a news report or create a comic strip retelling the events.



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### Notes by Just Imagine

Just Imagine is a Centre for Excellence in Reading and runs reading programmes and training for teachers across the UK

Visit [www.footballschool.co](http://www.footballschool.co) and [youtube.com/footballschoolfacts](https://youtube.com/footballschoolfacts) for free activities and fun videos with coaches Alex and Ben



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