

# Culture Choice 1

- 1 **Vocabulary** Look at the network. What do you like and dislike about football?

*I love big games when my team scores a goal!*



- 2 **Your Culture** Work in pairs. Ask and answer the questions about your country.

- How popular is football with young people?
- What are the most famous clubs and players?
- What style of football does your national team play?
- How do supporters from your country behave at football matches?

- 3 **Quiz** Work in pairs. Try to answer the quiz.

- Where and when were the rules of football invented?
  - Italy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century
  - England in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - France in 1904
- How many football players (amateur and professional) are there in the world?
  - 25 million
  - 250 million
  - 2.5 billion
- How many people watched the 2010 World Cup Final between Spain and Holland?
  - 70 million
  - 700 million
  - 2.7 billion
- What is the typical style of football in England?
  - skilful
  - creative and stylish
  - fast and physical
- What are the two 'big' South American football nations?
  - Brazil/Chile
  - Uruguay/Argentina
  - Argentina/Brazil
- Which country has won the World Cup five times?
  - Argentina
  - Italy
  - Brazil
- Which supporters sing *You'll never walk alone*?
  - Manchester United
  - Arsenal
  - Liverpool
- How many female football players are there in the world?
  - 3 million
  - 13 million
  - 30 million

- 4 **6.2 6.3** Listen to the talk about football and check your guesses from Exercise 3.

- 5 Read the information about Nick Hornby on page 103. When did he become an Arsenal fan? What are his feelings about his club?

- 6 Look at the drawing about one of Nick Hornby's experiences. Which of these things do you think happened?

- Nick went to an Arsenal game with his girlfriend.
- His team scored a goal.
- They both celebrated the goal.
- His girlfriend thought the situation was funny.

- 7 **6.4** Read and listen to the extract from *Fever Pitch* and check your guesses from Exercise 6.

- 8 Use the glossary to read the extract again. Are the statements true (T) or false (F)?

- Nick did not study very hard in his first year at university. T
- He fell in love with a woman who was training to be a nurse.
- They had a serious relationship.
- Arsenal was having a very good season that year.
- One Arsenal player scored three goals.
- His girlfriend laughed at the people when they celebrated the goal.

- 9 Work in pairs. Answer the questions.

- What other situation does Nick Hornby mention that looks silly from a different angle?
- Have you been in a 'serious' situation that you thought was funny?





## Boys and Girls

# ARSENAL

# V LEICESTER CITY

In his first year at Cambridge University, Nick went to see Arsenal with his new girlfriend and found her reaction to the game very interesting.

**I** did something else in that year, apart from watch football, talk and listen to music: I fell stomach-clenchingly for a smart, pretty and vivacious girl from the teacher-training college. We spent much of the next three or four years in each other's company.

She is part of this story, I think in several ways. For a start, she was the first girlfriend who ever came to Highbury (in the Easter holidays at the end of our second term). Arsenal had just beaten the club record for the longest losing streak in their history – they had managed to lose, in consecutive games, to Manchester City, Middlesbrough, West Ham, Everton, Ipswich, West Brom and QPR. She charmed the team, however, much as she had charmed me, and we scored three times in the first quarter of the game. Graham Rix got the first on his debut and David O'Leary, who went on to score maybe another half a dozen times in the next decade, got two in the space of ten minutes.

**Because it was a special occasion, Nick had bought expensive tickets so that they could watch the game comfortably sitting down.**

It was strange having her there – all I remember is how she responded each time Arsenal scored. Everyone in the row stood up apart from her – three times I looked down to see her shaking with laughter. 'It's so funny,' she said by way of explanation, and I could see her point. It had never really occurred to me before that football was, indeed, a funny game, and that like most things which only work if one believes, the back view (and because she remained seated she had a back view, right down a line of mostly misshapen male bottoms) is preposterous, like the rear of a Hollywood film set.



### Nick Hornby

(1957-) lived near London when he was a boy and started going to watch Arsenal at Highbury with his father when he was

eleven. After leaving school, Nick studied English Literature at Cambridge University and continued supporting Arsenal. After university, Nick taught English and then became a journalist and writer. His first book, *Fever Pitch* (1992), was about his experiences as a fanatical Arsenal fan and his love/hate relationship with his team. Since then he has written successful novels like *High Fidelity* and *About a Boy* that have become Hollywood films.

### Glossary

- bottom:** (n) the part of your body you sit on
- charm:** (v) to make someone like you
- company:** (n) when someone is with you
- consecutive:** (adj) one after another
- debut:** (n) first public appearance of a player or actor
- decade:** (n) a period of ten years
- fall for someone:** (v) to fall in love with someone
- film set:** (n) where a film is made
- losing streak:** to lose several times in a period of time
- misshapen:** (adj) not a normal shape
- occur to someone:** (n) to have an idea about something
- preposterous:** (adj) silly or ridiculous
- rear:** (n) the back of an object or a place
- row:** (n) a line of things or people
- see someone's point:** (v) to understand someone's opinion
- shake with laughter:** (v) to laugh violently
- stomach-clenchingly:** (adj) painfully, madly
- vivacious:** (adj) full of life

## My Culture Project

- 10** Choose a sporting event that was important for your country, region or city. Write notes about the things below.
  - why it was important
  - the atmosphere before it
  - who you watched the event with
  - what happened during the event
  - how you felt at the end
  - what happened afterwards
- 11** Work in pairs. Ask and answer questions about the sporting event.
  - A: Why was it important?
  - B: Well, it was the final of the World Cup and my country had never won it before.