SOCcer WORLd

Magazine

by Cynthia Swain
How to use this book
1. Learn about the genre by reading pages 2–3. Get background information about the topic on pages 4–5. (Shared reading)
2. Read the articles for enjoyment. (Leveled texts)
3. Reread the articles and answer the questions on pages 13 and 21. (Shared reading)
4. Reread the last article. Pay attention to the comments in the margins. See how an author writes an informational text. (Leveled text)
5. Follow the steps on pages 22–23 to write your own informational text. (Shared reading)
6. Complete the activity on the inside back cover. Answer the follow-up questions. (Shared reading)
What is an informational text?

Informational text is nonfiction text that presents information in an accurate and organized way. It is often about a single subject, such as an event or time period in history or a scientific discovery. It may be about any topic, such as a sport or a hobby. The research report that you write for a school assignment is an informational text and so is an article you read in your favorite fashion magazine or on a Web site. A newspaper account of a local election and a history book chapter on a famous battle are additional examples of informational texts.

What is the purpose of informational texts?

Informational text has one main purpose: to inform. The best informational writing does this in a way that keeps readers' attention. It pulls readers in, making them want to keep reading so they know more about the topic.

How do you read an informational text?

Look for facts and for the details that support them. Read critically to make sure conclusions make sense. If there is more than one way to look at an event or a situation, make sure it is given. Ask yourself questions, such as Did I learn something new from this text? Do I want to know more about the subject? Can I draw my own conclusions from what I have read?

Who writes informational texts?

Writers who know their topic well write good informational text. They do this by becoming mini-experts on the subjects they are writing about. They make sure that they support the information in their work with historical facts; scientific data; expert evidence; and graphics, which might include time lines and diagrams. They provide more than one person’s point of view. They use primary sources (firsthand information) such as journals and photographs.
During a soccer game, or match, each team puts eleven players on the field. Some of the players are on offense; they try to score goals against the other team. Some of the players are on defense; they try to keep the other team from scoring. Which position would you want to play?

The lead defender is the goalkeeper, or goalie. Good goalies are quick and fearless. The goalie is the only player on the field allowed to touch the ball with his or her hands—and only when inside the penalty box area. The other players must kick the ball or tap it with their chest, body, or head. If the ball touches the arms of any of these players, even by accident, it’s a foul called a “handball.”

Four other defenders, or backs, play in front of the goalkeeper. They are strong kickers. Sometimes, one defender is positioned behind the other back as extra protection. That position is called sweeper.

In the center of the field are three midfielders: right, left, and center. Midfielders figure out how to attack the other team and decide which attacker to pass the ball to in order to score. Sometimes midfielders, also called halfbacks, go up the field to score, and other times they go back to defend.

The front line is the offense. It consists of three attackers: left winger, right winger, and striker. Attackers, or forwards, are often the fastest players. On a typical score, the wingers dribble the ball down the left or right side of the field, then pass the ball into the other team’s goal area. The striker, who is near the goal, will either kick or head the ball into the goal.

A Strong Lead

A strong lead, or opening section, grabs or “hooks” readers. A strong lead makes readers want to keep reading. The lead tells you something important about the subject and hints at what you may learn. Writers use two types of leads. A direct lead tells who or what the piece is about and why the subject is important. An indirect lead may quote someone; ask a question; describe a setting; or tell an anecdote, or true story, about the subject.
soccer has been called a simple sport because the game is simply about kicking a ball, scoring goals, and making sure the other team doesn’t. But don’t be fooled. There’s a lot to understand.

Let’s start with the field: For an Under-11 League, it’s a rectangle about 50 yards wide and 80 yards long. Dimensions vary by players’ ages. The field has a center circle and a mark to indicate where the ball is placed at kickoff. Lines also show the boundaries of the field as well as the goal and penalty areas.

Ready to grab a ball and play? Not so fast. Serious soccer players need special shoes called cleats. Cleats have hard plastic or metal studs on the bottom. The studs help the shoes grip the ground. Players can better maintain their footing as they run, dribble, and pass the ball up and down the field. Shin guards are another essential. They are made of plastic and can slide under kneepads. Shin guards protect players’ legs from bruises and cuts when other players kick them while going for the ball.

As with other sports, team members wear numbered uniforms in matching colors. Goalkeepers’ jerseys are a different color than their teammates’. Goalkeepers need to be easily identified by their own team, the opposing team, and the referee. Most goalkeepers also wear padded clothing to protect them when they fall on the ground after making a diving save. Goalkeepers should also wear padded gloves.

Organized soccer matches have one referee and two assistants. The referee runs up and down the field and follows the action to make sure there are no fouls. The two assistants stand on either sideline and use flags to show which team should throw in the ball if it goes over the sidelines (out-of-bounds). Professional soccer matches last ninety minutes, but youth games are shorter.
The basic gameplay of soccer is simple: Players kick the ball up and down a large field. But it is not a wild free-for-all. Players are not allowed to trip, grab shirts, or tackle from behind. If they do, a referee will call a foul and award a free kick to the opposing team. A player who commits a foul on purpose can get a yellow card. This is a warning. If the foul is more serious, a player will get a red card and be ejected from the game.

If a player commits a foul against the other team in the penalty area in front of the goal, the referee awards a penalty kick to the attacking team. This means that one player from the team that was fouled faces off against the goalkeeper. The kicker must have a cool head and a strong kick to boot the ball by the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper must block the ball by anticipating correctly where the kicker will try to place it in the net.

There is one very tricky rule in soccer called offside. This rule keeps an attacker from standing in front of the other team’s goal, waiting for the ball. There must be at least one other defender in front of an attacker when he receives a pass. Otherwise, the team on offense is offside. The referee awards the ball to the other team.

Offside is a complicated rule and takes some getting used to. Of course, the best way to learn soccer is to watch the game in action. Look for games in your neighborhood. Watch college or professional matches on television. Even better, put on a pair of cleats and play a bit. You’ll soon get the hang of this “simple” game.
Women's Soccer: Keeping the Dream Alive

The dream team—that’s what the United States women’s soccer team was called when it won world championships in 1991 and 1999. Some of the greatest female soccer stars ever played for the United States. The U.S. team won a gold medal at the 1996 Olympics, too. But for many long years before these victories, winning was just a dream.

Soccer is an old sport, but women’s soccer is quite new in the United States. During most of the 1900s, very few women played soccer seriously. Then in the 1970s, the U.S. government passed a law called Title IX. This law stated that females should be allowed to participate equally in education and other activities. Before Title IX, schools had more programs and sports for males than for females.

As a result of Title IX, schools all over the country started sports programs for girls. Soccer was especially popular. In the 1980s, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and other organizations began to sponsor women’s soccer championships.

The U.S. Women’s National Team started in 1985. At first, the team didn’t get much practice time. They did not have a lot of equipment. It was hard for them to get to games. Worst of all, the media wasn’t too interested in the women’s team.

Then, in 1991, the U.S. Women’s National Team captured the first-ever women’s World Cup in China. The team beat Norway 2-1. And that was after defeating teams from five other countries. In those games, the United States scored a total of forty-nine goals.

Another big year for women’s soccer in America was 1999. The World Cup was held in the United States. This time the press was interested.

The final game against China was held at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California. More than 90,000 fans, the largest ever for a women’s soccer game, were treated to a nail-biter. Neither team scored. The tension mounted. The game went into overtime. Still no score. Finally, it came down to penalty kicks.

The U.S. Women’s team won the 1999 World Cup.
The United States scored on each of its five kicks. China scored four times. **Spectators** went wild! The United States had achieved a huge **victory**. Now everyone was paying attention to women’s soccer. The team appeared on American news programs and was invited to the White House. They were on the covers of *Time*, *Newsweek*, *People*, and *Sports Illustrated*.

American Mia Hamm, already a soccer superstar, stood out. After the team’s success here, she became the **marquee** player of the first professional women’s soccer league. This league lasted until 2003. Then, in 2004, the U.S. women’s team won Olympic gold again, playing in front of a world audience of millions.

Mia Hamm retired soon after, but other young women who grew up playing soccer are already taking her place. In 2009, a new league was formed, **Women’s Professional Soccer** (WPS). The dream is alive and kicking.
How did some of the best soccer players in the world learn their best moves? They played a game called Futsal.* The game is also known as mini-soccer or five-a-side.

Juan Carlos Ceriani from Montevideo, Uruguay, is considered the “father” of Futsal. In 1930, Ceriani began holding an indoor soccer competition for kids. The game caught on in Brazil and spread throughout South America.

Futsal is a lot like soccer. Players kick a ball into a goal to score. The goalkeeper defends the goal and can use his hands to pick up the ball. There is a penalty area and there are fouls for tripping or pushing an opponent.

*Futsal is a registered trademark of the U.S. Futsal Federation.

But there are real differences. Futsal is not played on a large grass field. It’s played on a smaller area such as a basketball court, with goals on each end. And the ball is different. It’s smaller and harder than a soccer ball with thirty percent less bounce. The ball spends less time in the air. Players can get in more kicking and passing.

Only five players are on a Futsal team. One plays goalkeeper and the four others defend their own goal and try to score goals against the opposite team. Since the field is much smaller than a regular soccer field and there are fewer players, the action is fast and furious. That’s good for kids because they have more chances to kick the ball and improve their skills.

Soccer superstar Pelé gives Futsal credit for making him a great player. “Of course Futsal was important in helping to develop my ball control, quick thinking, and passing,” said Pelé. He also noted that “Futsal helped produce many great players in my generation, such as Paulo César and [Roberto] Rivelino. All the best players began with Futsal.”

Today, Futsal is not just played by kids. Adults all over the world play, too. In fact, there is even a World Cup competition held every four years. The next one is in 2012 in Thailand.
Nearly three billion people enjoy soccer. That’s about half the people on Earth! How old is the world’s most popular sport? In 1004 B.C.E., people in Japan kicked around a ball. Nearly 2,000 years ago, the Romans played a soccerlike game. Teams of twenty-seven faced one another. But play was so rough that most participants needed medical care.

The British played a similar group ball-kicking game over a thousand years ago. Entire villages competed against one another. This game also got very rough. There were only two rules: no murder or manslaughter. Eventually laws cropped up to ban this too-violent game. A toned-down version became popular among schoolboys. Rules were introduced in the early 1800s.

Historians tell us that Native Americans played a ball-kicking sport, too. It was called pasuckquakkohowog, which means “they gather to play with a ball with the foot.”

In the 1820s, several American colleges played a variation of the British game, but not against one another. The first college match was after the Civil War. Princeton beat Rutgers 6-4.

In the United States and Canada, the game the world knows as football is called soccer. Why? In 1863, the Football Association was formed in England to establish formal rules. Players began referring to this game as Association Football, or “soc” for short. Around this same time, American football was a new sport and growing in popularity. Eventually, “soc football” became known as soccer and the name stuck in North America.

Meanwhile, British football spread far and wide. A world organization called the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was created in 1904. Other countries joined, including the United States in 1913. FIFA had several goals; an important one was to make sure the rules of the game were consistent around the world.
FIFA decided to hold its first World Cup competition in Uruguay in 1930. Uruguay was chosen to host the event because its team had won Olympic gold medals in 1924 and 1928. The South American country was also celebrating its 100th year of independence. The first World Cup was not successful, however. Only four European countries participated. Getting to Uruguay required a long journey by sea, and most of the world was experiencing difficult economic times (the Great Depression).

Four years later, the World Cup was held in Italy. Sixteen nations participated. Italy won. In 1938, Italy won again. This time, in France, thirty-eight teams took part. The World Cup was suspended during World War II, but for the past sixty years, it has become a global event, with a different country hosting it every four years. According to Reuters, around 700 million people watched the finals on television in 2010. What's more, three-million-plus fans attended matches leading up to the final.

Hundreds of nations have participated in the nineteen World Cups. Yet only eight countries have won the title. Brazil has won five and Italy four. The United States has never won a World Cup, but the team did something extraordinary in the 1950 event. It was a game against one of the best teams in the world—England. An Irish newspaper, The Belfast Telegraph, called the Americans “a band of no-hopers.” But that didn't discourage the American team. During the game, Haitian-born Joe Gaetjens scored a goal for the Americans to win 1-0. Many sports historians consider this game to be the biggest upset in international soccer.

Other soccer followers say that a match during the 1966 World Cup was an even bigger upset. A low-ranked North Korean team was playing against the Italian national team, then considered one of the best in the world.
Something magical happened on the field that day. Just before halftime, North Korean Pak Doo-Ik scored. It turned out to be the only goal. The mighty Italian team lost 1-0. To this day, for an entire generation of Italians, the name of Pak Doo-Ik is still a painful reminder of this stunning loss.

Many of the world’s greatest players have competed in the World Cup tournament. The Brazilian Pelé, considered to be the perfect footballer, participated in four World Cups for his country, winning a record-setting three World Cups.

Who will win the next World Cup? Which new superstars will make soccer history? One thing is for sure. Soccer has been the world’s most popular game for a long time. And many new chapters to its history are still being written.
How does an author write an Informational Text?

Reread “World’s Favorite Sport,” and think about what Cynthia Swain did to write this informational text. How did she keep a narrow focus? How did she help you understand the text?

1 Decide on a Topic
Choose something you are interested in and want to know more about. Good writers enjoy researching their topics.

2 Narrow Your Focus
Cynthia Swain knew she couldn’t write everything there is to know about soccer, so she narrowed her focus to the history of soccer.

3 Write a Question about Your Focus
Questions lead to answers, so turn your focus into a question.

4 Research Your Focus
Become the “expert” by reading books, articles on the Internet, or newspaper articles and interviewing people connected with your topic. For instance, Cynthia wrote to FIFA. You want to show readers that you know what you are talking about.

5 Organize Your Information
Before writing an informational article, make a chart or table like the one on the next page that outlines the main points. For each main point, identify supporting details. You don’t have to write full sentences. These are your notes. Remember, however, that there should be a logical progression of ideas.

6 Write Your Informational Text
As you write, develop each main point with your supporting details. Remember, you want people to enjoy reading your article as well as learn something new.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Point</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Number of people who play soccer today (amazing facts)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Soccerlike games from long ago | 1004 B.C.E., Japan  
2,000 years ago, Romans  
Native Americans played a game with a ball |
| Development of modern soccer in England | England, over 1,000 years ago (rough; few rules)  
Boys played friendlier version  
(Rules introduced in 1800s) |
| Development of soccer in America and England in the 1800s | 1820s, American colleges played sport  
After Civil War, Princeton and Rutgers (6-4)  
United States called game “soccer” (explain reason)  
British football spreads to many countries  
1904—FIFA wants consistent rules |
| Beginning of World Cup | 1930, Uruguay; only four countries played due to Great Depression |
| Growth of World Cup | Italy, 1934; sixteen nations competed  
France, 1938; thirty-eight teams  
Haltered during World War II  
Over past sixty years turned into global event  
By 2010, 700 million watched worldwide on TV |
| World Cup winners and famous “upsets” | Brazil won five; Italy won four; the U.S. never won  
1950: The U.S. had major upset during one game against England; Haitian-born Joe Gaetjens scored, making score 1-0  
1966: Underdog North Korea played top-rated Italy; North Korean Pak Doo-Ik scored only goal |
| Conclusion | Superstar Pelé won three World Cups  
Popular game for a long time and still to come |
Glossary

**captured** (KAP-cherd) won (page 11)

**colleges** (KAH-lih-jez) universities (page 17)

**competition** (kahm-peh-TIH-shun) a game, event, or activity where people play against one another (page 18)

**ejected** (ih-JEK-ted) removed (page 8)

**furious** (FYER-ee-us) intense (page 15)

**generation** (jeh-nuh-RAY-shun) a group of people that were born and are living in the same time period (page 15)

**marquee** (mar-KEE) big name; star (page 12)

**opponent** (uh-POH-nent) someone on the team being played against (page 14)

**organization** (or-guh-nih-ZAY-shun) people who work together for a common purpose (page 17)

**professional** (pruh-FEH-shuh-nul) participating in an activity for money (page 9)

**spectators** (SPEK-tay-terz) people who look on or watch an event (page 12)

**uniforms** (YOO-nih-formz) matching outfits that all members of a team wear (page 6)

**victory** (VIK-tuh-ree) winning or success over an opponent or enemy (page 12)

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**Make Connections Across Texts**

Complete a graphic organizer like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before You Play</th>
<th>Women’s Soccer: Keeping the Dream Alive</th>
<th>Fast and Furious Futsal</th>
<th>World’s Favorite Sport</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>Lead (direct or indirect?)</td>
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<td>History included?</td>
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<td>People included?</td>
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<td>Rules included?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ending (What do you think about as you finish the text?)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Analyze Informational Texts**

Use your graphic organizer to help you answer these questions.

- Do the leads hook you? How do they hook you?
- What personal connections can you make to these informational texts?
- How are these informational texts alike?
- How are these informational texts different?
- What can readers learn from these informational texts?
- What question(s) do you have about soccer after reading these informational texts?
Whether you like to kick around a ball for fun or are a World Cup hopeful, you’ll find something to satisfy your love of soccer in this magazine-style book. Read about the history of the world’s most popular sport, the U.S. women’s “dream team,” and more.

Cynthia Swain lives in New York City with her family, but she travels long distances to watch her son play soccer.