

English Session: Why do fewer women than men play football?

Age range: 9–14 years

<p>Outline Learners will use an “agreement line” to consider their perceptions and attitudes about gender and sport. They will then work collaboratively in groups to read and sort information to solve a “mystery” about why fewer women play football than men. This activity will support learners to have a structured discussion around this issue, covering both the barriers facing women in football and the potential ways of overcoming them. Finally, learners will discuss other examples of gender inequality in our wider society, before reflecting on what changes they would like to see with regards to this issue in the future.</p>	
<p>Learning objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use evidence in a text to justify a response. • To develop critical thinking, collaborative and discussion skills. • To explore and challenge assumptions and perceptions, both their own and those of others. • To understand what gender inequality means, in the context both of football and of life opportunities in general. 	<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will use an “agreement line” to consider their own and others’ perceptions and attitudes about gender and sport. • Learners will work collaboratively in groups to read, sort and discuss statements linked to gender inequality in football. • Learners will be introduced to other examples of gender inequality in our wider society, before considering what changes they would like to see with regards to this issue in the future.
<p>Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why might someone think that a sport is more “male” or “female”? • Should men and women have equal access to all sports? Should men and women be paid the same if they are taking part in the same sport? Why? / Why not? • What do you think the barriers to women playing football are? Do you think these are the same everywhere in the world? Why? / Why not? What do you think the solutions to these challenges might be? • Can you think of any other examples where life opportunities might be unequal for women and men or girls and boys? • What would you like to see happen with regards to gender equality in the future? 	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The World Cup: A fair game?</i> English slideshow • Resource sheets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Football mystery cards 1</i> 2. <i>Football mystery cards 2</i> • Activity sheet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Ideal futures</i>

Curriculum links		
<p>England <i>Pupils should be taught to:</i></p> <p>KS2 English Spoken language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions. • Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others. <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read. • Provide reasoned justifications for their views. <p>KS3 English Spoken English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak confidently and effectively through participating in formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said. <p>Reading Make inferences and refer to evidence in the text.</p>	<p>Wales KS2 English Oracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to others, asking questions and responding to both the content and the speakers' viewpoints. • Express opinions about topics and written texts and include some supporting reasons. • Build on and develop the ideas of others in group discussions, for example, by asking questions to explore further, offering more ideas. <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of main ideas and significant details in texts. • Infer meaning which is not explicitly stated. <p>KS3 English Oracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise a range of options for action and reach agreement to achieve the aims of the group. • Express opinions confidently about topics and written texts, reasoning and supporting their own and others' ideas with relevant evidence. <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain a full understanding of texts using inference, deduction and analysis. • Compare and contrast themes and issues across a range of texts. 	<p>Scotland Literacy and English Listening and talking Tools for listening and talking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role and use contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking. <p style="text-align: right;">LIT 2-02a and 3-02a</p> <p>Finding and using information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can independently select ideas and relevant information for different purposes, organise essential information or ideas and any supporting detail in a logical order, and use suitable vocabulary to communicate effectively with my audience. <p style="text-align: right;">LIT 2-06a, 3-06a and 4-06a</p> <p>Understanding, analysing and evaluating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help me develop an informed view, I am learning about the techniques used to influence opinion and how to assess the value of my sources, and I can recognise persuasion. <p style="text-align: right;">LIT 2-08a and 3-08a</p> <p>Reading Understanding, Analysing and Evaluating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help me develop an informed view, I am exploring the techniques used to influence my opinion. I can recognise persuasion and assess the reliability of information and credibility and value of my sources. <p style="text-align: right;">LIT 2-18a and 3-18a</p>

Note: The following activities explore the issue of gender inequality, both in football and the wider world, in terms of male and female experiences, as well as roles. Depending on learners' age and the context, teachers may also wish to acknowledge and discuss inequality issues connected to LGBT+.

Activity 1 (15 min)

Where do you stand?

Note: This activity is adapted from a teaching idea from the Gender Respect Project, coordinated by Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY): genderrespect2013.wordpress.com/teaching-ideas/primary/

- Ask learners to imagine a line across the learning space, with one “female” end and one “male” end. Alternatively, you could print off “male” and “female” labels and display these at either end of the line.
- Explain to learners that you are going to call out some different sports. For each sport, learners should stand somewhere on the line, according to whether they think of the sport as a female sport, a male sport, equally open to both genders, or somewhere in between.
- For each sport, invite learners to share reasons for their positions. Before moving on to the next sport, encourage learners to alter their positions on the line based on what they have heard from others in the group. Invite learners to explain the reasons for their new position.
- Finish with a quick debrief of the activity:
 - *Why might someone think that a sport is more “male” or “female”?*
 - *Who changed positions after hearing from others in the group? What led you to change your mind?*
 - *Should men and women have equal access to all sports? Should men and women be paid the same if they are taking part in the same sport? Why? / Why not?*
 - *Do you think men or women (or boys and girls) are able to participate equally in all sports?*

Activity 2 (40+ min)

Why do fewer women play football than men?

Note: This activity is called a “mystery” because learners piece together clues written on separate pieces of paper to solve a problem. Mysteries are an excellent literacy tool for developing critical thinking and inference skills, and this one enables learners to explore a range of possible causes of the gender inequality that exists in football, as well as consider how these factors can interact with one another. By the end of the activity, aim to ensure that learners understand that the actions of many people and groups, as well as government policies and social conventions, contribute to both this issue and the potential solutions. For further details of using “mysteries” in the classroom, see p. 15 of Oxfam’s Global Citizenship in the Classroom – A guide for teachers:

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/global-citizenship-in-the-classroom-a-guide-for-teachers

- Organise learners into groups of three or four and explain that their task is to solve a mystery by answering the question: *Why do fewer women play football than men?* *Note: You may want to first spend some time exploring learners’ own ideas about this question before starting the activity.*
- Give each group a copy of *Football mystery cards 1* and *2* (Resource sheets 1 and 2). Explain that these cards provide a set of clues, some of which may be more useful than others. Learners should cut out the statements and then work as a group to consider their response to the question.
- Tell learners that they need to try and solve the mystery by organising the information provided by the clues on the cards. They should be encouraged to look for links between the clues and to group the clues in ways that help them



explain as fully as possible the various reasons why fewer women play football than men. They may omit some cards if they do not feel the information is relevant and you may provide them with blank cards to add extra points of their own. Emphasise that learners will need to be ready to justify their answers to others and encourage them to discuss in their groups the causes, the effects and the connections they are making.

- When learners have completed the task, allow time for each group to feed back its response to the rest of the class. Depending on the outcome of the discussion, aim to review the following points:
 - *What reasons did you find for why fewer women play football than men?*
 - *Do you think the causes that stop women playing football are the same everywhere in the world? Why? / Why not?*
 - *What do you think would help more girls and women to play football?*
 - *Who do you think is responsible for making it easier for girls and women to play football?*
 - *Do you think access to women's football is improving? What evidence do you have for this?*
 - *Can you think of any other sports which have unequal access for men and women? Are there any sports where fewer men take part than women? Which sports are these and why do you think this? For example, you might like to refer to England winning the netball tournament at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.*
 - *Can you think of any other examples where life opportunities might be unequal for women and men or girls and boys?*
 - *Do you think gender inequality (in football or elsewhere) is an issue in your school or community? What evidence do you have for this? What do you think should be done to change things and who do you think should take action?*
- As an extension to this activity, learners could be asked to produce an extended piece of writing, using a writing frame, to give a full response to the question of why fewer women than men play football. The writing frame could include headings such as:
 - *Introduction to the issue.*
 - *What prevents women playing football?*
 - *How have things changed over time? How do you think the situation will change in the future?*
 - *What do you think the solutions might be?*

Differentiation

- *Make it easier: Divide the mystery cards among the groups so that each group has just two or three of the cards to read and look at for clues. Ask each group to feed back their ideas and then work together as a whole-class to "solve" the mystery.*

Activity 3 (30+ min)

Equal or unequal in the future?

- *Note: This activity is a mind-mapping exercise that helps people to consider and express their ideas – both positive and negative – about the future. For further details, see p.18 of Oxfam's Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A guide for teachers: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/global-citizenship-in-the-classroom-a-guide-for-teachers*
- Remind learners that in the last activity they investigated some of the reasons why there are fewer women playing football than men. Explain that this is an example of gender inequality.



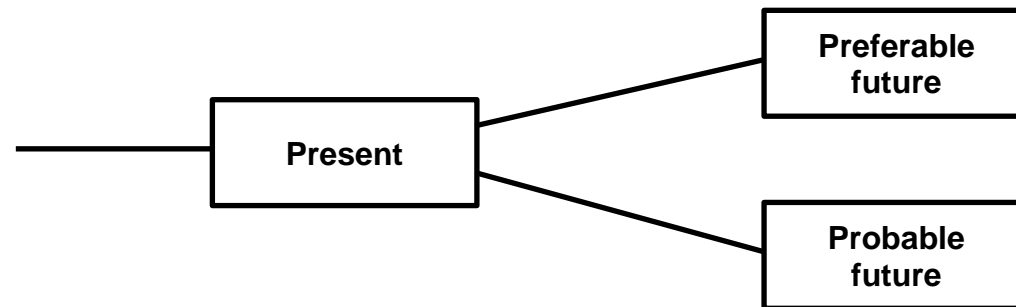
- Show slide 3 of the English slideshow and explain that we can think of inequality as the difference between the things some groups of people have compared with other groups of people. It is a bit like looking at how big a slice of cake one person has compared with another.
- Show slide 4 and say that people often think of inequality in terms of how much money or wealth different people have but inequality is also about the opportunities that people have, for example to access safe water, go to school, visit the doctor or play football.
- Explain that there is inequality between countries, where some countries have more wealth than others. However, there is also inequality within countries between different groups of people, for example between people living in rural and urban areas, people of different ethnicities and people of different genders.
- Show slide 5 and ask learners if they can think of any examples of inequality other than football, between men and women, or girls and boys. Discuss what learners think might be the reasons for these inequalities.
- Show slide 6 and explain that a lot of progress has been made in past decades to make life fairer for women and girls. For example:
 - *It's only 100 years since some women in the UK got the vote, but today women in nearly every country in the world have the right to vote.*
 - *More girls are going to school than ever before.*
 - *More women are in paid work.*
 - *Laws are in place around the world to support gender equality.*
- However, it is not all good; there is still a long way to go before life opportunities are equal for women and men. Share the facts on slide 7.
 - *Women and girls make up the majority of those living in poverty.¹*
 - *Women are more likely than men to be in low-paid work. They earn less for doing the same roles and are often in the lower paid roles as well.¹*
 - *On average, women do twice as much unpaid care work as men, such as childcare and housework – sometimes 10 times as much, often on top of their paid work.¹*
 - *Only 24.5% of parliamentarians around the world are women.²*
- Allow time for learners to reflect on these facts. You might like to do this as a *Think, Pair, Share* activity:
 - *Think: Ask learners to think on their own for a minute.*
 - *Pair: Give learners a couple of minutes to compare their ideas.*
 - *Share: Spend a few minutes sharing some learners' suggestions as a whole group.*
- Now organise learners into pairs or groups of three. Give each group a large piece of paper.
- In their groups, learners should draw a time line on a large piece of paper (see diagram below and on slide 8). Alternatively, you could distribute A3 copies of the template provided in *Ideal futures* (Activity sheet 1).
- On the lower time line, learners should place the things they think will probably happen in relation to gender inequality. These can be represented in a variety of ways such as words, drawings or cut-out images. Along the upper time line, learners should add the things they would prefer to happen.

¹ F Rhodes, A Parvez and R Harvey (2017). *An economy that works for women*. Oxfam.

www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-works-women

² archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm





- Allow time for learners to share their timelines and ideas about the future with other groups. Possible discussion questions include:
 - Which changes for men and women do you think are most likely to happen?
 - What changes would you prefer to see happen?
 - Does anyone else share your vision of the future? If so, who? This might be someone in your class, school or community, or a famous person.
 - What needs to change if your preferable future is to become a reality? What challenges are there and how could these be overcome?
 - Who is taking action to create such a future? Who else should be taking action?
 - How can we ourselves contribute to this preferable future?
 - What will happen if no action is taken?

Differentiation

- *Make it easier:* Ask learners to focus on a specific example of gender inequality, such as women playing football, rather than the issue in general.
- *Make it harder:* Ask learners to extend the time line to the left (as shown in the diagram), going back in time before the present. They could then annotate this line to show changes that have happened in relation to gender inequality in the past.

Further ideas

- Try other teaching activities and ideas from the *Gender Respect Project*. Led by DECSY, this project aimed to help children and young people to understand, question and challenge gender inequality and violence in both a local and a global context:
genderrespect2013.wordpress.com/teaching-ideas/
- Use activities from the FYS Forum to find out more about gender inequality. The FYS Forum provides teaching ideas, methodologies and resources for exploring gender issues through youth forums. Learners might like to run one with other schools in their local community.
fys-forums.eu/en/fys-toolkit/forum-curriculum
- Write the story of a football used at the 2022 World Cup. Think about where in the world the ball was made, how it was made and the people involved in the supply chain. Describe the working conditions and profits of the different people involved, from the factory where it was produced to the consumer at the end of the chain. Women and children are often more negatively affected by being at the bottom of the supply chain than men, for example by impacting on the amount of time available for childcare or going to school.

- Watch a short video clip (*Playing fair: The story of Fairtrade footballs*) from the Fairtrade Foundation to find out how footballs are made in Pakistan and the impact that Fairtrade has made to the lives of some people involved in their production:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTrFOLLvIGs> (8 min, 5 sec)
- See Playfair 2012's *Fair's fair – Life and rights in the global sports industry* to find out more about some of the people who make these goods in poorer countries, often working with few rights, and for very low wages:
www.playfair2012.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TUC_Fairs-fair_booklet.pdf
- There has been much controversy surrounding the staging of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, with some people calling on countries and teams to boycott the event. Organise a debate around this issue: *Should England be taking part in the 2022 World Cup?*

See Oxfam's recently updated *Teaching Controversial Issues* guide for guidance, classroom strategies and practical teaching activities for managing controversial issues in the classroom:
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/teaching-controversial-issues
- Use the internet to research how some different organisations are taking action to promote gender equality. Explore the targets for gender equality outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals. *How well do learners think these targets will help in achieving the future that they would like to see?*
<https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals#gender-equality>
- Use a Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach to facilitate discussion, critical thinking and reflection among learners on the issue of gender inequality. Support learners to collectively choose a philosophical question linked to the issue, either connected to football or to another example of gender inequality. Introduce philosophical skills and language to enable learners to have a high-quality dialogue around this question. For further details on using P4C in the classroom see Oxfam's *Guide to Philosophy for Children*, developed in collaboration with SAPERE, the Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education:
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/philosophy-for-children

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Football mystery cards 1

Resource sheet 1

<p>The first recorded public women's football match took place in 1881. The British Ladies' Football Club was founded in 1894.</p>
<p>In 2021 Carli Lloyd formerly of the USA national team was reported to be the best paid woman footballer in the world with a salary of \$518,000³ while Neymar Jr and Lionel Messi of Paris Saint Germain were the joint best paid men footballers with salaries of \$75 million each (approximately 144 times greater).⁴</p>
<p>Despite recent increases in coverage, women's football has had far less TV and media coverage than men's football. In 2015 women's sport made up only 7% of all sports coverage in the UK – on TV, on the radio, online and in newspapers.⁵</p>
<p>Women's football became very popular towards the end of the First World War. At the time, many women had jobs in factories, replacing the men who had gone to fight. There were around 150 women's teams in England and women's football matches often attracted larger crowds than the men's games.</p>
<p>The first unofficial Women's World Cup was held in Italy in 1970, though the first FIFA Women's World Cup championship wasn't until 1991. The first FIFA World Cup (for men) was held in 1930.</p>
<p>On 5 December 1921, the Football Association banned women from playing on FA-affiliated pitches. Football was thought to be "quite unsuitable for females". Women were also banned from playing football in other countries, such as Germany and Brazil.</p>
<p>In January 2018, women in Saudi Arabia attended a football match in the country for the first time. Up until then, women hadn't been allowed to enter stadiums. Girls at state schools in Saudi Arabia have only been allowed to take part in PE lessons since 2017.</p>
<p>The first official European women's football championship was held in 1984, 24 years after the first men's championship, which was held in 1960.</p>
<p>Lewes Football Club in the southeast of England recently became the first professional or semi-professional football club to pay their male and female football players the same salary.</p>
<p>The FA's ban on women playing football was lifted in 1971.</p>

³ <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/sport/football/football-news/how-much-womens-footballers-paid-24590343>

⁴ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinasettimi/2021/09/21/the-worlds-highest-paid-soccer-players-2021--uniteds-cristiano-ronaldo-reclaims-top-spot-from-psgs--lionel-messi/?sh=77e5d1c33b7b>

⁵ Women in Sport (2015). Stats pack for media. www.womeninsport.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Media-Stats-Pack-June-2015.pdf?938151



Football mystery cards 2

Resource sheet 2

<p>In 2016 the average salary of players in the Premier League (the top men's football competition in England) was £2.64 million, 99 times as much as the average salary in the Women's Super League (England's top women's football competition), which is £26,572.⁶</p>
<p>In 2017 only 2% of all active female football players around the world were mothers. Only 3% of top division football clubs worldwide had creche facilities.⁷</p>
<p>In 2015 it was estimated that there were 137,021 male professional football players in the world, compared to 1,287 females. This means that less than 1% of the world's professional football players were women.⁵</p>
<p>Women's football became an Olympic sport in 1996. Men's football has been recognised as an Olympic sport since 1900.</p>
<p>In October 2017, the Norwegian Football Association agreed to pay players in their male and female national teams the same. Norway is the first country in the world to do this. Often, women playing for their country receive much less pay for their appearances than players in the men's team. Worldwide, 35% of female national team players weren't paid anything.⁶</p>
<p>A recent survey suggested that many women in the UK are still nervous about getting involved in sports such as football, that are widely considered to be "male sports", because they are worried about what people might think of them.</p>
<p>Football is now the most popular female team sport in England.</p>
<p>Attendance at women's football matches in the UK has increased greatly in recent years. In 2013, just under 5,000 people attended the women's FA Cup Final, in 2022, it was over 49,000. Over 89,000 people attended the men's FA Cup Final in 2017.</p>
<p>Sponsorship provides an important source of income for sports, such as football. However, from 2011 to 2013, only 0.4 % of total sports sponsorship went to women. That means that over 99% of the money went to men's sport.⁸</p>
<p>In 2015 95% of boys were playing some form of football by the age of 10. For girls, this figure was only 41%.⁹</p>
<p>Women often have less leisure time than men. On average, women do twice as much unpaid care work, such as childcare and housework, as men – sometimes 10 times as much, often on top of their paid work.¹⁰</p>

⁶ Sporting Intelligence (2017). *Global Sports Salaries Survey 2017*. globalsportssalaries.com/

⁷ FIFPro (2017). *2017 FIFPro Global Employment Report. Working Conditions in Professional Women's Football*. www.fifpro.org/en/women-football-committee/2017-employment-report

⁸ www.womeninsport.org/how-were-doing-it/sponsorship-media/

⁹ www.thefa.com/news/2015/jun/08/we-can-play-release-090615

¹⁰ F. Rhodes, A Parvez and R. Harvey (2017). *An economy that works for women*. Oxfam. www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-works-women

Ideal futures

