

NATIONAL
SPORTS
MUSEUM

AUSTRALIA'S GAME
LEVEL 5 – YEAR 7/8

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL – A GREAT GAME



Key concept

Many people and various elements combine to make Australian football an exciting national game.

Focusing questions

1. How do people and various elements contribute to making Australian football a great game?
2. What do particular groups of people contribute to the game of Australian football?
3. Is Australian football a truly national game?

National Sports Museum exhibition focus

Australia's Game

VELS dimensions addressed

Physical, Personal and Social Learning: Interpersonal Development

Discipline-based Learning: English

Interdisciplinary Learning: Communication; Information and Communications Technology

Overview

This Australian football unit has been developed using inquiry-based learning. It involves an active learning approach which allows students to explore a variety of topics and report their findings to their fellow students.

The topics are broad, and students are encouraged to share and discuss information. The project also allows students to work with others who have like interests, developing their social learning skills.

Students will categorise the people and various elements which combine to make Australian football such a great game. They will explore these elements through research, visiting the National Sports Museum to further develop their understandings and present their findings to fellow students.

Pre-visit activities

Introduce the key concept: Many people and various elements combine to make Australian football an exciting national game.

In a general discussion, have students brainstorm why Australian football is a great game. Display a list of ideas on a poster for students to refer to throughout the topic. These need to include:

- Australian football players
- Australian football umpires
- Australian football coaches
- Women in the game
- Sports medicine
- The fans
- Print media/radio broadcasting and sponsorship
- Participation/game development.

Ask the students to bring in anything they have that would assist them with this activity.

Focusing question 1: How do people and various elements contribute to making Australian football a great game?

Focus skills, knowledge and understandings: Communication; Interpersonal Development; English; Information and Communications Technology

Materials

- Poster to display the list of elements that make a great game
- Class set of Worksheet 1 enlarged to A3 size
- Australian football books from school libraries and any other aids the students can bring in to help one another
- Class set of Worksheet 2

Divide students into groups to explore one group of people or one of the elements that contribute to Australian football. Each group will become the expert group and will share their findings with the other groups at the end of the activity. Students may choose to explore their questions as a whole group, in pairs or independently and report to their groups at the end of each lesson. Students will research their questions using the internet, books, magazines, brochures and pamphlets and record their findings on Worksheet 1. Students may also discover as they work that they have other questions that relate to their topic. These can be added to their investigation table.

Distribute Worksheet 2 to introduce students to the project that will follow the visit to the National Sports Museum. Discuss the Action Plan, the basic Gantt Chart, the assessment criteria for this project and the follow-up questions. Students do not have to decide the presentation style until after the visit to the National Sports Museum as this will allow them time to think about the most effective ways to present their findings. Included on the Worksheet is a basic Gantt Chart to illustrate the project schedule, to help students manage time effectively and to help them stay on task. Students may also need to be reminded of the school's referencing techniques.

Focusing question 2: What do particular groups of people contribute to the game of Australian football?

Focus skills, knowledge and understandings: English; Communication; Interpersonal Development

Research questions relevant to each group

Australian football players

- How has the modern footballer changed over time? Compare past players and today's players in terms of body type, training requirements, dietary management, injury prevention and professionalism.
- Over the last century, has there been an increase in the number of Indigenous players and players of other cultures and nationalities playing Australian football? How has this affected the game?
- Do footballers only need to be good at the game? Are they expected to be role models too?

Australian football umpires

- What training requirements are needed to be an Australian football umpire? (For example, good eyesight, comprehensive understanding of the rules, fitness, confidence in stressful situations, ability to perform under pressure.)
- What extra responsibilities and duties do umpires have? (For example, Brownlow voting.)
- What types of courses/programs are offered to umpires to keep up to date with the game?
- What courses/programs are offered to people who would like to become umpires?

Australian football coaches

- What characteristics make a coach successful?
- What roles and responsibilities does a coach have? (For example, motivation, tips and tactics, ethics and rules, fitness training, media commitments, being a role model and coaching through games.)

Women in the game

- What types of jobs/positions are available for women within Australian football (including the AFL, AFL clubs, local community clubs and the media)?
- Name a successful female Australian footballer. How did she become so?
- Is the women's game the same as the men's game? Explain any differences.
- What roles do women have within Australian football? What can women do for the game and how do they support the players?

Sports medicine

- How has sports medicine changed over time?
- What are the major developments in sports medicine science?
- Have any of these developments improved the standard of the game or the duration of time a footballer can play? How?

The fans

- What can a fan do to support his/her club?
- How can a fan get more involved with his/her club?
- What would happen if fans lost interest in the sport?

Print media, radio broadcasting and sponsorship

- What impact does the media have on the game/players/coaches?
- What types of media target fans specifically and how does this impact on the game?
- How do commentators make the game exciting to listen to?
- What impact has the web had on the promotion of the game?
- List some of the major sponsors of a football club you support. How does sponsorship affect the game?

Participation/game development

- What programs are offered to children to encourage them to play Australian football? (For example, Auskick, club/school football, talent pathways, draft camp and drafts.)
- What are the principles behind these programs?
- Why is it important for a sporting association to have a strong pathway to develop the game?

During the visit to the National Sports Museum

During their visit to the National Sports Museum, students work in their pre-formed groups to explore the Australia's Game gallery. Students can take relevant notes related to the key questions and group questions posed in the pre-visit investigation. The teachers/leaders can roam among groups to ensure the students are getting the most out of each display.

The National Sports Museum provides brief introductions to each of these components yet students must research their topics before and after the visit to develop a broader understanding.

Gather students together to discuss techniques the National Sports Museum has used to engage the audience through their displays. During the visit, students will need to think about how they are going to present their work effectively when they return to school.

As an additional task for each group (time permitting), students may include a case study for each component based on an exhibition from the National Sports Museum. Allow students time to work out what to investigate. Students may also do extra research once back at school. This can be completed with their groups or individually.

Post-visit activities

Focusing question 3: Is Australian football a truly national game?

Focus skills, knowledge and understandings: Communication; Thinking Processes; Interpersonal Development; English

Australian football was invented in Australia but it hasn't always been played across the whole country. Invite students to research how the game's popularity has grown since its origins in the late 1850's when it was played only in Victoria and all teams were associated with particular places in Melbourne and around the state.

Have students tell you what they know about the game becoming national and teams moving to other capital cities (the South Melbourne Swans becoming the Sydney Swans, the Fitzroy Lions becoming the Brisbane Lions, and so on). Ask: Is Australian football a national game? Discuss students' ideas for making the game truly national. For example, have students consider the states and territories that do not have teams. Ask students to suggest names for these future teams and display them in the classroom. Students could also write club songs for these new teams.

Revisit the key concept: Many people and various elements combine to make Australian football an exciting game.

Focus skills, knowledge and understandings: *Communication; Information and Communications Technology; Interpersonal Development*

Materials

- Worksheet 1
- Worksheet 2
- Computers and relevant programs
- Poster paper
- Video recorders, TVs, cameras
- Art supplies, including cardboard boxes, markers, painting equipment, pencils

The following activities are tasks that students will complete after their visit to the National Sports Museum.

Students are given time to complete their research investigation adding to their Australian football investigation table (Worksheet 1). Students can use a different colour pen to show what they have learnt while at the National Sports Museum.

Once the investigation is complete, students will need to work out how they are going to present their findings to their fellow students. As a group, brainstorm effective ways to present work that will engage the audience. Some ideas include using:

- Computer programs like PowerPoint
- Posters to support findings
- Multi-media equipment such as video recorders or cameras to record interviews between students
- Role-plays relevant to their topics
- Dioramas and three-dimensional aids
- Pictures and photographs
- Fact sheets or fact game cards
- The presentation and converting it into a TV game show in the form of a Trivial Pursuit game.

Indicators of student achievement and assessment strategies

The activities in these materials address the following dimensions of VELs:

English: Reading; Writing; Speaking and listening

The student is able to read and view informative texts that explore ideas and information related to challenging topics.

The student is able to identify the ideas, themes and issues explored in these texts, and provide supporting evidence to justify their interpretations.

The student is able to produce, in print and electronic forms, texts for a variety of purposes.

The student is able to critically evaluate the spoken language of others and select, prepare and present spoken texts for specific audiences and purposes

The student is able to ask clarifying questions and build on the ideas of others.

Communication: Listening, viewing and responding; Presenting

The student is able to modify their verbal and non-verbal responses to suit constructive feedback.

The student is able to provide and use constructive feedback and reflection to develop effective communication skills.

Information and Communications Technology: ICT for communicating

The student is able to select the most appropriate search engines to locate information on websites.

The student is able to use complex search strategies to refine their searches.

The student is able to judge the integrity of the located information based on its credibility, accuracy, reliability and comprehensiveness.

Interpersonal Development: Building social relationships; Working in teams

The student is able to demonstrate respect for the individuality of others.

The student is able to accept responsibility as a team member and support other members to share information, explore the ideas of others and work cooperatively to achieve a shared purpose within a realistic timeframe.

The student is able to reflect on individual and team outcomes and act to improve their own and the team's performance.

Source: Adapted from Victorian Essential Learning Standards, VCAA 2005 <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>

Additional resources

- AFL (Development) website: <http://www.afl.com.au/Development/tabid/10211/Default.aspx>
- Australian Sports Commission website: <http://www.ausport.gov.au/schools/index.asp>
- AFL Victoria website: <http://www.aflvic.com.au>
- AFL (Aboriginal players) website:
http://www.afl.com.au/Portals/0/afl_docs/Influence_of_Aboriginal_Players.pdf
- Female footy:
<http://www.afl.com.au/Development/PlayAFL/FemaleFooty/tabid/10249/Default.aspx>
- Victorian women's football league website: <http://www.vwfl.org.au>
- AFL Development- Umpires website:
<http://www.afl.com.au/Development/Umpiring/tabid/10269/Default.aspx>
- Australian football League Umpires Association website: <http://www.aflua.com.au>

CD-ROMs

- *Our National Game*, Australian Football League
- *It's More Than a Game*, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton South, 2007

Books

- *AFL Record guide to season 2008: The official statistical history of the AFL*, AFL Publishing, Melbourne, 2008
- Atkinson, Graeme, *The Complete book of AFL Finals*, Five Mile Press, Canterbury, 2002
- Blainey, Geoffry, *A Game of Our Own: the origins of Australian Football*, Information Australia, Melbourne, 1990
- Hess, Rob; Stewart, Bob, *More than a Game*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1998
- Hibbins, Gillian, *Running with the Ball*, Lynedoch Publications, Melbourne, 1987
- Hibbins, Gillian, *Sport and Racing in Colonial Melbourne – The Cousins and Me: Colden Harrison, Tom Wills and William Hammersley*, Lynedoch Publications, Melbourne, 2007
- Holmesby, Russell; Main, Jim *Encyclopaedia of League Footballers: Every AFL player since 1897*, Bas Publishing, Melbourne, 2007
- Hunt, Paula, *Shirtfront: Short and Amazing History of Aussie Rules*, Black Dog Books, Fitzroy, 2005
- Hutchinson, Garrie (ed) *The Clubs: The Complete History of Every Club in the VFL/AFL*, Viking, Ringwood, 1998
- Ross, John (ed) *100 Years of Australian Football: 1897-1996*, Penguin Books, Ringwood, 1996
- Slattery, Geoff *The Australian Game of Football Since 1858*, Geoff Slattery Publications, Melbourne, 2008

Tour of the MCG

During your visit to the National Sports Museum at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, we also suggest that you take an MCG Tour. Our bookings staff will help schedule this. It is an excellent opportunity to make special use of the reduced price combination package.

Worksheet 1: Australian football investigation table

Name: _____

Focus question/Investigation topic	Reference	Information

Worksheet 2: Project plan and criteria

Name: _____

Action plan

What people and elements combine to make Australian football a great game?

One component that makes Australian football a great game is:

Group questions:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Form of presentation:

My jobs within the group are:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Due date of presentation _____

Follow-up questions

How well did your group work together and why?

What support did your group provide you with?

Did your group use its time wisely? Please explain.
