

Bend it like Beckham

Pre-reading Activities

Getting to Know the Characters

Look at the following extract from the book 'Bend it like Beckham' and then answer the following questions.

'But playing for the team is an honour,' I blurted out, unable to keep quiet any longer.
 Mum glared at me. 'What bigger honour is there than respecting your elders?' she demanded.
 Dad looked at Joe. 'Young man, when I was a teenager in Nairobi, I was the best fast bowler in my school', he said curtly. 'Our team even won the East African cup. But when I came to this country, nothing. I wasn't allowed to play in any team. These bloody *goreh* in their clubhouses laughed at my turban and sent me packing.'
 I looked down at the floor. I knew about this because Mum had told me, but Dad had never talked about it before.
 'I'm sorry, Mr Bhamra,' Joe began. 'But now -'
 'Now what?' Dad broke in. 'None of our boys are in any of the football leagues. And you think they'll let our girls in? I don't want to build up Jesminder's hopes -' he glanced over at me ' - she'll only end up disappointed like me.'

1. What do the references to 'East Africa', 'goreh' and 'turban' tell you about the Bamrah's background?
2. What did the narrator want to do?
3. Did the narrator's mother and father agree with her?
4. What is the difference between the narrator's father's objections and those of her mother?



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Building a Story

You are going to answer some questions about a story you haven't read! The answers lie in your imagination. Work in small groups to answer the questions (read all the questions first as some clues to some of the answers can be found there). From your answers you can build up your own version of the story. Get ready to tell your story to the rest of the class.

1. Why did Joe, the trainer of the girl's football team, go round to see Mr and Mrs Bhamra, Jesminder's parents?
2. How did Mr and Mrs Bhamra treat Joe?
3. What did Jess (Jesminder) think about Joe being at her house?
4. Why did Joe tell Jess about the football match in Germany when her parents couldn't hear?
5. What did Jess's friend Jules think when she saw Jess turn up for the plane?
6. How did Jess feel when she saw the number of spectators at the German match?
7. How closely matched were the two teams and what was the result by half time?
8. How did the game end? How did Jess feel?



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While Reading Activities

1. Read the first part of the chapter (until line 95) and answer the following questions:
 - What were the **two** things that Jess was nervous about Joe's visit?
 - What do you think is the significance of the sentence '*Your parents don't always know what's right for you*' being repeated? Will this affect Jess's future actions?

2. Read from line 96 to line 153 and answer the following questions:
 - Why did Joe say 'I didn't hear that'?
 - Will Jess's enthusiasm and new found freedom carry her through the 90 minute match?

3. Read from line 154 to the end.
 - Explain the meaning of 'gutted' in your own words.
 - What do you think happens when Jess and the team get back to England?

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While Reading

Glossary

The following words appear in the extract from Narinder Dhami's book 'Bend it like Beckham' featured in this kit. The definitions are accurate for the context of this story, but may vary in different contexts.

barge in	<i>arrive unannounced</i>
cartwheeled	<i>use hands and feet alternatively to turn in circles</i>
deadlock	<i>reach a point where it seems no one can win</i>
dribbling	<i>run and keep the ball at your feet</i>
fab	<i>fabulous; fantastic</i>
fast bowler	<i>in the game of cricket, someone who delivers the ball quickly</i>
filthy look	<i>show immense displeasure in the way you look at someone</i>
flipping	<i>jumping; feeling excited and nervous at the same time</i>
glared	<i>looked angrily</i>
goalie	<i>goal keeper</i>
grin	<i>wide, happy smile showing teeth</i>
gutted	<i>feeling devastated; very upset</i>
lead	<i>feeling very heavy</i>
let's stuff 'em	<i>let's beat them properly</i>
mock-sexy pout	<i>pushing out lips, pretending to look sexy</i>
muttered	<i>spoke quietly; hardly heard</i>
niggling	<i>worrying; causing anxiety</i>
no pushover	<i>not easy</i>
on strike	<i>refuse to work</i>
pep talk	<i>talk designed to encourage a team to do well</i>
rattling	<i>making a clicking noise</i>
roar	<i>noise made by a large crowd of people</i>
scorched down the road	<i>drove a car very quickly</i>
second wind	<i>find some extra, hidden strength</i>
shrieking	<i>crying</i>
sternly	<i>seriously</i>
trudged	<i>walking as if feet were very heavy</i>
unfounded	<i>without cause or reason</i>
were all up for	<i>everyone was keen or interested to do it</i>
wheeze	<i>breathing noisily</i>
whipped out	<i>made appear suddenly</i>
whisked out of	<i>taken away quickly</i>
wobbling	<i>shaking; shaking and moving unsteadily</i>

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After Reading Activities

Women's Football

'Bend it like Beckham' is very much about women playing football. This is becoming increasingly popular in Britain, as the following articles will show.

1. The first two articles will appear a bit confusing. This is because they are mixed up together, and your job is to decide which paragraphs belong to which article. One article is called '**TV Stars Back Women's Cup**' and the other is called '**Kelly's a genius**', but which is which?

Once you have sorted this out, there is a further problem – the paragraphs of the piece called '**TV Stars Back Women's Football**' are all mixed up themselves and you will have to decide the correct order. Luckily the paragraphs of the other article, 'Kelly's a genius' are all in the right order – once you have removed the paragraphs that don't belong! Finally, you will be able to say which of the photographs below shows Ms Bell and which shows Ms Smith, won't you?. All clear? Then off you go.....



The FA Women's Cup Final, in partnership with Nationwide, will take place at Loftus Road, QPR FC, on Bank Holiday Monday, 3rd May at 1.00pm KO. The Cup Final will also be televised live on BBC1 for the third successive season

US-based England striker Kelly Smith has signed for W-League club New Jersey Wildcats – and has immediately been dubbed 'a genius' by Wildcats coach Charlie Naimo.

Jake who will be attending the match said: "It seems to me that more and more girls are kicking a football about and the talent that will be on show at the final is testament to the fact that women's football is moving in the right direction. I am really looking forward to watching the match and soaking up the atmosphere."

"Kelly Smith is flat-out one of the best overall players in the world," said Naimo, who has followed the striker's career since she was starring on the American college soccer scene. "From the first moment I saw Kelly play at Seton Hall," added Naimo, "I have been a huge fan and I'm really excited to be working with her."

"No words can describe the way she plays - she's absolutely electric. She's strong, intense, quick with the ball, but her best attribute is how clever she is – she's a genius."

Jake and Angellica, who are keen football fans, are calling on the nation's kids to get behind the ever increasingly popular sport of women's football.

That's a massive billing to live up to, but Smith takes her new coach's words in her stride as she begins preparing for what will be her return to W-League football. The one-time Arsenal striker spent two seasons in the League with New Jersey Stallions before joining WUSA outfit Philadelphia Charge.

The demise of the first professional women's soccer league has led to Smith's move back to the W-League in what the Wildcats call 'the most substantial signing in the team's history'.

Speaking from her New Jersey home, Smith - who will captain the Wildcats – said: "It's nice to have compliments like Charlie's, but I don't think it puts extra pressure on me. I just want to start playing on a regular basis again and this will give me the opportunity I've been looking for at a good level of soccer against quality opposition."

Angellica, who took part in the Fourth Round Draw of The FA Women's Cup last season, added: "Women's football is strongly underrated, yet the skills and expertise needed to play are the same as in the men's game. I hope as many families as possible will get along to the match and cheer both teams on. I wish both teams the best of luck. "

"As well as myself the Wildcats have signed one of my Philadelphia team mates, Anne Makinen, and USA international Heather O'Reilly - so they mean business. There could be another major signing on the way too, and I'm really looking forward to starting training towards the end of April and our first League game on 8th May."

"I believe we can be successful in the W-League, and a bonus for me will be the extra fitness and match-sharpness I'll have if I'm selected for England games. I really want to help the national team in the build-up to next year's European Championship Finals and I'd obviously love to play in the tournament itself."

"Failing to qualify for last year's World Cup Finals in America was a big blow, but it would be great to play in Euro 2005 – especially as it's in England and in front of our own fans."

CBBC stars Jake Humphrey and Angellica Bell, hosts of the new Saturday Show, are lending their support to The FA Women's Cup Final, which sees Arsenal take on Charlton Athletic on Bank Holiday Monday 3rd May.

2. Look at the article above called 'Kelly's a genius'. See how many more words you can put into each box, corresponding to the headings.

<p>Words of Praise <i>genius</i></p>
<p>Words Suggesting Humility <i>takes in her stride</i></p>
<p>Words Indication Physical Ability <i>extra fitness</i></p>

3. Here is part of an news item about women's football in Britain. Some of the words are underlined. You have to match the underlined words or phrases with expressions that mean the same thing, which appear in the box on the right.

Goal-den girl Julie Fleeting spearheaded a comprehensive 8-0 Arsenal victory over Aston Villa as the FA Nationwide Women's Premier League title race moved excitingly towards the finishing line.

Scotland striker Fleeting bagged a hat-trick to take her goal tally to 12 in eight matches since joining the Gunners at the end of January.

Despite clocking up their 10th successive League win, however, Arsenal are still second in the table as leaders Charlton Athletic won 1-0 at Leeds United thanks to a ninth minute goal by captain Casey Stoney.

The Addicks are two points ahead of second in the table Arsenal, but their fixtures are now completed while the Gunners have one game remaining.

Victory in that last match will therefore give Arsenal the title, but their opponents – none other than arch rivals Fulham - may have something to say about that.

A 3-2 win at Doncaster Rovers Belles meant that third in the table Fulham can take the title by beating Arsenal then winning their final match, at home to Birmingham City.

Should the Cottagers draw at Arsenal, however – and the teams drew 1-1 in their October meeting at Fulham – then Charlton would be crowned champions.

- biggest opponents
- achieving
- the end
- three in a row
- obtained
- equal score
- led
- name for Charlton Athletic
- name for Arsenal
- become winners
- total

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4. Here is a piece about a women’s football team in Afghanistan. Where do you think the article appeared first, and what is it describing?

Afghan Girls Can Kick

Director: Bahareh Hosseini, UK/Afghanistan, 2007, 50 minutes

Under the Taliban, women’s freedom in Afghanistan was almost entirely curbed. For five years, women went through life veiled, usually indoors, excluded from education and, of course, from sports. Now some women are seizing their chance to do what they couldn’t before. *Afghan Girls Can Kick* is a portrait of teenage girls breaking stereotypes set by an intensely conservative Afghan society. As players in Afghanistan’s first ever women’s national football team, these young women are escaping poverty while gaining self-esteem and confidence. For security reasons, no international team has ever played against them in Afghanistan; at a friendly game on Peace Day, NATO’s women soldiers are no match for the Afghani team.

When the team is invited to a tournament in Islamabad, it’s the first time they will play a game on a real soccer field. The film follows the team’s preparations for their first international matches, concentrating on a few players. As a child, Roya had to collect waste paper on the filthy streets of Kabul’s slums to provide fuel for her family. Through an Afghan charity, she received an education and found she had a talent for football. She now plays centre-forward for the national women’s team. Other members of the team recount their problems with the Taliban and how football helped them see a future in present-day Afghanistan, beset by insecurity and suicide bombings. The film offers a rare insight into the lives of young Afghan women, showing them not as passive victims, but as people striving for a future.

1. Why don’t the team play against international teams?
2. What problems does the film expose?
3. In what way should we expect our opinions of Afghan women to be challenged by this film?



5. Discussion. Women’s football in your country: what do you know about it? What do you think about it? How should it be encouraged?