**Spartacus Educational Classroom Activity**

# Football and the First World War (Questions & Answers)

<http://spartacus-educational.com/EXAManswerFWW2.htm>

Question 1: Read the first two paragraphs of the introduction. Why was it difficult for professional footballers to join the British Army in August 1914?

Answer 1: Professional footballers were tied to clubs through one-year renewable contracts. Players could only join the armed forces if the clubs agreed to cancel their contracts.

Question 2: What is the cartoonist saying in source 2?

Answer 2: The cartoonist is trying to make professional football players feel guilty by not joining the British Army.

Question 3: The famous amateur footballer, Charles B. Fry, called for the abolition of football, demanding that all professional contracts be annulled and that no one below forty years of age be allowed to attend matches. What might a professional footballer had said to Fry in response to this statement?

Answer 3: Amateur footballers like Charles Fry usually came from wealthy families and did not need to be paid to play football. However, professional players played football for a living. They might well have said to Fry that unlike him, they could not afford to give up playing football.

Question 4: Study source 4? Why does the poster contain a quotation from a German newspaper?

Answer 4: The poster quotes the Frankfurter Zeitung as saying: "The young Britons prefer to exercise their long limbs on the football ground rather than to expose them to any sort of risk in the service of their country." The designer of the poster wants the young men to respond to this comment by joining the Football Battalion.

Question 5: Read sources 2, 3, 5 and 7. Do they agree that professional footballers should join the armed forces in 1914?

Answer 5: The authors of sources 2, 3 and 5 want British young men to stop playing football and to join the armed forces. However, the person who has written the article for the [Athletic News](http://spartacus-educational.com/Fathleticnews.htm) disagrees. He argues that football provides entertainment for the working class: "The whole agitation is nothing less than an attempt by the ruling classes to stop the recreation on one day in the week of the masses... The poor are giving their lives for this country in thousands. In many cases they have nothing else ... There are those who could bear arms, but who have to stay at home and work for the army's requirements, and the country's needs. These should, according to a small clique of virulent snobs, be deprived of the one distraction that they have had for over thirty years."

Question 6: What is taking place in source 6?

Answer 6: The photograph shows young men joining the British Army. Every man had to swear an oath of allegiance. This involved reading a statement: "I swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs, and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, in Person, Crown, and Dignity against all enemies, according to the conditions of my service."

Question 7: Study source 9. What did the government do to persuade footballers to join the British Army?

Answer 7: William Joynson Hicks established the 17th Service (Football) Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment on 12th December, 1914. This group became known as the Football Battalion. It was believed that if footballers could serve in the same regiment, they might be more willing to serve in the army.