

FOOTBALL

PACKET # 13

INSTRUCTIONS

This Learning Packet has two parts: (1) text to read and (2) questions to answer.

The text describes a particular sport or physical activity, and relates its history, rules, playing techniques, scoring, notes and news.

The Response Forms (questions and puzzles) check your understanding and appreciation of the sport or physical activity.

INTRODUCTION

Football is a physically challenging, aggressive sport played by two teams of opposing players. Each of the two teams tries to get the ball across the opposing team's goal by running, kicking and passing the ball.

American-style football is often known as “the gridiron sport” because of the design of the field. The sport is widely popular in the United States and is gaining fan support in Canada. Although American-style tackle football, as it is called, has spread to a few other countries, it has not achieved the international reputation of such sports as baseball and basketball.



American-style football is a combination of two older sports, soccer and rugby. Soccer (still called football in England) and rugby, which developed from soccer, are both more popular in Europe and other countries than in the United States.

Unlike soccer, a game in which players are forbidden to use their hands but may use other body parts, football allows perhaps the roughest physical contact of any team sport. However, two variations on tackle football, called “touch football” and “flag football” respectively, do not involve tackling the opponent and are less physically challenging to play.

HISTORY OF FOOTBALL

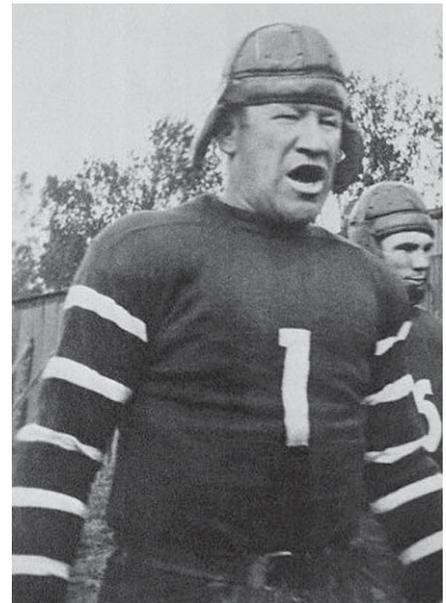
Football first became popular in the United States in the 1820s, when it was widely played

in colleges and universities. Many colleges, including Yale, Harvard and Cornell, played an early version of football which incorporated many features of rugby. Football at this time had no uniform rules and regulations, and games often ended up with heaps of injured players on the field! To stop this physically violent aspect of football, Walter Camp (now remembered as “the father of American football”) in 1880 made many changes in the game. Most of these changes regulated the physical violence of the sport and many have lasted into modern times.

Camp refined the scrimmage (a term borrowed from rugby), a play whereby the center puts the ball into play by sending it to the quarterback. In addition, Camp introduced the role of the quarterback, now considered the most exciting position on the team. Camp also altered the number of players on a team from the traditional 15 of rugby to the 11 now used in modern football. Camp was also the person who finalized the alignment of the 11 players into 7 forwards, a quarterback, two halfbacks and a fullback.

Between 1882 and 1888, Camp made three more significant changes in the game. First, a system of downs and yardage to be gained was finalized. According to the new rules, a team has to surrender the ball if it fails to gain five yards (later increased to 10 yards) in three downs (later raised to four). This was the rule that made it necessary to mark the field with horizontal lines five yards apart, thus giving the field its traditional “gridiron” appearance.

Another rule Camp introduced was regulations for scoring—specifically, giving points to different scoring methods. For example, tackling a ball carrier behind his own goal line was worth one point. Many of Camp’s changes in this area still apply today.



Finally, Camp changed the tackling rule to its present status. In early football, tackling was permitted only from the waist up. Camp changed the rule to permit tackling as low as the knee area. Linemen, however, were required to keep their arms at their sides, and were not allowed to block with their arms as they previously had done.

Football has grown steadily in popularity in the United States and Canada, largely because of television. Thanks to television coverage of this sport, football has grown into a major industry in North America. Television, in fact, dictates much about how the game is now played. For example, halftime, time outs and even the overall length of the game have been extended to allow for TV commercials. As a result, games on television can last up to three hours.

Television has also made superstars out of many players, giving them a chance for new careers in the media. Many football players have “retired” from the game, only to reappear on television as actors and sports commentators.

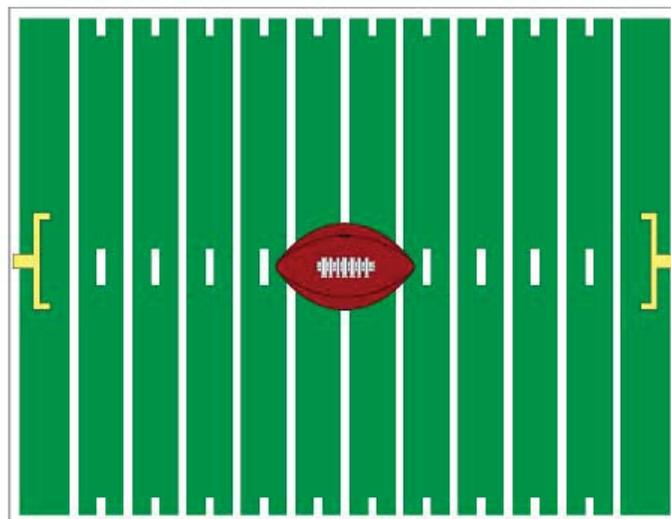
HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

The football field is traditionally 100 yards long from one goal line to the other and 160 feet wide. The “end zone” extends ten yards past each goal line. In professional football, the goalposts are ten yards behind the goal lines. The width between the posts is 18 feet six inches.

A coin toss determines which team has the choice of receiving the ball or starting the game with a kick-off. A kick-off occurs when the football is kicked while it is placed on a tee and sent to the opposing team. The kick-off traditionally occurs on the kicking team’s 35-yard line. The receiving team is situated 10 yards from the kickoff line. (The NFL changed this rule in 2011, see News & Notes for more information.)

Once the ball has been kicked off, the team with the ball tries to advance down the field in order to score points. When a player carries the ball into the end zone or catches a forward pass in the end zone, he/she scores six points for a touchdown.

Meanwhile, the defensive team tries to get into a scoring position either by intercepting a pass or by picking up a fumbled ball. The team that scores a touchdown can get an extra point by kicking the ball over the crossbar of the goalposts in a move known as a “conversion.” By running instead of kicking the conversion, two additional points can be earned.



In order to make a first down, the offensive team has four downs, or plays, in which to advance the ball at least ten yards. Each time that a player makes a first down, that team gets another series of four downs in which it can gain at least ten more yards.

If a team has failed to gain 10 yards by the fourth down, it has two options to choose from. The team may opt to punt the ball to the other team, or it may attempt a field goal. A “punt” entails dropping the ball and kicking it before it touches the ground.

A football game lasts for sixty minutes broken into four 15-minute periods, or “quarters.” After the second quarter, there is usually a 20-minute break.

The clock may be stopped for any of the following four reasons:

- an incomplete pass
- a runner goes out of bounds
- a penalty
- after a score is made

Teams are typically penalized five, ten or fifteen yards, depending on the type of foul committed. For example, a five-yard penalty would be given for delaying the game or for crossing the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed. Ten-yard penalties are typically given for illegally holding a player on the opposing team.

Fifteen-yard penalties are given for the most serious offenses. They include blocking from behind, butting another player with a helmet and running into/tackling the passer once the ball has been thrown.

EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING

Because of the rough nature of football, modern players wear a good deal of padding and protection, including helmets, face masks and pads that cover the hips, shoulders, knees and forearms. Flak jackets also are used to cover the ribs and mouthpieces protect the mouth and face. Now that artificial turf is so widely used on playing fields, special cleated shoes are also worn.



Players wear a uniform characterized by tight pants ending just below the knee. Numbers are sewn on the fronts and backs of the jerseys for identification purposes. Quarterbacks

and kickers are 1-19, running backs and defensive backs, 20-49, centers and linebackers, 50-59 and linemen, 60-79. Wide receivers and tight ends are numbers 80-89 and defensive linemen/linebackers use numbers 90-99.



FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS

For many people, football—especially professional football—has replaced baseball as the “National Pastime.” Monday night football on television has become an American institution, and all across the country people gather around TV sets to watch their favorite teams perform.

Television coverage is one of the major reasons for football’s popularity: football is a dramatic sport, with lots of body contact and heavy action. Baseball, on the other hand, is less visually dramatic for some, and, as such, less exciting. Baseball and football fans will argue both sides as long as there are games.

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

Super Bowl XLV was played between the American Football Conference champion Pittsburgh Steelers and the National Football Conference champion Green Bay Packers. The game was held at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas on February 6, 2011. The Packers defeated the Steelers by the score of 31–25. Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers was named Super Bowl MVP, completing 24 of 39 passes for 304 yards and three touchdowns.



This was the Packers’ fourth Super Bowl victory out of five total appearances and a record thirteenth overall NFL title. Even with this loss, the Steelers still hold the record for six Super Bowl victories, out of eight total appearances. The Steelers’ most recent Super Bowl appearance was a win in the 2008 season at Super Bowl XLIII.



The Steelers, coached by Mike Tomlin since 2007, entered the playoffs with a 12–4 record, while the Packers, coached by Mike McCarthy since 2006, had a 10–6 record. The Steelers made the Super Bowl with 31–24 and 24–19 victories over the Baltimore Ravens and New York Jets respectively. The Packers meanwhile defeated the top three seeds entering the post-season, with 21–16, 48–21 and

21–14 victories over the Philadelphia Eagles, Atlanta Falcons and Chicago Bears respectively. The defending champions from Super Bowl XLIV, the New Orleans Saints, as well as the defending AFC champion Indianapolis Colts, were eliminated from the playoffs in the first round.

This was the first time the Super Bowl was played in the Dallas–Fort Worth area, and the third time it was held in the state of Texas, with the city of Houston having hosted Super Bowl VIII and Super Bowl XXXVIII previously. The hosting venue, Cowboys Stadium, was built less than two years earlier, is the largest domed stadium in the world with a capacity of 110,000 (including standing room), and is home to the Dallas Cowboys.



RULE CHANGES FOR THE NFL

The NFL will move kickoffs up 5 yards to the 35-yard line, keep touchbacks coming out to the 20 and allow the number of players in a blocking wedge to remain at two. Kick coverage players now will be limited to lining up 5 yards or fewer from the spot of the kickoff. Another change calls for all scoring plays to be reviewable by the replay official and referee.

At this time there are no similar plans to change these rules at the College or High School levels.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Despite all the attention that pro football gets, there would be no NFL if there were not

colleges to discover, train and develop new football players. Consequently, colleges all over the country are proving grounds for new players, some of whom dream of a pro ball career. NFL scouts are constantly on the watch for talented players.



College players operate within either of two associations: the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) and the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics). Season play leads to annual bowl games, in which college teams that have won their division title compete for the season championship. The winners of major bowl championships in 2009-2010 included: Orange Bowl: Iowa, Sugar Bowl: Florida, Fiesta Bowl: Boise State and Rose Bowl: Ohio State.

The most coveted award for college football is the Heisman Trophy. Listed below are some recent winners:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>NFL Team</u>
2010	Cameron Newton	Auburn	QB	
2009	Mark Ingram	Alabama	RB	Still in college
2008	Sam Bradford	Oklahoma	QB	St. Louis Rams
2007	Tim Tebow	Florida	QB	Being Scouted
2006	Troy Smith	Ohio State	QB	Baltimore Ravens
2005	Reggie Bush	USC	RB	New Orleans Saints
2004	Matt Leinart	USC	QB	Arizona Cardinals
2003	Jason White	Oklahoma	QB	Tennessee Titans (retired)
2002	Carson Palmer	USC	QB	Cincinnati Bengals
2001	Eric Crouch	Nebraska	QB	St. Louis Rams
2000	Chris Weinke	Florida State	QB	Carolina Panthers



Cameron Newton
2010 Heisman Winner

High school football is also exciting to watch or play. Few activities are more fun than rooting for your team. Many professional players start their first serious training in high school. Remember also that standouts often receive athletic scholarships for college.

You might want to visit these web sites to stay up on what's happening in the sport:

<http://www.nfl.com>

<http://www.ncaa.org>



5. How is a first down made and what advantage does it give the team that makes it?

6. What options does a team have if it has not gained 10 yards by the fourth down?

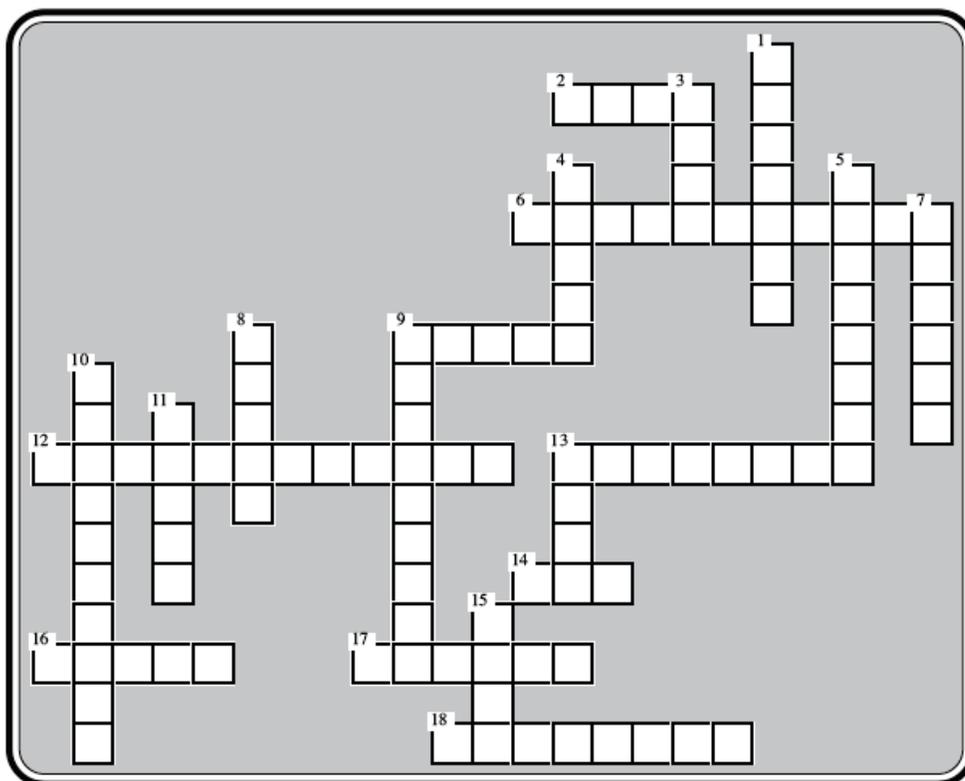
7. For what four reasons may the clock be stopped?

8. Fifteen-yard penalties are given for what kinds of offenses?

9. What kinds of protective gear and clothing does a football player need to wear?

10. Name at least one way in which television coverage has affected the game of football.

Name: _____ Date: _____

**Across:**

2. He is the father of American football
6. The offensive leader on the field
9. Number of minutes played in football game
12. When a defensive player catches a pass
13. There is usually only one of these on the field for the offensive team
14. The number of yards needed for a first down
16. 160 feet is the ____ of the football field
17. After this quarter there is a halftime break in the game
18. Football is called the ____ sport because of the field design

Down:

1. Length in yards of a football field
3. What a team often does if it does not make a first down on the third attempt
4. American football is a combination of soccer and this sport
5. There are usually two players on the field in this position
7. This player has a jersey number lower than 19
8. A type of football game that does not involve tackling
9. When the center sends the ball to the quarterback
10. Kicking the ball over the crossbar for an extra point
11. The number of forwards in football
13. Number of yards a team is penalized for a delay of game
15. The number of attempts a team has to make a first down

Name: _____ Date: _____

Physical Education 13 Word Search



Use the clues below to discover words in the above puzzle. Circle the words.

1. The offensive leader on the field
2. Number of yards a team is penalized for a delay of game
3. Number of minutes played in football game
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