



### Unit 15 Popular sports

#### Before you read

Think about these questions. Do you enjoy watching football games? Do you think football is exciting?

#### Read the article

##### All-American Football

<sup>1</sup> Football is not just a game in the U.S. It's an event. A *big* event. In the U.S., the games are often only a part of a colorful festivity.

<sup>2</sup> Football has its beginning in soccer and rugby. All have the same objective: to get the ball to the opponent's goal and score points. In soccer, the ball is advanced only by kicking it. In rugby, a player can pick up the ball and run with it toward the opponent's goal. In 1874 a new form of the football game that combined both soccer and rugby developed. Players not only kicked the ball but they did more; they ran with the ball and passed it to teammates.

<sup>3</sup> Football in the U.S. is played by more than 600 colleges and universities in stadiums often called "bowls." At the end of the college season, the best college football teams are invited to play against each other in "bowl games." For many people, the main attractions in these games are the colorful bands and cheerleaders who entertain the audience with gymnastics and dancing.

<sup>4</sup> The most popular football event is the Rose Bowl held on New Year's Day in Pasadena, California. Again, for many, the game itself is not the main attraction. The Tournament of Roses Parade, which is a breathtaking parade of floats covered entirely with flowers, is what millions of people come to see. Marching bands and floats from around the world participate and compete for prizes for the best and most beautiful float.

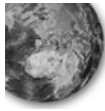
<sup>5</sup> After the Rose Bowl and the end of the college football season, professional football teams play in their own championship games. The final play-off game to decide the season's champion team is called the "Super Bowl."

<sup>6</sup> Once again, the game at the Super Bowl is less important than all the activity surrounding it. It has now become a tradition to have Super Bowl parties on Super Bowl Sunday. Usually, friends gather at one household. Everyone brings food. Some guests bring extra televisions which they place throughout the house. This way the guests, in between eating and talking, can watch the game anywhere in the house.

<sup>7</sup> Another part of the Super Bowl event that people look forward to is the halftime show, a 15-minute intermission in the middle of the game. Performances from internationally famous performers, light shows, marching bands, cheerleaders, and dancers are all part of halftime. The Super Bowl halftime is watched by millions of people around the country.

<sup>8</sup> Part sport, part entertainment, football has become an important part of the American way of life.

Source: Adapted from *More About the USA* by Milada Broukal and Janet Milhomme, Longman



### Build your reading skills: Skimming for main ideas

Circle the letter of the phrase or clause that best expresses the main idea of each paragraph.

- Paragraph 2 is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - how soccer was played by American college students
  - how football originated from soccer and rugby
  - how football is similar to rugby
- Paragraph 3 is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - the entertainment provided at the stadiums
  - the large crowds at the bowls
  - football games played by colleges and universities
- The main topic in Paragraph 4 is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - how people from all over the world compete for the best float at the Tournament of Roses
  - what the main attractions are at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California
  - how to join the Tournament of Roses
- Paragraph 6 is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - what people do during a Super Bowl party
  - why people have parties during the Super Bowl
  - where people go during the Super Bowl
- The main topic of Paragraph 7 is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - the entertainment provided at the Super Bowl halftime show
  - the millions of people who watch the Super Bowl halftime show
  - the famous performers who perform during the Super Bowl halftime show

### Check your comprehension

Read the article again. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

- Players can only kick the ball to advance it.
  - football
  - rugby
  - soccer
- Players can pick up the ball, run with it, and pass it on to teammates.
  - football
  - rugby
  - soccer
- Football games played by the best college and university teams at the end of the college season.
  - Super Bowl
  - "Bowl" games
  - Rose Bowl
- Final play-off games played by professional football teams.
  - Super Bowl
  - "Bowl" games
  - Rose Bowl
- A football event where a parade of floats made entirely with flowers is the main feature.
  - Super Bowl
  - "Bowl" games
  - Rose Bowl