VIOLENCE ON THE PITCH

Football hooliganism has been widespread for many years now, and, for the anti-football groups, the issue is clear. Violence in the streets appears to be related to violence on the field, and if we stop football, we will prevent much of that violence.

Unlike the majority of hooligans, however, I have been a football fan since I was seven, and my father used to take me to watch the local team almost every Saturday. In those days there were only three policemen to look after a crowd of 20,000 people. Now there are a whole army of them to keep half that number in order.

It is therefore no wonder that sociologists want to ban football altogether. The fact is that the phenomenon in Britain is very different from what it is abroad. The English are extremely aggressive and unbelievably crude. Of course, that’s true of some English supporters. Some Spanish fans, for example, are also violent, but it’s nothing like the sort of crude brutality of the English. Nevertheless, what the experts cannot understand is that it isn’t the match or the result that produces the violence. In England some people come determined to make trouble, whatever the result. They are particularly keen on tormenting continental supporters.

The truth of the matter is that, for football hooligans, violence is part of everyday life. If we closed all the football grounds tomorrow, the violence would go on somewhere else. Violence in our society is something we have to cure, but its roots have little to do with football.
QUESTIONS

1. State in your own words what the author means when he says: ‘[…] for football hooligans, violence is part of everyday life.’ (2 marks)

2. Say in each case whether the statement is true or false according to the text. Write T or F. If the answer is not mentioned in the text, mark it as false (F). (2 marks)

   a) The anti-football groups think that street violence will disappear altogether if we ban football. ___
   b) The author’s father used to take him to watch the football match every week. ___
   c) Most football clubs don’t hire the police to keep order because they don’t have enough money. ___
   d) Football hooliganism is not a new phenomenon. ___

3. These words and expressions are all found in the text: truth, continental, issue, make trouble, go on, experts, keep, fans, somewhere else, phenomenon, abroad, hooligans. Choose the ones that mean the same as the following: (2 marks)

   (a) in foreign countries ____________________________
   (b) continue ____________________________
   (c) important subject of debate ____________________________
   (d) supporters ____________________________
4. Choose, \( a \), \( b \) or \( c \) after each statement below. Only one answer is correct. **(2 marks)**

1. The author believes that, generally speaking, ...
   a) English supporters are particularly violent when they are abroad.
   b) some Spanish supporters are more violent than the English.
   c) English supporters are more violent than the Spanish.

2. Experts have observed that ...
   a) the result of a match has no influence on the behaviour of hooligans.
   b) hooligans are more aggressive when their team wins.
   c) hooligans are more aggressive when their team loses.

3. The author of the text ...
   a) has been a football fan since he was a child.
   b) has never been a football fan.
   c) used to be a very keen football fan when he was younger.

4. Sociologists believe that ...
   a) football hooligans should join the army.
   b) football should be banned.
   c) football should not be banned.

5. Answer the following questions: **(2 marks)**

   a) Are alcohol, drugs and unemployment related to football violence? Give reasons to support your answer.
   b) Should football-related crimes be punished severely? Give reasons to support your answer.