



Theme 11

Facts and Opinions

Teacher Answer Sheet

A

1. opinion
2. fact
3. fact (Their first match was played at Rifle Fields in 1866)
4. opinion
5. fact
6. opinion
7. opinion
8. opinion
9. opinion
10. fact
11. fact
12. fact (Rifle Fields (1866-1878); Fartown (1878-1992); Leeds Road (1992-1994); The McAlpine/Galpharm/John Smith's Stadium (1994-present))
13. opinion
14. opinion

B (suggested answers only)

1. partly agree: The freedom of running about, the interest in mob football and the excitement of playing it would have been enjoyable, but mob football was also a dangerous game and the pain of injury, or fear of it, would not have been enjoyable.

4. disagree: The railways were certainly important in enabling teams and supporters to travel to matches in other places as the game of rugby developed, but it was several years after the Huddersfield club was formed before there were many teams in other places for them to play. It is arguable that the growth of the woollen industry, driving the rapid increase in population in Huddersfield and other Yorkshire towns, was more important.

6. agree: The RFU was unrealistic in demanding that working men in the north should not receive broken time payments, compensating wages they lost by leaving work early to play, at a time when wages were low, employment uncertain and the rugby matches of the leading clubs were attracting huge crowds.

7. disagree: The 'Team of all Talents' won all four trophies in 1914-15, the last full season before the war, and they won four of the first five competitions they entered after the war in 1919-20, so it is highly likely that they would have won numerous trophies in the intervening years.

8. agree: Five years is a particularly long time in the career of a professional rugby player. The longest career of any of the Team of all Talents was 20 years (Douglas Clark (1909-1929)). Most rugby careers were 10 to 15 years, so five years was a huge percentage of this. The Huddersfield players were particularly unlucky as it is likely they would have been very successful between 1915 and 1919.

9. agree: 'Northern Union' suggests a game that is only played in the north. 'Rugby League' suggests a competitive sport – one that has leagues – that is not limited to one geographical area. When the name was changed in 1922, rugby union did not have leagues. All their matches were 'club matches', the RFU clinging to the belief that leagues would encourage professionalism in payments to players and a 'win at all costs' approach. The RFU began a league structure in the 1990s, and allowed payments to players – professionalism – in 1995.

13. disagree: 'Huddersfield Barracudas' was a very unpopular name and was dropped after four years. 'Huddersfield Giants' has stuck and been the club's name since 1996, and has allowed the image of the Giant (Big 'G') to be used commercially. A giant is a more appropriate, imposing, intimidating and marketable image for a rugby league team than a barracuda.

(It is arguable that Huddersfield were ahead of their time in intruding 'Barracudas' to their name in 1984. The successful commercialisation/Americanisation of the sport began with the success of Keighley Cougars in the early 1990s. The rest of the sport followed suit with the introduction of Super League in 1996. Had Huddersfield introduced 'Barracudas' to their name for the first time in 1996 it could well have been accepted by the fans – it is no dafter than, for example, Halifax Blue Sox!)

14. partly agree: Harold Wagstaff was a great international player and a great man, whose captaincy of Great Britain tours of Australia and New Zealand earned him admiration for his diplomacy and character off the field, as well as for his brilliant skills on it. He helped to attract and sustain great interest and pride in the Huddersfield club during his career (1906-1925). Does this make him more important to the club's history than, for example, the men who founded the club in the 1860s, Keith Burhouse whose work off the field enabled the club to survive its darkest days in the 1980s and early 1990s, or Ken Davy whose leadership and personal finance helped the club to recover from going into administration in the 1990s to becoming a leading club in Super League?

C (suggested answers only)

The Team of all Talents winning all four trophies in 1914-15 because this achievement was only ever achieved three times in the history of the game (by Hunslet (1907-08) and Swinton (1927-28)).

Sustaining the club for over 150 years since 1864, as it has had to overcome many difficulties, including poor teams, loss of ground, and lack of support and money.

Recovering from being a club in the third tier of the rugby league pyramid, and going into administration in the 1990s, to becoming one of the best teams in Super League.

Producing arguably the greatest-ever rugby league player in Harold Wagstaff.

Hosting the 1895 meeting in the George Hotel that voted to break away from the Rugby Football Union and to set up the Northern Rugby Football Union, which is regarded as the birth of rugby league.