



VOTES FOR SCHOOLS

Secondary 15



Be informed.



Be curious.



Be heard.



This week's VoteTopic



Do fandoms encourage bullying?

Share your thoughts!

Log in to your VotesforSchools account
after the lesson to submit your vote.



Anti-Bullying week is taking place between 14-18th November. This year's theme is "**Reach Out**".

To explore this topic we are going to look into an area where there have been accusations of bullying: **fandoms**.

Fandom:
A group of fans of someone or something, especially very enthusiastic ones.

Class discussion (1-2 mins)

Can you name some popular fandoms?

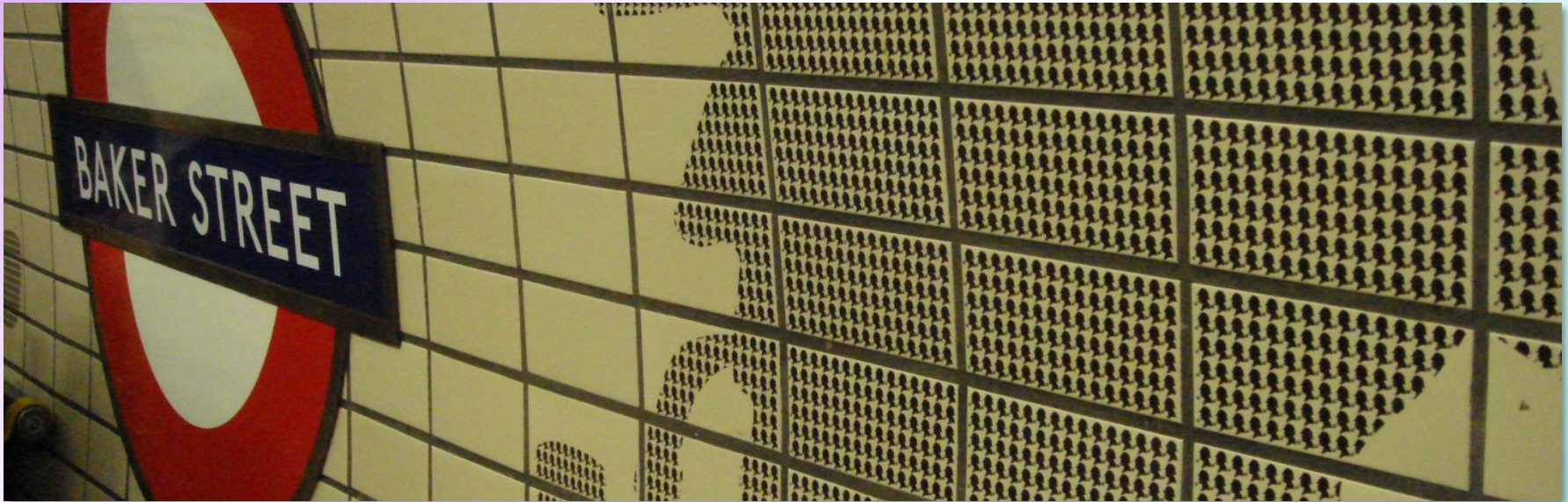


2 Fanning the flames



Fandoms have been around for a while.

Spoiler alert! **Public demonstrations** were held in **1893** after **Sherlock Holmes** was “killed off” in the **series**. It even spawned some of the first **fan fiction**!



Today, fans flock to **social media** and **review sites** to make their voice heard.

Celebrities, hobbies, genres, films or TV shows now have global fans with **high expectations** and serious **devotion**.

2 Fanning the flames



But, can the **actions** of **fandoms** go as far as **bullying**?

Class activity (4-6 mins)

You are going to read some examples of **fandom behaviour**. For each example, strike a **heart pose** if you think it's just **being a fan**, and **point** if you think it's **bullying**.



It's being
a fan!



This is
bullying.

2 Fanning the flames



It's being
a fan!



This is
bullying.



In **2019**, there was a fan backlash against the **finale** of hit TV show **Game of Thrones**. It resulted in a **million signatures** calling for a remake of the **final series**.

2 Fanning the flames



**It's being
a fan!**



**This is
bullying.**



There are a subgroup of **Taylor Swift** fans called “**Gaylors**” who believe that Taylor Swift is **privately gay**. They analyse her past **relationships**, **friendships** and **lyrics**.

2 Fanning the flames



It's being
a fan!



This is
bullying.



In September 2022, TV show **The Rings of Power** was subject to “**review-bombing**”. People **criticised** the **diversity** of the cast as well as **faithfulness** to **Tolkien's work**.

2 Fanning the flames



Initial **character designs** for the **Sonic the Hedgehog** movie were so widely **mocked** online that the character was **given a new look** by animators.



Passionately **supporting a cause** can bring about **change**. Clearly **not all fans** are causing **harm**.

With the men's **FIFA World Cup** about to start in **Qatar**, let's consider a couple of **footballing stories**.

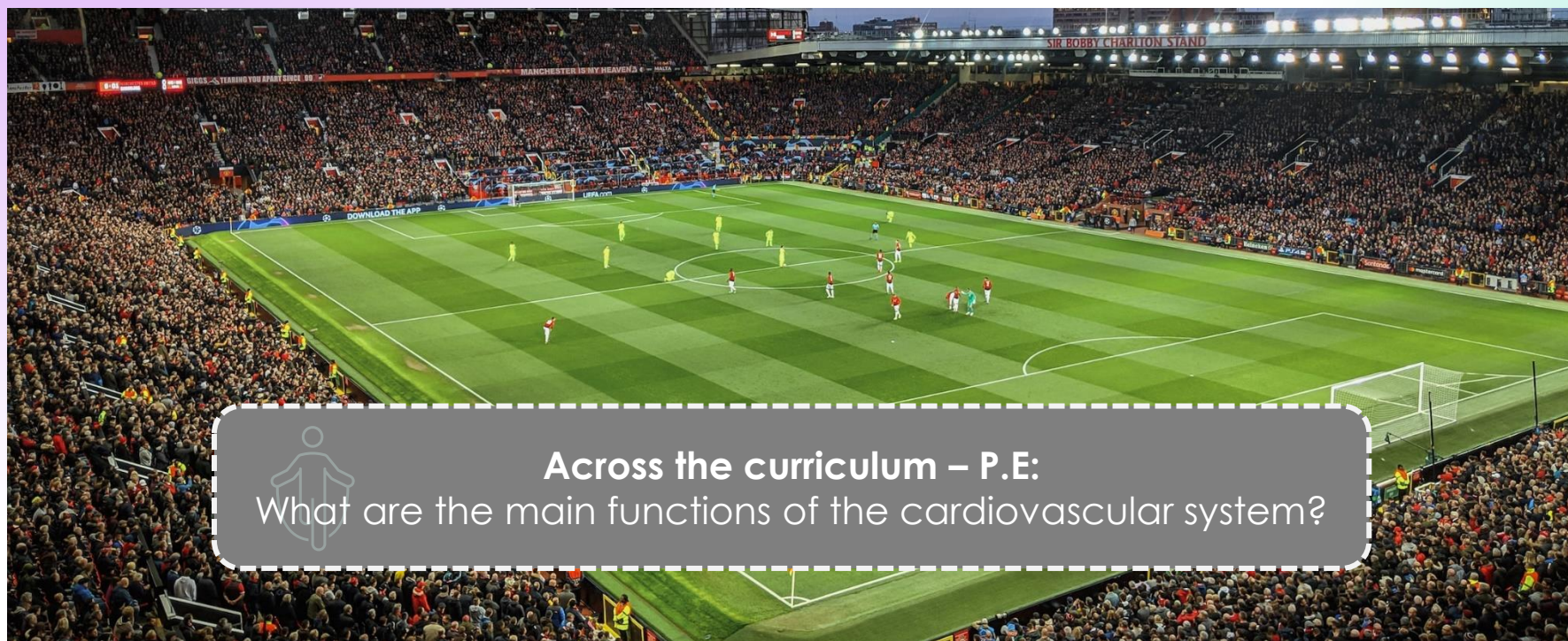
Over **20,000 Everton** fans have signed a **petition against** a new **gambling sponsor** that will be on their men's and women's **shirts** next season.



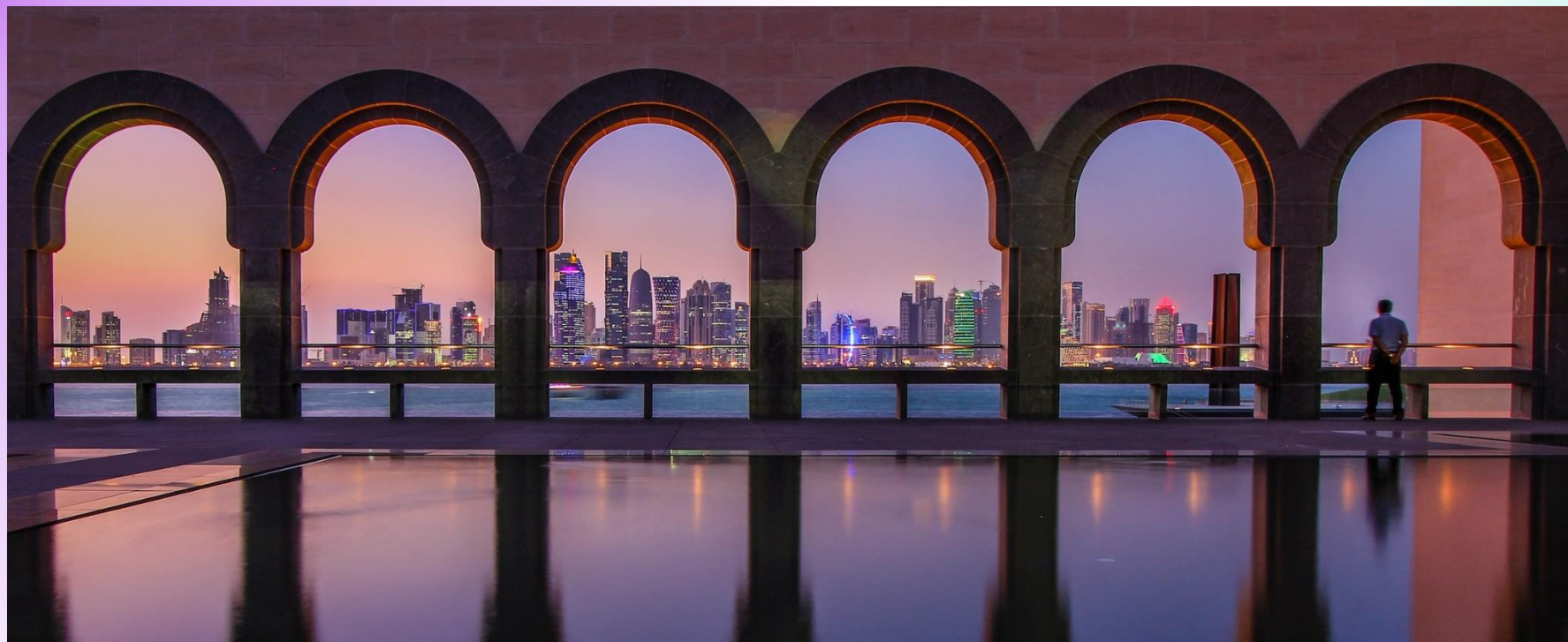


In **April 2021**, many of Europe's "biggest" clubs announced they were joining a **European Super League**.

Pressure from fans of the six English teams included resulted in **them pulling out of the plan**. The idea **fell apart** faster than certain teams in penalty shoot-outs!



Across the curriculum – P.E:
What are the main functions of the cardiovascular system?



Debate around the FIFA World Cup is continuing, with **calls to boycott** the tournament from fan groups around the world. **Concerns** have been raised about **workers' safety**, **LGBTQ+** and **women's rights**.

Forward pass...

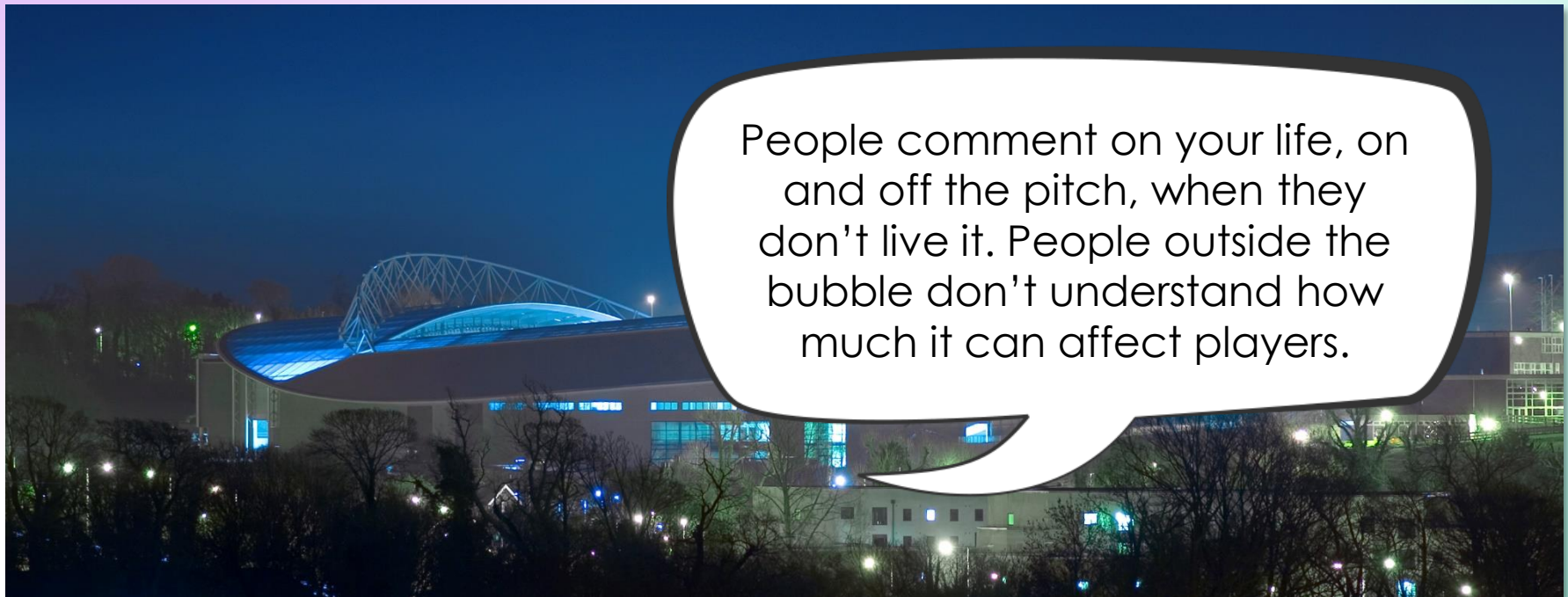
Feel like there's more to say on the FIFA World Cup? We'll continue the discussions with next week's VoteTopic.



To **blow the whistle** on this debate, let's hear from Brighton and Hove Albion men's player **Levi Colwill**. He opened up about fans who **unfairly criticise** and **abuse** players.

Pair discussion (2-3 mins)

Does the experience of celebrities **relate** to what normal people feel as **a result of fandoms**?



People comment on your life, on and off the pitch, when they don't live it. People outside the bubble don't understand how much it can affect players.



Vote!



You get people so passionate that they have to shout down others with alternate views.

Trying to get people or projects cancelled can go too far. We don't have to agree on everything.

When feuds between celebrities extends to feuds between their fan groups, it's definitely going too far.

Do fandoms encourage bullying?

There are often toxic influences in many social groups. Fandoms are not unique in having this.

Talking passionately about something you believe in is not bullying. There has to be a sharing of views.

Often fandoms are about spending time with like-minded people, not calling out others.

We will be sharing your thoughts on this topic with The Anti-Bullying Alliance, The Diana Award, Curtis Pritchard, toot toot and The National Children's Bureau.

Log in to your VotesforSchools account to submit your vote and leave a comment.