Blowing his whistle, Mr. Morgan signaled that it was time for PE to start. Ricardo hated PE, because he didn’t know the rules for American football or basketball. He was tired of looking silly in front of the other kids.

“Settle down, you guys, or you’ll be in hot water,” Mr. Morgan demanded.

Ricardo wondered what “hot water” had to do with PE.

Being new wasn’t working out very well for Ricardo, because every day the kids at school made fun of him for something. He didn’t dress like they did, and he couldn’t understand what they were saying.

Just yesterday a couple of boys had pointed at him and said, “What’s with the shoes, dude?” He’d looked around him and couldn’t see anything “with” his shoes. He couldn’t figure out what they meant.

Then there was the money, which was also difficult for him to understand. He didn’t know how many nickels made a quarter or how many dimes were in a dollar. And he hadn’t figured out the value of a quetzal in American money.

Now it was time for PE again, and, like usual, Ricardo was picked last when they chose teams. He just couldn’t figure out how the games worked, so the kids didn’t want him on their team.

As he trudged over to his group, he heard Mr. Morgan announce that they would be playing soccer that morning. Soccer? Ricardo knew how to play soccer! He’d played it every day in Guatemala, but there they called it “football.”

Ricardo’s team wasn’t very good at soccer, though. They couldn’t move the ball down the field, let alone score a goal. Good thing the other team was just as bad. Of course, no one ever passed the ball to Ricardo because no one on his team thought that he might actually know how to play.
Then, just by chance, the ball came spinning towards Ricardo, and with a flick of his foot, he had it under control. Quick as lightning he was speeding down the field, dribbling the ball easily, avoiding all the players who tried to block him.

Goal! Ricardo smiled as his team ran up to him.

"Cool, man!"

"That was awesome," they shouted.

Now those were English words that he could understand!