

## Resource

Read through the extract from England Manager Gareth Southgate's 'Dear England' letter below. Why do you think Gareth decided to write the letter? What do you think is the most important message?



**England Captain,  
Gareth Southgate**

Dear England,

It has been an extremely difficult year. Everyone in this country has been directly affected by isolation and loss. But we have also seen countless examples of heroism and sacrifice. It's given us all a new understanding of the fragility of life and what really matters. When you think of the grand scheme of things, perhaps football doesn't seem so important. And what I want to speak about today is much bigger than football.

There's something I tell our players before every England game, and the reason that I repeat it is because I really believe it with all my heart. I tell them that when you go out there, in this shirt, you have the opportunity to produce moments that people will remember forever.

Why do we care so much? Like with our own memories of watching England, everyone has a different idea of what it actually means to be English. What pride means. For me, personally, my sense of identity and values is closely tied to my family and particularly my granddad. He was a fierce patriot and a proud military man, who served during World War II. My granddad's values were instilled in me from a young age and I couldn't help but think of him when I lined up to sing the national anthem before my first international caps. My belief is that *everyone* has that pride. And that includes the players.

Only one team can win the Euros. We have never done it before, and we are desperate to do it for the first time. Believe me. But the reality is that the result is just a small part of it. When England play, there's much more at stake than that. It's about how we conduct ourselves on and off the pitch, how we bring people together, how we inspire and unite, how we create memories that last beyond the 90 minutes. That last beyond the summer. That last forever. I think about all the young kids who will be watching this summer, filling out their first wall charts. No matter what happens, I just hope that their parents, teachers and club managers will turn to them and say, "Look. That's the way to represent your country. That's what England is about. That is what's possible." If we can do that, it will be a summer to be proud of.

Yours, Gareth Southgate