



Athletes Take a Stand

Type of Teacher Tool: Small Group Activity

Targeted Grade Level(s): 6-12

Targeted Curriculum Areas: Social Studies

Learning Objectives:

Students will

1. explore and understand the social impacts resulting from athletes taking a stand.
2. learn about athletes who used different methods to make a statement.
3. understand the impacts on the athletes themselves.
4. reflect on a social change that is important to them and produce a written or video piece seeking support from an athlete.

Video Resources/Materials Needed:

1. Civil Rights 3: History in the First Person: Race and Civil Rights—Where is Jim Crow Now?
2. Civil Rights 29: Selma March
3. Civil Rights 30: Protest Coverage
4. Civil Rights 16: Educate Yourself as Muhammad Ali Did
5. Liquid Light: Jim Crow to Barack Obama, <http://www.hectv.org/video/12859/jim-crow-to-barack-obama>
6. A Brief History of Racial Protest in Sports, <http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/12/02/367766230/a-brief-history-of-racial-protest-in-sports>
7. An Olympic Boycott That Almost Worked, <http://www.espn.com/olympics/news/story?id=4396362>
8. As Women's Sport Grows, Athletes Find They Can't Stay Silent in the Era of Trump, <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/jul/29/womens-sport-activism-and-political-protest-planned-parenthood>
9. The Black 14: Race, Politics, Religion and Wyoming Football, <https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/black-14-race-politics-religion-and-wyoming-football>
10. Articles from your own research

Teacher Instructions:

Background Information to Provide Students: In the 2016 NFL season, Colin Kaepernick took a stand by taking a knee during the national anthem. He is not the first athlete nor will he be the last to make a stand on an issue, nor is this a recent trend. The 1936 Olympics, held in Nazi Germany, were almost boycotted by the United States, as a political statement. Kaepernick's action has been both derided as un-American and praised as a First Amendment stand against racial injustice.

1. Have your students view and read the clips and articles listed in the Resources/Materials Needed section. Divide the class into small groups. Each group should choose one person or team to research to understand what stand was being taken and why, as well as the impacts on the person or team. Suggestions include Muhammad Ali's stand against being drafted into the U.S. Army in 1967, Tommie Smith and John Carlos in the 1968 Olympics or the University of Wyoming's Black 14. After their research is complete, each group should present to the rest of the class background on the athlete or team involved, the issue, the form of demonstration taken, and any impacts felt.

2. After the presentations, lead a class discussion of the following topics:

How were these stories similar and unique?

Do you feel the same about protests or differently based on your research and the discussion?

Why do you think professional athletes take public stands on social issues?

3. Ask your students to think about a social change they feel would like to see and research an athlete they feel would also support that change. They should then write a social media post, blog or letter or create a video in which they speak to the importance of the change, explain why they think that athlete might agree with them and request that athlete also publicly support the issue.

4. A student worksheet (Student Tool 47) is provided on the next page of this document if it's helpful for your students as they research and take notes. This worksheet is also available on the Educate.Today website page where you found this lesson plan.

Supplemental Materials:

No additional supplemental materials are needed.

Assessment/Evaluation Option:

1. Review the students' writings for clear and coherent logic and persuasive arguments in support of their position and request.

Student Tool 47: Athletes Take a Stand

Student Name _____

Instructions:

1. View and read the clips and articles listed in the Resources/Materials Needed section. Choose one person or team to research to understand what stand was being taken and why, as well as the impacts on the person or team. Suggestions include Muhammad Ali's stand against being drafted into the U.S. Army in 1967, Tommie Smith and John Carlos in the 1968 Olympics or the University of Wyoming's Black 14. Be prepared to present to the rest of the class background on the athlete or team involved, the issue, the form of demonstration taken, and any impacts felt.

2. Reflect on

How these stories are similar and unique.

Whether you feel the same about protests or differently based on your research and the discussion.

Why professional athletes take public stands on social issues.

3. Think about a social change you would like to see and research an athlete you feel would also support that change. Write a social media post, blog or letter or create a video explaining the importance of the change, why you think that athlete might agree and request that athlete also publicly support the issue.

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8. As Women's Sport Grows, Athletes Find They Can't Stay Silent in the Era of Trump, <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/jul/29/womens-sport-activism-and-political-protest-planned-parenthood>
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