

Lesson Plan

Athletes and Activists

Book: *Colin Kaepernick: Football Star*

Series: Biggest Names in Sports

Level: Navigator

Objective

To help students use their critical thinking skills to examine the controversy surrounding Colin Kaepernick's protests, including how his story relates to other athletes who have protested in the past.

Supplies

- *Colin Kaepernick: Football Star* book
- Nightline video about Colin Kaepernick from ABC News:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdlQtjPGnSc>

Before the Activity

Pull up the Nightline video and let the ad at the beginning play, keeping your volume on mute. Then jump ahead to the 3:25 minute mark. Read *Colin Kaepernick: Football Star* as a class, or assign it to students to read on their own.

Activity

Colin Kaepernick attracted a lot of attention in 2016 when he knelt in protest during the national anthem. Some people supported him and his actions, while others had harsh criticism. To help students explore this controversy, have the class watch a section of the Nightline video: 3:25–6:50. This part of the video includes quotes and interviews highlighting the differing viewpoints in the controversy surrounding Kaepernick. It also describes some other athletes who have protested in the past. After watching the video as a class, have students turn to a neighbor and discuss the following questions:

- Were you familiar with any of the historical athletes mentioned in the video? If so, which ones?
- Based on the video (or what you knew before), what do you think those athletes and Colin Kaepernick have in common? Or, if there are ways you think their experiences were different, how would you describe those differences?

Let students discuss in their pairs for a few minutes. Then have students think individually about the following questions: "Are there situations or causes where you believe athletes should protest? If so, what are they? If not, why do you hold that view?"

Give students a few moments to think. Then discuss the questions as a large group, having students raise their hands when they would like to speak and wait until you call on them. Remind students to speak civilly to one another, even if their classmates hold differing opinions.

Evaluation

Could students discuss the questions with their partners? Could they speak civilly and thoughtfully, both in their pairs and during the large-group discussion?

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational text, grade 6 (RI 6.3, 6.7), and speaking and listening standards, grade 6 (SL 6.1, 6.2).