NEWS BREAK

Article: WOMEN & SPORTS: A FRESH LOOK

Section: SPORTS, B1

Sunday’s News Break selects an article from Sunday, May 3, 2020 of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some teachers might use this as a take-home assignment and others might read and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

*Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

• Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

• Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will discuss gender bias in sports and whether they think there will be a shift towards gender pay equality. They will talk about why history has generally portrayed sports as “male” turf and whether they think about sports in terms of gender. They will debate whether equal pay is important for men and women. Students will debate the U.S. Soccer’s statement that men’s teams require more strength and speed than women’s teams and that’s why they are paid more. They will also talk about what teams generally produce more revenue and whether that should play into consideration with overall pay.
Pre-Reading Discussion:

What do you think the article will be about? Are there clues in the picture?
What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using context clues? A context clue is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Huge steps have been taken toward creating equity in sports since the passing of Title IX in 1972, but the movement for women’s sports remains slowed by stereotypes of social roles based on gender.

Equity Guess:

Equity Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. Fans celebrate on July 10, 2019 while members of the World Cup champion U.S. women’s soccer team pass by during a ticker-tape parade along the Canyon of Heroes in New York. The team has challenged the norms of how Americans view what?
2. This indefinite break from sports can be an opportunity to reconsider how we view what?
3. Huge steps have been taken toward creating equity in sports since the passing of Title IX in 1972, but the movement for women’s sports remains slowed by stereotypes of what?
4. SOME OF THE PROGRESS IS EVIDENT. A person can breeze into a sports bar — or could when they were open — and spark a debate about Serena Williams being the greatest athlete of all time.

   “And that conversation being more about what you consider ___________ and less about, ‘Well, she’s a ______________.’"

5. “That’s different than even 20 years ago.” Not long ago, the belief that women’s sports weren’t as interesting and that men are inherently more athletically talented than women wasn’t often __________________. 

6. Nancy Lough, a UNLV professor who has spent decades researching sports marketing and gender equity, has found women are equally as engaged in sports. What do her findings show?

7. BEFORE THE VIRUS OUTBREAK, MOMENTUM WAS BUILDING toward what two things for women athletes?

8. The women earned a groundswell of support as they tore through the bracket to win the World Cup in France last summer, as an estimated _______________ viewers tuned in to the tournament.

9. What country’s men’s and women’s teams are paid equally?

10. The article gave 5 stories of women’s roles in sports and how that’s evolving. Write down 3 examples that were shared.

11. Storm guard Sue Bird was an analyst on the ESPN draft telecast. She believes former NBA star Kobe Bryant might have been a factor in the draft’s viewership, and overall changes in views toward women in sports. Why?

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

- Have you thought about gender bias in sports prior to reading this article?
- Why does gender-based discrimination in sports continue?
- Do you think the mindset will change and there will be a shift towards gender pay equality? Why or why not?

“It’s a tired joke,” said Mechelle Voepel, who covers women’s college basketball, the WNBA and volleyball for ESPN. “It goes back to this whole idea that sports is inherently male turf, and that’s the default. Where it’s an issue is it automatically puts women in the position of being interlopers either as participants or as spectators.”

- Why do you think history has generally portrayed sports as “male” turf?
- Do you think about sports in terms of gender? Why or why not?

“You saw other national teams start to stand up for themselves as well,” Lynn Williams, a forward with North Carolina of the National Women’s
Soccer League, said. “Then you look at Australia and how their men’s and women’s teams are now paid equally. People were starting to see us as equal, which we are.”

- Were you surprised to hear that Australia’s men’s and women’s teams are paid equally? Why or why not?
- Is equal pay for men and women important?

But U.S. Soccer drew the ire of many in March when it was reported that, in court documents related to the pay-equity case, it claimed “it is undisputed that the job of (USMNT) player requires materially more strength and speed than the job of (USWNT) player,” adding “the job of MNT players carries more responsibility than the job of a WNT player.”

- What do you think about the above comment from U.S. Soccer? Do men’s teams require more strength and speed than women’s teams? Are they the same? Do you agree or disagree?
- What teams generally produce more revenue? Should that play into consideration with pay? Why or why not?

News Break is posted to the Web on Monday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica for your class, please register on-line or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.

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