

Lesson | LIFE LESSONS FROM SPORTS

Inspire students to reflect on and write about sports lessons that matter both on and off the field.

Objective

Students will use critical thinking to define what being a good sport means, then plan and write an essay about why sports matter.

Standards

Common Core. ELA

- SL.6-7.1 Engage in collaborative discussions and express ideas clearly

SEL

- Responsible decision-making
- Relationship skills

Time

40 minutes, plus writing time

Materials

- How to Be a Good Sport poster
- Are You a Good Sport? activity sheet
- Write About Why Sports Matter activity sheet
- Get in the Game choice chart from scholastic.com/sportsmatter
- A ball

Need more copies?

Printer-friendly versions are available online at scholastic.com/sportsmatter.

1 Conduct a classroom barometer activity by having students listen to a series of statements. Follow these activity steps:

- Read Statement 1 (below) aloud. Instruct students to stand at one end of the room if they agree and at the other end if they disagree.
- Toss the ball to a student. Have them explain why they agree or disagree, then toss the ball to another student to do the same.
- Invite students to change the end of the room they are standing in if their classmate's explanation changes their mind.
- Have the last student toss the ball back to you, then read the next statement.

Statements: 1) *There's more to sports than winning.* 2) *Sports can change the world.* 3) *Playing a sport teaches you important life lessons.* 4) *Being a good sport matters on and off the field.*

- To support English language learners, post each statement on the board.

2 Read the following story to students: When Spanish runner Ivan Fernandez Anaya made headlines in 2012, it was not for winning. Instead, he was celebrated for choosing honesty over victory. During a race, he showed another runner the way to the finish line rather than passing him and earning first place. For Fernandez Anaya, it was an easy decision. The other runner was the "rightful winner," he later said.

Ask students to share any similar stories they know of. Then ask whether the stories change their positions on the statements.

3 Tell students that professional athletes are not the only ones who

Essay Contest

Submit your students' essays on why sports matter by April 24, 2020.

You could win:

- ▶ **\$500 gift cards** for the Grand Prize—winning student and teacher!
- ▶ **\$250 gift cards** for the winning students and teachers in both the grades 4–5 and grades 6–7 categories!

Go to scholastic.com/sportsmatter for more information.

face sportsmanship dilemmas. Student athletes do too. Display the How to Be a Good Sport poster and discuss each tip. For the "Act With Integrity" tip, challenge the class to define it. Arrive at a definition such as: acting honestly and sticking to your principles/values.

4 Hand out the Are You a Good Sport? activity sheet. Give students time to read each scenario and write about how they would respond. Then ask: *Which scenario was the hardest to answer? Why?*

5 Divide the class into small groups. Give each group a sheet of chart paper, and have them come up with their own "Top Five Rules for Being a Good Sport." Share out loud. Ask: *How do the rules of being a good sport apply to other situations in or out of school?*

6 Hand out the Write About Why Sports Matter sheet. Have students plan and craft a persuasive essay to submit to the contest (see details above).

Differentiated Extensions

Hand out the Get in the Game choice chart, which offers a menu of extension activities for students to complete if they finish early or are between tasks. Display students' work in a Why Sports Matter gallery in the classroom, hallway, or gym.

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. The "Sports Matter Essay Contest" is open to students in grades 4–7, 50 US states & DC. Students will write an essay on two possible topics about sports, on the entry form available at scholastic.com/sportsmatter. Entries must be submitted by the student's teacher, 18+. Prizes: Grand Prize Winner: \$500 Amex Gift Card (ARV: \$500). Grand Prize Winner's teacher: \$500 Amex Gift Card. Grade Winners, two (2) total, one (1) from grades 4–5 and one (1) from grades 6–7, \$250 Amex Gift Card. Grade Winners' teachers: \$250 Amex Gift Card each. Online entries submitted at scholastic.com/sportsmatter, or by mail to: Sports Matter Student Contest, ATTN: SNP, 3rd Floor, Scholastic Inc., 557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. Online entries deadline 11:59 p.m. ET on April 24, 2020 (the "Entry Period"). Mail-in: postmarked by 4/24/20, and rec'd by 5/1/20. Void where prohibited. Subject to Official Rules: scholastic.com/sportsmatter/rules.



Name _____

ARE YOU A GOOD SPORT?



Explain how you would handle four sticky situations.

1 There's a new kid on your hockey team who's just learning the game. He gives the puck to the other team by mistake, and they score a goal. What do you do?

2 Jackson is organizing a game of basketball at recess with a few other boys. Camila runs over with her ball and says she'd like to join. Jackson tells her their game is just for boys. You're standing nearby. What do you do?

3 Your team hits a game-winning home run. Everyone is jumping up and down and celebrating at home plate. You see the opposing team's pitcher still standing on the mound. He is upset, with his face in his glove. What do you do?

4 You're running in an 800-meter race. As you near the finish line, you and one other runner are right next to each other. You see the other runner's foot cross the finish line first. But the official says that you won. What do you do?
