

MAKING HEADLINES

This lesson will invite students to reflect on how female athletes are spoken about in the media and encourage them to develop their own media literacy skills.

CONTEXT

The media often treats men and women differently. We are examining this particularly through the way female athletes and women's sports are spoken about online. This has negative impacts on people of all genders. Students will begin to learn how media connects to real life outcomes. They will gain foundational skills to think critically about the media that we consume and its impacts.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the real-life consequences of internet media.
2. Apply critical thinking skills to real news articles about athletes.

MATERIALS

1. Supplemental articles and videos, linked below
2. Making Headlines Handout
3. Media literacy question worksheet

PROCEDURES

- Begin by watching "Correct the Internet" from Women in Sport Aotearoa's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBtGOZgBb-A>)
- Have students read "Why storytelling 'hooks' hurt female athletes." (<https://www.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/olympic-sexism-media-1.3741279>)
- Discuss the Making Headlines Handout. Have students decide if each headline is likely to have been written about a male or female athlete. Note that one page has the blacked out names for the activity, the other is the answer key containing all links to the entire articles.
- Reveal the answer key. Ask students why they think it was possible to sort these headlines accurately. Note that the headlines are different: the headlines about men often focus more on their athletics and accomplishments whereas headlines about women often focus on feminine aspects of their personal lives.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY/QUESTIONS

- Invite students to select an article from the Headlines Handouts to read or choose an article of their own.
- In groups or independently, have them fill out the Media Literacy Worksheet to look at their article from a critical angle.



Name: _____

Date: _____

MAKING HEADLINES

Read each headline and decide whether it was written about a male or female Olympian.

1. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME], 42, shares incredible bathing suit photo six months after becoming a parent.” Female Male

2. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME], a spouse of Bears lineman [NAME], wins bronze in Rio.” Female Male

3. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “What Olympic swimmer [NAME] has done since making history at the Summer Games.” Female Male

4. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME] chooses “all of the above” when faced with choices involving skiing, Stanford, and style.” Female Male

5. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME]’s 5 gold medals is greatest feat in sports.” Female Male

6. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “7 cool things about [NAME].” Female Male



7. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME] returns to bobsled as a parent of two.” Female Male

8. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME] exclusive: The Olympic figure skating champion on potential comeback, academic life.” Female Male

9. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME] becomes first [OF THEIR GENDER] to land 1260 in snowboard halfpipe, wins record-tying 7th X Games gold.” Female Male

10. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “Navigating change with a champion’s mindset: [NAME] on transformation and growth.” Female Male

11. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME] wins historic first [GENDER]’s ski jump gold.” Female Male

12. **BREAKING NEWS LIVE** “[NAME] becomes a parent.” Female Male

Name: _____

Date: _____

WORKING WITH MEDIA LITERACY

Media literacy is the ability to critically analyze stories presented in the mass media and to determine their accuracy or credibility. After deciding whether each headline is written about a female or male Olympian, reflect on your choices by answering the questions below.

1. Who created this message?
2. How did the headlines catch my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently from me?
4. What points of view or values are represented in this message? What points of view or values are omitted in this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

MAKING HEADLINES ANSWER KEY

Links to the articles are embedded in each headline.

1. "[Serena Williams](#), 42, shares incredible bikini photo six months after giving birth."
2. "[Corey Cogdell](#), wife of Bears lineman [Mitch Unrein](#), wins bronze in Rio"
3. "What Olympic Swimmer [Michael Phelps](#) Has Done Since Making History at the Summer Games"
4. "[Eileen Gu](#) chooses 'All of the Above' when faced with choices involving skiing, Stanford and style"
5. "[[Eric](#)] [Heiden](#)'s 5 gold medals is greatest feat in sports"
6. "7 Cool Things About [Jarome Iginla](#)"
7. "[Elana Meyers Taylor](#) returns to bobsled as a mom of two"
8. "[Nathan Chen](#) exclusive: The Olympic figure skating champion on potential comeback, academic life"
9. "[Chloe Kim](#) becomes first woman to land 1260 in snowboard halfpipe, wins record-tying 7th X Games gold"
10. "Navigating Change with a Champion's Mindset: [Apolo Ohno](#) on Transformation and Growth"
11. "[Carina Vogt](#) wins historic first women's ski jump gold"
12. "[Charlotte Kalla](#) becomes a mother"