



Theme 5

The Birth of Rugby League

Teacher Notes

Aims

- to learn that rugby league was 'born' in Huddersfield in 1895
- to learn about the social and economic reasons why the Northern Union split from the Rugby Football Union
- to understand the concepts of amateur, professional and broken time payments
- to understand the concept of voting in a democracy
- to understand the concept of the burden of proof
- to learn about how national decisions impacted locally in Huddersfield

Related Skills

reading comprehension, literal and interpreted
speaking and listening in group and class discussion
interpreting the points of view of writers and satirical cartoonists
assessing the fairness and strength of arguments

Time

5 x 60 minute lessons

Resources

Pupil Resource Sheet 1a: Amateurs, Professionals and Broken Time Pay (easier version)
Pupil Resource Sheet 1b: Amateurs, Professionals and Broken Time Pay (harder version)
Pupil Resource Sheet 2: Rugby Football Union AGM 1893
Pupil Resource Sheet 3a: The Birth of Rugby League: What Happened Next (easier version)
Pupil Resource Sheet 3b: The Birth of Rugby League: What Happened Next (harder version)
Pupil Resource Sheet 4: Cartoon Satire
Pupil Activity Sheet 1: Broken Time Payments
Pupil Activity Sheet 2: Professionalism
Pupil Activity Sheet 3: Cartoon Satire
Teacher Answer Sheet

Differentiation Strategies

Less able children:

Groups should include at least one good reader to ensure access to information.
Use Pupil Resource Sheets 1a, 3a.

More able children/groups:

Opportunity to take responsibility by leading and organising their group.
Use Pupil Resource Sheets 1b, 3b.

Overview

Activity Number	Class Organisation/Activity	Main Idea	Resource
1.1	Class introduction	Reading the background to the Rugby Football Union's 1893 vote on broken time payments; learning definitions of 'amateur', 'professional' and 'broken time payment'; deciding whether quotes are for or against broken time payments; judging the strength of arguments for and against	Pupil Resource Sheets 1a, 1b Pupil Activity Sheet 1
1.2	Pairs/small group written answers		
1.3	Class discussion, groups reporting back	Discussing decisions and judgments from 1.2 above	Teacher Answer Sheet
2.1	Class reading	Reading/performing transcript of 1893 Rugby Football Union AGM debate on broken time payments; deciding whether each speaker is for or against broken time payments.	Pupil Resource Sheet 2
2.2	Class vote	Understanding secret voting as a key democratic process; conducting a secret ballot about whether to allow broken time payments.	
3.1	Class introduction	Deciding whether quotes are for or against professionalism; judging the strength of arguments for and against.	Pupil Activity Sheet 2
3.2	Pairs/small group written answers		
3.3	Class discussion, children reporting back	Discussing decisions and judgments from 3.1 above.	Teacher Answer Sheet
4.1	Class introduction	Recapping broken time, professionalism and relations between the RFU and northern clubs; deciding what should happen next; predicting what will happen next.	
4.2	Group discussion		
4.3	Class discussion, groups reporting back		
4.4	Class reading and discussion	Reading 'What Happened Next'; discussing events in light of their predictions (4.1 to 4.3 above); assessing winner and losers from the birth of northern union (rugby league)	Pupil Resource Sheets 3a, 3b
5.1	Class introduction	Studying two satirical cartoons, including captions	Pupil Resource Sheet 4
5.2	Individual or pairs written answers	Answering questions requiring observation and interpretation of cartoons and the cartoonists' views.	Pupil Activity Sheet 3
5.3	Class discussion, children reporting back		Teacher Answer Sheet

Activities

1.1 Class introduction

- Tell the class:
they are going to learn about how rugby league came to exist as a sport
rugby league is the only sport that knows exactly when and where it was 'born',
and it was 'born' in Huddersfield.
- Read Pupil Resource Sheet 1a and/or 1b 'Amateurs, Professionals and Broken Time Pay' round the class. (1a is shorter, less detailed and easier than 1b.)
- Discuss the key points in the text:
differences between amateurs and professionals
differences between broken time payments and payments for being a professional
rugby's rules on payments to players compared to rules in cricket and football
the fairness of entertainers attracting huge crowds and losing wages to do so
whether amateurism would result in more 'fair play' compared to professionalism
the decision of Reverend Frank Marshall to report his own club, Huddersfield,
for breaking the rules about professionalism.
- Organise the class into groups of 2-4, weak readers supported by a stronger reader.
- Read the instructions on the first page of Pupil Activity Sheet 1.

1.2 Pairs/small group written answers

1.3 Class discussion, groups reporting back

- Groups reporting back on:
whether each argument is for or against broken time pay
marks for strength of arguments
why they found some arguments particularly strong or weak.
- Discuss in detail:
quote 9 and the implications of the economic depression for the lives of working
men, such as rugby players, and their families
quote 10 and the implications of additional costs for most of the rugby clubs.

2.1 Class reading

- Tell the class that:
the Rugby Football Union decided on whether or not to allow broken time
payments at their Annual General Meeting in 1893
the children are going to act the parts of representatives at the meeting and read
what they said. (The words have been slightly adapted but the meaning is
unchanged. The speeches are quite formal in style.)
- Select 12 children to read the parts. The parts of James Millar, Reverend Frank Marshall
and Roger Walker require strong readers.
- As each speaker finishes:
ask the class to decide whether the speaker is for or against broken time payments
ask for comments about how they used intonation and gestures to emphasise points
stand the speakers in separate groups, 'for' and 'against'.
- After the last speaker finishes count up the numbers in the 'for' and 'against' groups.
They should be:

For (4)		Against (8)
James Millar	William Cail	FC Cousins
Mark Newsome	Rowland Hill	KB Holmes
Joe Mills	JW Thorp	Mr Northin
J Gledstone	Reverend Frank Marshall	Roger Walker

- Ask the class if they think any of the speakers have been unfair. (The main unfairness was in all those opposing broken time, except Mr Northin, suggesting that the proposal was to allow players to become professional. Was this genuine confusion, a fear of what might happen or deliberate scare-mongering? J Gledstone clearly sensed this when he repeated what the proposal was about halfway through the debate.)

2.2 Class vote

- Ask the class:
 - how they think the Rugby Football Union should go about deciding whether or not to allow broken time
 - why one man/club one vote is fair, using and defining ‘democracy’ (noun) and ‘democratic’ (adjective) and briefly comparing democratic voting systems to dictatorships.
 - how the vote should be conducted – as in general elections, it should be by private ballot so that voters cannot be influenced by coercion or by a herding instinct
 - ask those who read the parts to think about whether the way they will vote might be affected by the part they played and why.
- Organise a secret ballot in the class – small piece of paper with 3 choices – for, against or don’t know.
- Count the votes and write the results into the table at the bottom of Pupil Resource Sheet 2.
- Add into the table the actual results of the vote at the Rugby Football Union AGM:

For Broken Time Payments:	136
Against Broken Time Payments:	282
Don’t Know/Absentions:	13

3.1 Introduction

- Remind the children that paying players for playing (professionalism) is different from broken time pay, although some of the arguments are similar.
- Organise the class into groups of 2-4 as in 1.2 above.
- Read the instructions on the first page of Pupil Activity Sheet 2.

3.2 Pairs/small group written answers

3.3 Class discussion, children reporting back

- Groups reporting back on:
 - whether each argument is for or against professionalism
 - marks for strength of arguments
 - why they found some arguments particularly strong or weak.
- Discuss in detail:
 - quote 9 and the implications of the economic depression for the lives of working men, such as rugby players, and their families
 - quote 10 and the implications of additional costs for most of the rugby clubs.

4.1 Class Introduction

- Remind children of the story so far:
 - economic depression of the early 1890s
 - that they have studied the arguments for and against broken time payments and professionalism
 - that the Rugby Football Union will not allow broken time payments – so it certainly isn't going to allow professionalism
 - that rugby, especially in West Yorkshire and South East Lancashire, is very well supported and that the players are nearly all working men.
- Ask children in their groups to discuss, ready to report back to the class:
 - what they think **should** happen next
 - what they think **will** happen next
 - (possibilities are:
 - i) the RFU relents and allows at least broken time pay;
 - ii) no change – the northern clubs continue to 'put up with' the RFU's rules
 - iii) the northern clubs defy the RFU in some way.

4.2 Group discussion

4.3 Class discussion, groups reporting back

- Groups reporting back their ideas about what **should** and what **will** happen next.

4.4 Class reading and discussion

- Read Pupil Resource Sheet 3a and/or 3b 'What Happened Next', either as a class or in groups of 2-4. 3a is shorter, less detailed and easier than 3b. Use your judgment about whether the activity should be whole class or in groups and which version to use with the class or with the different groups.
- Discuss how rules about clubs and players being guilty until proved innocent is contrary to the burden of proof in the British legal system.
- Ask the children:
 - if anything surprised them, and if so, what
 - if anything happened that they expected, and if so, what
 - who or what was better off because of the birth of northern union (rugby league)
 - who or what was worse off because of the birth of northern union (rugby league).

5.1 Class introduction

- Study the two cartoons on Pupil Resource Sheet 4.
- Explain that satire is the use of ridicule to lampoon individuals and/or their ideas for their foolishness. It is intended to be humorous and is often aimed at politicians.
- Set the task, individually or in pairs, of answering the questions on Pupil Activity Sheet 3, as a basis for class discussion, explaining that questions require:
 - observation of the cartoons
 - interpretation of the cartoons and the cartoonists' views.

5.2 Individual or pairs written answers

5.3 Class discussion, children reporting back

- Use the Teacher Answer Sheet to help guide the discussion.