

I'm Going to Pump You Up!

History and Heroes Lesson 4 | Suggested Grades: 6-7

Lesson Plan

Objectives:

Students will...

- Learn about Doug Hepburn's life and accomplishments
- Participate in a Plus-Minus-Interesting Activity
- Reflect on how "determination" plays a role in achieving personal goals

Curricular Links:

- Personal Planning
- Language Arts
- Physical Education

The Big Idea

Through Doug Hepburn's story, students will understand that, with sufficient "determination," they can overcome any obstacles in achieving their goals.

Opening Motivator (10 min)

Read the following passage to your students and ask them to put themselves into Doug's shoes, imagining what he felt.

"I was born with a club foot and crossed eyes and as a child, I underwent operations to correct both faults. The eye operation was a success but the doctors who operated on my foot bungled the job, leaving me with a withered leg and a permanently weak ankle. These things made me look different, and I was a scrawny, little kid to begin with. I hated school, because the other students made my life miserable by mocking my physical deformities and I was often the brunt of cruel jokes at school. I wanted the teasing and bullying to end, but I felt helpless to change anything."

Read the following to explain how Doug Hepburn addressed his predicament.

To increase his confidence, Doug began lifting weights. Through exercise and great determination, Doug built up his physical strength. From a skinny kid of 145 pounds Hepburn, through hard work, was soon tipping the scales at a granite-like 255 pounds. Through his innovative training methods, he became so strong in the shoulders that it compensated for his damaged leg. In 1948, he began competitively weightlifting and in 1953, he received the official title of the "Strongest Man in the World"!

Teaching Tip

The purpose of this Opening Motivator is to introduce the class to the obstacles Doug faced in his childhood and how he overcame them. The concept of bullying will be more deeply explored in the classroom activity.

In the Lab (40 min)

Direct students to move to the lab where they can view images of Doug lifting enormous weights, watch an interview excerpt, and read relevant newspaper clippings and a more detailed overview of Doug's life story.

Classroom Activity (PMI - Plus-Minus-Interesting) (60 min)

1. Once students have individually reviewed and reflected on his story, start the large group PMI activity.

2. Divide the chalkboard into three individual sections – Plus, Minus, and Interesting. These three categories will be used to help organize your student’s comments regarding the discussion questions listed below.
3. Raise the discussion questions under paragraph 4 individually. As students share their ideas with the class, record each comment under the appropriate category. For example: Was Doug’s solution to deal with the bullying an appropriate one?

Plus: Yes, because he avoided further ridicule.

Minus: No, because, his approach did not deal directly with the teasing.

Interesting: Initial response to get stronger led him to a career in weightlifting

4. Questions (consider each in how they would be answered for the PMI)

- Was Doug’s solution to the bullying an appropriate one?
- Did he have any other options?
- Have you or someone you know ever had a similar experience at school?
- In a similar situation, how might you deal with bullies?

Teaching Tip

Hopefully, the previous questions and the student’s comments raised will generate a broader discussion about bullying and peer pressure.

Conclusions and Reflections

Doug was successful in part because he knew what he wanted and then when after it, never giving up. Ask students to think about what they want out of school this year. What obstacles do they have to overcome? How determined are they to do what it takes to be successful?

Extension Ideas

- Have students try some strength training circuits during physical education.
- Doug had to eat enormous amounts of food to bulk up. Although we all need nutritious food to stay healthy, athletes in different sports have lots of variation in their dietary needs. Have students pick a favorite sport or favorite athlete, and research the best nutritional plan for that sport, or research what that particular athlete eats. Compare everyone’s findings.
- Doug’s achievements are worthwhile because they were done without the assistance of steroids. Have students research incidents of drug use in recent Canadian athletic history and ask them to come up with potential solutions to this issue.

Web Links

Fair Play for Kids

<http://www.cces.ca/>

The notion of Fair Play is a universally understood concept, which underpins all of sport.