



Global Voices Information Sheet

“Magic” Johnson and HIV/AIDS



Earvin “Magic” Johnson tells the world he has HIV on November 7, 1991.

Background Info

- Earvin “Magic” Johnson was born in 1959 to a working class family in Lansing, Michigan.
- Johnson was sent to a mostly-white high school where he helped speak out against and end racial tensions and violence in the school.
- A local sports reporter gave Johnson his nickname “Magic” when he played for his high school basketball team.
- Johnson was the first person in his family to go to college.
- In 1979, a professional basketball team, the Los Angeles Lakers, made Johnson their first draft pick.
- Johnson held a public press conference on November 7, 1991, to announce he had been diagnosed with HIV. He said he would retire from basketball to dedicate his life to publicly fighting the disease.
- Johnson started the Magic Johnson Foundation in 1991 to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and help those affected by the disease. The Foundation also works to support disadvantaged youth in urban communities by providing education opportunities, health care, and social programs.
- Johnson is a successful businessman. Magic Johnson Enterprises, owns movie theatres, restaurants, coffee shops and health clubs. His businesses employ more than 40,000 minority workers.
- In 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 33.4 million people worldwide had HIV/AIDS, 2.7 million more people were being infected with HIV each year, and 2 million people were dying of AIDS every year.
- World AIDS Day, an international day to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, happens every year on December 1.

Key terms

- **HIV** — Human Immunodeficiency Virus. A virus that infects important cells in the human immune system. HIV can only be spread by sharing infected bodily fluids like blood, semen or breast milk. Without treatment, HIV can lead to the disease AIDS.
- **AIDS** — Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. A disease caused by HIV which destroys the immune system, making the infected person less able to fight other diseases. There is no known cure for AIDS.

Global Voices Secondary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Themes and Course Connections

- Themes: HIV/AIDS, prejudice, Magic Johnson, overcoming obstacles.
- Course Connections: The Arts, Canadian and World Studies, English, Health and Physical Education, Social Sciences and Humanities.

Materials

- Chart paper or blackboard
- Screen and projector
- Computers and internet
- Global Voices column

Specific Expectations and Learning Goals

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken language or other forms of expression.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express, and defend a position on an issue and explain how to put the ideas into action.

Reading Comprehension

1. Reading Comprehension: Global Voices Column (estimated time: 15 minutes)
 - a. Pre reading steps:
 - i. Introduce the topic and encourage students to discuss what they already know about the topic, making predictions around what the column is about.
 - b. Reading steps:
 - i. Read: students must read the text independently, highlighting important points throughout the column.
 - ii. Ask: students must ask themselves what the story is about, recording five questions they are unsure of after reading the column.

- iii. Paraphrase: students must write point form notes in their own words around what the column is about.
- c. Post reading discussion:
 - i. What are the main points of the column?
 - ii. What emotions did this column evoke in you?
 - iii. What problems are identified in the column?
 - iv. What questions do you have about the column?

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Discussing the Global Voices Column (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Ask students the following suggested questions about the column, encourage them to use evidence from the Global Voices column to support their answers:
 - i. What is the message in this column?
 - ii. What perspectives are presented in this column? Which ones are left out?
 - iii. What problem is presented in this column?
 - iv. What is HIV/AIDS?
 - v. Who is Magic Johnson?
 - vi. What is stereotyping and prejudice? Provide examples.
 - vii. What did you learn from Magic Johnson in this column?

Thinking

1. Know, Want to know, and Learned (KWL) Chart (estimated time: 30 minutes)
 - a. Activate students' prior knowledge about HIV/AIDS by asking them to complete individual KWL charts.
 - b. In this chart, students must indicate what they already know, and what they want to know about HIV/AIDS. Students will fill in what they have learned at the end of this activity.
 - c. Ask students the following questions about HIV/AIDS:
 - i. When was the first time you heard about HIV/AIDS? What did you hear?
 - ii. What thoughts and emotions do you have about HIV/AIDS?
 - iii. Who does HIV/AIDS affect?
 - iv. How is it transmitted?
 - v. What is HIV?
 - vi. What is AIDS?
 - d. Ask students to look up the definition of HIV and AIDS and explain them to the class.
 - e. Explain to students that **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)** is the virus that causes AIDS. This virus severely damages the immune system by infecting and destroying certain white blood cells. HIV is passed from person to person via blood, semen or mucous membranes. Pregnant women may pass HIV to their baby during pregnancy, delivery or breast feeding. Some people will develop AIDS as a result of their HIV infection. An HIV positive test result does not mean a person has AIDS.
 - f. Explain that **Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)** is developed after a person has been in contact with HIV. AIDS is a collection of infections and cancers that people with HIV might develop. AIDS weakens the immune system making it difficult for a person to fight illness. If a person gets one of these infections or cancers after they are HIV+ they are said to have AIDS. Many of these infections that cause AIDS are harmless to a healthy immune system.
 - g. Tell students that people can contract HIV in multiple ways:
 - i. Unprotected sex with an infected person.
 - ii. Sharing needles with someone who is infected.
 - iii. Transmission from a mother to her unborn fetus.
 - h. Explain to students that you cannot get HIV through daily contact such as:

- i. Hugging
 - ii. Shaking hands
 - iii. Sharing a swimming pool or toilet
 - iv. Coughing, sneezing, tears or insect bites
- i. Following this discussion, ask students to complete the Learned section on their KWL chart.

Communication

1. Magic Johnson (estimated time: 30 minutes)
 - a. Ask students to discuss what they know of the public opinion of HIV/AIDS in the 1980 and 1990s. Write suggestions on the board.
 - b. Encourage students to do some quick research on this topic and share it with the class.
 - c. After this discussion, watch the following video of the Magic Johnson's press announcement in 1991, where he informed the public of his diagnosis <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSfy4AhDDnw>
 - d. After viewing this video, ask students the following suggested questions:
 - i. How did this press conference make you feel?
 - ii. What were the risks of Magic going public with his diagnosis?
 - iii. What do you think was the public's reaction to this announcement?
 - iv. What did prejudice look like in Magic's situation?
 - v. What was Magic's take on the situation, what was your impression of his attitude?
 - vi. What can you learn from Magic in this situation?
 - vii. What is Magic doing today? What can you learn from his actions?
 - e. Following this discussion, ask students to write a reflection around HIV/AIDS, prejudice and what they can learn from Magic Johnson.
 - f. Completed reflections will be handed in for grading.

Application

1. HIV/AIDS Advertising Campaign (estimated time: 60 minutes)
 - a. Explain to students that HIV can be transmitted in multiple ways:
 - i. Mother to unborn fetus transmission.
 - ii. Blood transfusions.
 - iii. Injecting drug use.
 - iv. Sexual transmission.
 - b. Ask students to select one of these transmission types for a research project.
 - c. When students have selected their topic ask them to research their topic and identify the following information:
 - i. How does this type of transmission happen? Explain the physiological and circumstantial components.
 - ii. How can this type of transmission be prevented? List strategies.
 - iii. Design an education program to inform peers of HIV/AIDS and the selected way it is transmitted.
 - d. When students have completed their research, ask them to use this information to create an informative poster about HIV/AIDS. Explain to students that these posters will be used to inform the student body about this disease and safe life practices.
 - e. Display completed posters around the school.

Additional Resources

In addition to the above lesson plans, you may want to share some additional resources with your students. Listed below are some links to useful online resources:

Free The Children – www.freethechildren.com

We Day Teach - <http://www.weday.com/teach>

The Magic Johnson Foundation - <http://magicjohnson.com/>