Teaching this lesson? Here are some tips:

**Tight on time?** Stick with the 3 Key Takeaways and The Basics. These will help your athletes understand that if they respect others and hold themselves accountable, others will respect them.

**Have more time?** Share the TrueSport Talk and discuss how an Olympic athlete can relate to this lesson.

**Extra time?** Continue on through to Tips & Applications for more valuable information about cultivating a respectful and accountable youth sports team.

**Looking for more?** Explore the Downloads & Additional Resources, which offer additional conversation starters and fun activities to support each lesson.
Respect has two chief definitions:

1. **admiring (someone or something) deeply, as a result of their abilities, qualities, or achievements.**
2. **having regard for someone's feelings, wishes, or rights**

These two go hand-in-hand, but more simply, respect means treating others how you would want to be treated. It also means practicing self-respect by being accountable for your own actions and attitudes.

In athletics, this can sometimes be a tough thing to do. But even in the heat of competition, it's important to continue to show respect to opponents, coaches, teammates, and officials. Being respectful of everyone (including yourself) makes it more likely that others will respect you back in return.

**Accountability:** Having accountability means being responsible. And like having responsibility, being accountable translates to being punctual, attentive, prepared, and ready to help. It also means that you are willing to accept and learn from your mistakes.
Track and field Olympic gold medalist DeeDee Trotter recalls a time as a young athlete when she committed a false start in a race. Prior to the sprint, DeeDee was distracted by having fun with friends and socializing rather than focusing on the event and mentally preparing herself. When she jumped the link just before the starting gun fired, DeeDee was penalized for a false start. She remembers feeling embarrassed but blamed others for her mistake - the starter, her teammates, her coach, and even her mother.

However, after some thought, DeeDee soon realized that she should hold herself accountable for her own actions because she was solely responsible for the false start. She knew that it was easier to blame others, but the truth was that there was no one to blame but herself. Had she properly prepared for the race, she would have been better focused and prepared to reach her goals. From this experience, DeeDee learned to take accountability for her actions and now knows this helped to make her the Olympic champion she is today. DeeDee is proud to say that she has never false started in a race again. TrueSport athletes are accountable for their own actions and understand that doing the right thing is not always easy.

AMBASSADOR STORY QUESTIONS

1. What was the main point you took away from the ambassador story?

2. Have you ever learned a meaningful life lesson from an earlier experience?

3. How can you practice being more respectful and accountable on a daily basis or with your team?
What Respect Looks Like In Sports

In the context of sports, respect is paid in many different ways to many different people and things.

- **Coaches:** Giving your undivided attention while coaches are speaking before, during, and after games and practices
- **Rules:** Acknowledging the rules of your sport and playing by them
- **Officiating:** Accepting the referee’s decision as final (and not arguing with them)
- **Teammates:** Always being encouraging, even if they make a bad play or perform poorly
- **Opponents:** Sincerely shaking the hands of your opponents after a game and telling them ‘good game’
- **Referees:** Thanking the referee and shaking their hand after the game
- **Body:** Getting proper rest, nutrition, warm-up times, and cool downs
- **Self:** Always giving it your all, even in certain defeat

What Respect Looks Like In Life

Outside of sports, ways to show respect are a lot more versatile and can be shown to parents, friends, teachers, siblings, strangers, and anyone else:

- **Listening** to others when they are speaking (and not talking over them)
- **Asking** permission before touching someone else’s property
- **Making an effort** to remember and use people’s names
- **Apologizing** after making a mistake
- **Not harming** the environment or others’ property
- **Giving credit** to others when it’s due
- **Being sensitive** to how what is said or done can affect someone else’s feelings
Accountability On The Field

Accountability: An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility for one’s actions.

Examples of accountability in sports:
• Showing up on time for practices and games, ready to go.
• Taking care of your equipment.
• Fully participating in practice.
• Knowing the specific responsibilities of your position and fulfilling them as best you can.
• Supporting your teammates when they are having both good and bad days.
• Keeping track of your stats so you can chart improvements.
• Talking with teammates and coaches about mistakes you make and how you can correct them in the future.

Accountability In Social Media

Whether or not you have aspirations to play sports in college, being accountable for what you say and post on social media is a smart plan. In order to get an idea for what kind of person a potential player is, college coaches pay attention to what they are posting on Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and other social media outlets.

Case in point, this tweet from then-Penn State football assistant coach Herb Hand about a high school player he was recruiting:

“Dropped another prospect this AM due to his social media presence ... Actually glad I got to see the ‘real’ person before we offered him [a scholarship].”

Don’t jeopardize your athletic career due to what you put on social media, and always keep in mind these guidelines before you post:
• Remember that despite what apps may claim, it is nearly impossible to permanently delete anything from the Internet.
• Anything you create or communicate can be copied, edited, and sent around. Once you put something online, it’s out of your control.
• Think before you post. Would you want a potential coach to read it? A potential employer?
• If you retweet, comment on, or like something inappropriate, realize you are now directly connected to it.
• Say thank you to fans, teammates, and family who support you.
• Set a positive example for other students by posting encouraging messages about your teammates and peers in other sports or activities at school.
Additional Resources

Be sure to check out these additional resources available for download:

Chalk Talk (PDF)
15-minute activity: Get your athletes thinking and talking about respect with these guided discussions.

Review Handout
10-minute quiz: Test your athletes’ knowledge of what it means to be a respectful & accountable athlete and person. (answers included)

TrueSport Certificate
Lesson Certificate Handout: Celebrate your groups’ completion of the lesson on Respect & Accountability with this special certificate.
With the provided questions, lead a discussion about the role that respect plays in both athletics and in life.

Instructions

Lead a discussion with the provided questions around the role that respect has in athletics.

1. How can you demonstrate respect to your opponents and officials during a game?
2. During a game, is there ever a time when it’s ok to be disrespectful?
3. What are some ways you can show respect outside of sports?
Lead a discussion with the provided questions around the role that respect has in athletics.

1. Do you agree that being respectful is not always easy during a game?
2. If yes, can you provide an example in sports when this might be the case?
3. Can you provide an example in life when this might be the case?
4. Do you agree that you first have to respect yourself before others respect you?
5. How can you incorporate more respect into your life?
In order to reinforce the lesson and put TrueSport into action, do the following Chalk Talk with your athletes.

Instructions

Lead a discussion with your athletes about the importance of being accountable in all aspects of their lives.

1. What are some ways you are accountable to your teammates?

2. What are some ways you are accountable to your coaches?

3. What are some ways you are accountable to yourself, on and off the field?

4. Do you agree that doing the right thing isn’t always easy?
Review the Basics and the Tips & Applications for this lesson with your athletes, then read the following questions as an oral quiz OR print the last two pages of this document and let your athletes fill out on their own and then discuss as a group.

Answers

1. The Golden Rule of Respect is to: d) Treat others how you want to be treated

2. Teammates deserve respect...: c) at all times

3. Part of being a respectful person means being __________ for your own actions: b) Accountable

4. Referees and their calls are supposed to be argued with: False

5. You can be respectful to your body by: D) All of the above

6. When someone is speaking, it’s ok to have a side conversation or look at your phone as long as most everybody else is paying attention: False

7. You can show respect to your sport by: d) both a and c

8. The sweetest sound to someone’s ear is: c) Their own name

9. Being respectful to opponents means they will gain a competitive advantage: b) False

10. After a game, you should always shake the hands of: d) Both b and c
Read the following questions about being a respectful athlete and all-around person, then circle your best guess.

**Question 1**

The Golden Rule of Respect is to:

- [ ] Smile and nod
- [ ] Keep calm and carry on
- [ ] Live, laugh, love
- [ ] Treat others how you want to be treated

**Question 2**

Teammates deserve respect...

- [ ] When they play well
- [ ] When they make me look good
- [ ] At all times
- [ ] Only when our team wins

**Question 3**

Part of being a respectful person means being _______ for your own actions:

- [ ] Apologetic
- [ ] Accountable
- [ ] Embarrassed
- [ ] Boastful

**Question 4**

Referees and their calls are supposed to be argued with.

- [ ] True
- [ ] False

**Question 5**

You can be respectful to your body by:

- [ ] Warming up properly
- [ ] Eating foods that will help it repair and grow
- [ ] Stretching after games and practices
- [ ] All of the above
**Question 6**

*When someone is speaking, it's ok to have a side conversation or look at your phone as long as most everybody else is paying attention.*

- **True**
- **False**

**Question 7**

*You can show respect to your sport by:*

- Giving your best effort, every time
- Following the rules
- Trying to gain an edge any way possible
- Both a and c

**Question 8**

*The sweetest sound to someone’s ear is:*

- A mean nickname
- Their own name
- “Hey, you”
- Silly screeching noises

**Question 9**

*Being respectful to opponents means they will gain a competitive advantage.*

- **True**
- **False**

**Question 10**

*After a game, you should always shake the hands of...*

- No one
- Your opponents
- The referees
- Both b and c
The Accountability Bridge: Middle School Activity

Supplies Needed: Four chairs with backs.

Instructions

Divide your athletes into groups of four, and position the chairs in a square so that the back of each is facing out.

In groups of four, tell each athlete to sit in one chair sideways; their feet should be on the floor and their knees facing out. Then tell everybody to lie down so that their head is on the upper legs of the person next to them. Slowly pull one chair out from the square, and then the next, and the next, and finally, the last. Time how long each team of four is able to support each other without falling.

Then, discuss the activity with these questions:

1. How did it feel owning one quarter of the responsibility for keeping your team together?

2. How do you think this exercise relates to being accountable to your teammates when you are at practice?
Ask your athletes to get into groups of two or three and briefly discuss this scenario below. Follow up with a group discussion using the suggested questions.

You are a senior on the tennis team, which has made it to the State Quarterfinals. The day before your match is Senior Skip Day, a school tradition during which seniors that are about to graduate don’t attend school.

The administration has heard rumors of the Senior Skip Day date, and the athletic director has warned your team that if any seniors miss school that day, they will not be allowed to play in the State Quarterfinals.

What would you do?

**Suggested discussion points and questions:**

1. Lay out the reasons for participating in Senior Skip Day.

2. Lay out the reasons for not participating in Senior Skip Day.

3. What role does accountability play in this scenario?

4. When you look back on your senior year in a few years, which memory do you think would be more fulfilling: Senior Skip Day or playing in the State Quarterfinals? Why?
Congratulations! You have demonstrated that you know how to be a TrueSport Champion!

TrueSport, powered by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), is a movement that seeks to ensure a positive youth sport experience for athletes like you. In learning how to be respectful and accountable, you have gained skills to be a leader both on and off the field.