

Session 2
Arthur Ashe

Goals

- The students will learn about Arthur Ashe the founder of Virginia Heroes, Incorporated.
- The students will consider charitable giving and how it relates to success.
- The students will become exposed to many different charities.

Materials

Activity 1
Activity 2
Activity 3
Activity 4
Activity 5

Procedure

Greet the students. Wait until the students are seated and quiet. Reintroduce yourself to the students if necessary. Briefly describe the goals of today's lesson.

Script

Today we are going to learn about Arthur Ashe. Arthur Ashe is the founder of the Virginia Heroes program. Without his vision for a mentorship program for young people we would not be here today visiting with you.

Arthur Ashe believed in giving back to the community. He felt a sense of responsibility to those who were less fortunate than him. He traveled the world dedicated to making life a little better for someone who didn't have the opportunities that he had. Arthur Ashe was proud to be a voice for several charities.

Does anyone know who Arthur Ashe is? Are you aware of any of his accomplishments? By the time you leave today you will know a great deal about Arthur Ashe. It is our hope that the life of this Richmond hero inspires you to follow your dreams.

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Activity 1: Celebrities and Charities

Arthur Ashe believed in giving back to the community. He felt a sense of responsibility to those who were less fortunate than him. He traveled the world dedicated to making life a little better for someone who didn't have the opportunities that he had. Arthur Ashe was proud to be a voice for several charities. Listed below are famous people who have charities that are near and dear to their heart. Many of these celebrities have started their own charitable foundation. Can you match the famous person with one of their favorite charities?

Activity 2: Charity Begins At Home

Do you have a favorite charity or cause? Have you always wanted to help a certain cause or people who are less fortunate than you? Do you think it is important to give to charities? If you don't have a favorite charity, considering choosing a Literacy program, Earth Day program, World AIDs Relief program, the Feed the Children campaign or a Breast Cancer Research fund. You could always create your own charity. Write a paragraph describing why that charity is important to you.

Activity 3: Quote for Discussion

Read the quote. Ask the students what they think the author was trying to say. Do you agree with Mr. Ashe? Why do you agree or disagree?

*"True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not
the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost,
but the urge to serve others
at whatever the cost."*

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Activity 4: Service Off And On the Court

Arthur Ashe developed the mentor program called Virginia Heroes, Incorporated. Perhaps he believed in mentoring because there were several people who helped to shape his life. Read Worksheet #1. There are four people listed that were considered a mentor to Arthur Ashe. Answer the questions below and make your own list of influential mentors.

Activity 5: Arthur Ashe

Arthur Robert Ashe, Jr. (July 10, 1943 – February 6, 1993) was a prominent African American tennis player who was born and raised in Richmond, Virginia. During his playing career, he won three Grand Slam titles. Ashe is also remembered for his efforts to further social causes.

Arthur, the first African-American male to win a Grand Slam event, was an active civil rights supporter. He was a member of a delegation of 31 prominent African-Americans who visited South Africa to observe political change in the country as it approached racial integration. He was arrested on January 11, 1985, for protesting outside the South African embassy in Washington D.C during an anti-apartheid rally. He was also arrested again on September 9, 1992, outside the White House for protesting on the recent crackdown on Haitian refugees.

During his battle with AIDS, from the world over, he received letters from his fans, one of which asked: "Why does God have to select you for such a bad disease"? To this Arthur Ashe replied: The world over -- 50,000,000 children start playing tennis, 5,000,000 learn to play tennis, 500,000 learn professional tennis, 50,000 come to the circuit, 5,000 reach the grand slam, 50 reach Wimbledon, 4 to the semi-finals, 2 to the finals, When I was holding a cup I never asked God "Why me?" And today in pain I should not be asking God, "Why me?"

In his youth, Ashe was small and decided to start playing tennis. He was coached by Ron Charity and later coached by Walter Johnson. Tired of having to travel great distances to play Caucasian youths in segregated Richmond, Virginia, Ashe accepted an offer from a St. Louis, MO tennis official to move there and attend Sumner High School. Young Arthur continued to thrive in his new environment, earning recognition in Sports Illustrated for his playing.

Ashe began to attract the attention of tennis fans after being awarded a tennis scholarship to UCLA in 1963. That same year, Ashe was the first African American ever selected to the United States Davis Cup team. In 1965, Ashe won the individual NCAA championship and was a chief contributor in UCLA's winning the team NCAA tennis championship. While at UCLA, Ashe was initiated as a member of the Upsilon chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. With this successful college career behind him, Ashe quickly ascended to the upper echelon of tennis players worldwide after turning professional in 1969.

By 1969, most people considered Ashe to be the best American male tennis player. He had won the

inaugural US Open in 1968, and had aided the US Davis Cup team to victory that same year. Concerned that tennis pros were not receiving winnings commensurate with the sport's growing popularity, Ashe was one of the key figures behind the formation of the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP). That year would prove even more momentous for Ashe, when he was denied a visa by the South African government, thereby keeping him out of the South African Open. Ashe chose to use this denial to publicize South Africa's apartheid policies. In the media, Ashe called for South Africa to be expelled from the professional tennis circuit. In 1970, he added a second Grand Slam title to his resume by winning the Australian Open.

In 1975, after several years of lower levels of success, Ashe played his best season ever by winning Wimbledon, unexpectedly defeating Jimmy Connors in the final. He remains the only African American player ever to win the men's singles at Wimbledon, the US Open, or Australian Open, and one of only two men of black African ancestry to win a Grand Slam singles event (the other being France's Yannick Noah, who won the French Open in 1983). He would play for several more years, but after being slowed by heart surgery in 1979, Ashe retired in 1980.

In his 1979 autobiography, Jack Kramer, the long-time tennis promoter and great player himself, ranks Ashe as one of the 21 best players of all time. After his retirement, Ashe took on many new tasks, from writing for *Time* magazine to commentating for ABC Sports, from founding the National Junior Tennis League to serving as captain of the US Davis Cup team. In 1983, Ashe underwent a second heart surgery. To no one's surprise, he was elected to the Tennis Hall of Fame in 1985.

Ashe died of complications from AIDS on February 6, 1993.

Famous Arthur Ashe quotes:

- "From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life."
- "For every hour spent on the playing field, two should be spent with a book"
- "Let me put it this way: I think Republicans tend to keep the ball in play, Democrats go for broke."
- "True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever the cost."

Activity 6: Teen Health and Safety

What can I do now to keep myself healthy?

Avoid using any type of tobacco product. Try not to breathe second hand cigarette smoke.

Get regular exercise.

Eat a healthy diet.

Always use your seat belt.

Never swim alone.

Talk to your parents or your doctor if you're feeling really sad or if you're thinking about harming yourself.

Avoid situations where violence or fighting may cause you to be physically injured.

If you have sex, use condoms to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. (Remember, however, the "safest" sex is no sex.)

See your doctor regularly.