

DANIEL IGALI



SCHOOL PROGRAM

ATHLETE STORIES

A STORY ABOUT LEADERSHIP

The Canadian Olympic School Program first profiled Daniel Igalí's inspiring story in 2008. Daniel had fled the violence of his home country of Nigeria after the 1994 Commonwealth Games and was warmly welcomed by Canadians. He found a home that embraced him as one of their own, and his gratitude was never more evident as his victory celebration after winning a gold medal in 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. He danced around the flag and kissed it repeatedly.

But his heart was too big for just one nation. His love and compassion for the people of Nigeria inspired him to embark on a project to build a school. He returned frequently during the project, and on one occasion was injured during a violent home invasion. This did not deter him. He eventually took on a coaching position for the 2008 Nigerian Olympic wrestling team and now is the president of the Nigerian Wrestling Federation. He also serves as a member of the Bayelsa State assembly.



FREESTYLE WRESTLING - MEN'S

TEACHING VALUES THROUGH OLYMPIC STORIES

Olympic stories of triumph and disappointment can engage learners in discussions about important value issues. Through the stories and challenges of Olympic athletes, children and youth can explore and connect values to their lives, and perhaps begin to see their world in new and different ways.



TEACHING GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Current curriculum theory emphasizes the importance of reinforcing values education messages through narratives, storytelling, art, posters, drama, and physical movement, activities based on the stories, events, ceremonies and symbols of the Olympic Games stories have school-wide relevance.

THE OLYMPIC VALUES

The core Olympic Values are identified as Excellence, Respect and Friendship. The narratives which follow highlight these values. When you engage your learners with these narratives you will be expanding their moral and physical understanding and capabilities.

PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

The following principles of learning are highlighted in order to engage students actively in the values education process:

1. Learning is an active and not a passive activity. Students need to be actively engaged in discussion, sharing their ideas in small groups and exploring differing points of view.
2. People learn in different ways. Some people learn best by reading; some people learn best by listening; some people learn best by moving around. The activities associated with these narratives' present different ways of learning.
3. Learning is both an individual and a cooperative activity. Young people need opportunities to work together as well as independently. They also need to practice cooperative behaviours in order to learn competitive behaviours.

STAGES OF THE LEARNING SEQUENCE

Successful learning is built upon a carefully scaffolded series of steps that **connect** to students' prior understanding, actively **process** or practice new information, and finally **transform** their understandings into powerful demonstrations of learning.

Each values story is presented at three reading levels: Grades 2-3, Grades 4-5, and Grades 6 -7. The accompanying activities are sufficiently open-ended to address a diverse range of learning styles and proficiencies. They focus on six main facets of understanding:

Explaining, Interpreting, Applying, Taking Perspective, Empathizing, and Developing Self-Knowledge. These critical thinking skills are woven into all three stages of the learning sequence in order to promote deep understanding of the values and concepts.



CONNECTING

BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR NEW LEARNING

Partner Talk (All Grades)

In pairs, students share their ideas about leadership. Below are some guiding questions:

- Who are some leaders you know?
- How do we know they are leaders?
- What do leaders do?
- What is important for a leader to know?

Class Share (All Grades)

Using the *Qualities of a Leader* handout below, teacher records student ideas, organized in the four-quadrant format (Looks Like / Sounds Like / Feels Like / Examples of). For higher grade levels, students can record their ideas individually or in cooperative groups using the *Qualities of a Leader* handout below.

PROCESSING

USING STRATEGIES TO ACQUIRE AND USE KNOWLEDGE

Daniel's Journey to Leadership (Grades 2-3)

1. Students read Daniel's story and then the teacher reads it to the class
2. Teacher highlights the significant events in Daniel's journey to leadership: Daniel's background in Nigeria, Daniel comes to Canada, help from Daniel's friends, Daniel at school on the wrestling team, Daniel wins a gold medal at world championships, Daniel goes to the Olympic Games in Sydney Australia and wins a gold medal, Daniel visits Nigeria, and Daniel raises money to help his home village.
3. In groups of twos or threes, students draw and provide captions for each part of Daniel's journey using the handout below "Daniel's Journey to Leadership"

Daniel's Journey to Leadership (Grades 4-7)

1. Teacher models with a read and think aloud. Students with a partner read the story, pausing to record personal reactions to the text. Using the following symbols:
 - ✓ – agree
 - ✗ – disagree
 - * – a really important part
 - ? – questions I have about this
 - ! – surprising
2. Teacher debriefs student responses to text interactions in whole class discussion. Teacher asks, "what have you learned about leadership after reading about Daniel Igali?"

Optional: Have students respond to either their text interactions or the consolidating question above in a five-minute writing period.



TRANSFORMING

SHOWING UNDERSTANDING IN A NEW WAY

Letter Writing (Grades 2-3)

1. Teacher and students discuss the visual of Daniel's journey using the following prompts:
 - What surprised you about Daniel's journey?
 - What questions do you have for Daniel?
 - What do you admire about Daniel?
2. Students write a letter to Daniel in response to the three questions.

Hot Seat (Grades 4-7)

Students and teacher generate questions to ask "Daniel Igali." Several students in succession play the role and students pose the generated questions. Teacher can choose to organize the Hot Seat in a "talk show" format.



LEARNING ACTIVITIES



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FREESTYLE WRESTLING - MEN'S

Daniel Igali is Canada's best wrestler.

He was not born in Canada. He was born in Nigeria.

He was the best wrestler in Nigeria.

But he was poor.

Daniel had 21 brothers and sisters. His family had no money.

The army ran the country. They did not share their money. They could be mean.

Daniel did not like that.

Police beat him up once, for no reason.

Daniel and his team came to Canada in 1994.

Daniel did want to go back to Nigeria. He stayed in Canada.

"I feel safe in Canada. Canada respects human rights. And in Canada I could wrestle and go to school."

Daniel missed his family.

In Canada, Daniel made new friends. He met people who taught him about working together. He says they were leaders.

"Tom Murphy let me live with him. Satnam Johal also let me live with him for three years. Maureen Matheny was a principal. She became my new mother. They helped me stay in Canada."

Daniel went to school. He joined the school's wrestling team. He was good. He won all the time.

He became a Canadian citizen. And he became the leader of Canada's wrestling team.

In 1999, Daniel went to the World Championships. He won a gold medal for Canada.

Then Maureen died of cancer right after the competition.

Daniel was very sad. She had been like a mom to him. Now she was gone.

He was the new leader of the Canadian wrestling team. He had to be strong for his team.

"I made sure that the wrestling team was like a family, we were good friends."

Those friends helped Daniel. He was still sad, but they helped him wrestle again.

He went to the Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia. Daniel won! Daniel won a gold medal!

Daniel was so happy that he put a Canadian flag on the mat.

He danced around it with joy.

He kissed the flag.

"I thought about everyone who had helped me."

Daniel also thought of his old country, Nigeria.

He missed his friends and family there. He wanted to show them his gold medal.

After the Olympics, Daniel went to Nigeria. It was still poor.

"The school roof leaked when it rained. People drank dirty water from the stream. The stream was also the village sewage and the garbage dump."

Daniel knew he had to be a leader.

"I thought about the poor children. I would help them."

Daniel asked his friends in Canada to help him build a new school.

He asked them to help pay for new water wells.

He says the children have taught him about being a good leader.

"Kids can be leaders by caring about causes that mean something to them. They should not be afraid to fail. You have to learn from the mistakes."

The great boxer Mohammed Ali once said that we all need to be great neighbors to each other."

Daniel knew he had to be a leader.

Daniel has a big heart. It was too big for only one country. His love for the people of Nigeria led him back to help them.

He started coaching wrestling for Nigeria. He was an Olympic coach for Nigeria at the 2008 Olympics.

Now he is a politician in Nigeria. He makes laws to help and protect people.

LEADERSHIP



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DANIEL IGALI

FREESTYLE WRESTLING - MEN'S

"Leadership is not about giving commands, but about working together."

— Daniel Igali.

Daniel Igali grew up in Nigeria. He was that country's best wrestler.

His family was very poor. Daniel had 21 brothers and sisters. The army ran the country. Daniel didn't like that. The police once beat him up.

In 1994 Daniel came to Canada for a big competition called The Commonwealth Games in Victoria, British Columbia.

Daniel decided he would miss the plane ride home and stay in Canada.

"I felt safer in Canada, where human rights are respected and where I could compete and also go to school."

In Canada, Daniel met people who taught him about working together.

"Tom Murphy was a volunteer at the Games. He took me in and treated me like family. Satnam Johal let me live with him. Maureen Matheny, a school principal, became my second mother."

Daniel started taking classes at Simon Fraser University. He joined the wrestling team. He quickly improved with good coaching and equipment. Winning started to come easy, and he won 116 matches in a row.

In 1999, Daniel went to the World Wrestling Championships and won the gold medal for Canada.

Then he faced another challenge. Maureen died of cancer right after the competition.

It was a huge blow only months away from the Olympics. She had been like a mom to him, and now she was gone. But Daniel still had to remember his job as the new leader of the Canadian wrestling team.

"I tried to lead by example. I was always the first on the wrestling mats or the weight room. I made sure I was on good terms with the coaches. I made sure that the wrestling team was like a family, we were good friends on and off the mats."

Those friends helped Daniel cope with his loss, and he returned to his training.

At the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia Daniel won the gold medal.

He carefully placed a Canadian flag on the ground and danced around it with joy. Then he got on his knees and kissed the red maple leaf in the middle.

"I had a thousand thoughts flood my mind. I thought about everyone who had helped me from my youth to when I moved to Canada."

Daniel also thought of his birthplace, Nigeria. This medal was also part of that world. After the Olympics, Daniel returned to visit Nigeria and was saddened by what he saw.

"Young kids had to leave school when it rained because the roof leaked. All the people in the village were drinking from the same stream that was used for the village sewage and waste dump."

Daniel had a new mission to lead.

"I thought about the poor children there. I would finally be able to do something to change their fortunes."

Daniel asked his friends in Canada to help him raise money to build a new school and to dig new water wells. He says the children have taught him about leadership as well.

"Kids can be leaders by caring about causes that mean something to them. They should

not be afraid to fail. You can learn from the mistakes.

The great boxer Mohammed Ali once said that our purpose on earth is to be great neighbours to each other."

Daniel's heart was too big for only one country. His love for the people of Nigeria led him back to help them.

After starting a school, he started coaching wrestling in Nigeria. He was the Nigerian Olympic coach at the 2008 Olympics.

Nowadays, he is a state politician and makes laws that help and protect the people.

LEADERSHIP



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FREESTYLE WRESTLING - MEN'S

"Leadership is not about giving commands, but about working together."

— Daniel Igali.

For Daniel Igali, leadership also about facing challenges and not giving up. Daniel is originally from Nigeria. He grew up in a poor family, with 21 brothers and sisters, in a country torn apart by violence. The army ran the country.

Daniel overcame those obstacles to become Nigeria's best wrestler. He wrestled barefoot on the bare ground. There were no real gyms or training centres, but he still qualified for the 1992 Olympics.

Then he had to face more challenges. At the airport, his team suddenly told Daniel they didn't have the money to go. The team was told to return home. Daniel's heart was broken as his Olympic dreams were dashed.

Daniel knew he had to get away. He made the tough decision to move to a new country.

He got his chance in 1994. Daniel came to Canada for the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, British Columbia. After competing, he decided he would miss the plane ride home and stay in Canada.

"Nigeria was ruled by a military regime. I felt safer staying in Canada, where human rights were respected and where I would have an opportunity to combine athletics with academics."

In Canada, Daniel met people who taught him about leadership.

"Tom Murphy was a volunteer at the Games. He took me in and treated me like family. Satnam Johal let me live with him rent-free for about three years. Another great influence in my life was a lady named Maureen Matheny, a primary school principal in Richmond B.C. She became my surrogate mother. Without these people, adjusting to life in Canada would have been extremely difficult for me."

Daniel enrolled at Simon Fraser University and joined their wrestling team. He excelled under the coaching and with access to proper equipment. Winning came easy and he won 116 matches in a row.

International success came in 1999, when he won the gold medal for Canada at the World Wrestling Championships.

But he soon faced another challenge. Maureen died of cancer right after the competition.

It was a crushing blow months away from the 2000 Sydney Olympics. She had been like a mom to him, and now she was gone. Daniel was grief-stricken. In spite of the pain, he had to stay focused on his job as the new leader of the Canadian wrestling team.

"My mantra has been to lead by example. I am always the first on the wrestling mats or the weight room. I made sure I was on good terms with the coaches, so I could advocate for other athletes and resolve issues quickly. Most importantly, I ensured that the wrestling team was like a family, we were good friends on and off the mats."

Those friends helped Daniel cope with his loss and return to his training.

In 2000, on the wrestling mats in Sydney, Australia Daniel won the gold medal.

What followed won the hearts of all Canadians. He laid a Canadian Flag on the ground and danced around it with joy. Then he got on his knees and kissed the red maple leaf in the middle.

"I had a thousand thoughts flood my mind. I thought about everyone who had helped me from my youth to when I made the move to Canada."

He remembered his birthplace, Nigeria. This medal was also part of that world.

"I thought about the underprivileged children there and felt I would finally be able to do something to change their fortunes."

After the Olympics, Daniel returned to Nigeria and was saddened by what he saw.

"Young kids were evacuated from school when it rained because the roof was leaking badly. All the people in the village were drinking from the same stream which doubled as the village sewage and waste dump."

Daniel had a new mission to lead. He has dedicated his life to helping those children. Daniel asked his friends in Canada to help him. He has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a new school and to dig new water wells. He says the children have taught him about leadership as well.

"Kids can be leaders by being passionate about causes that appeal to them. They should not be afraid to fail. Learn from the mistakes and remain focused on your goals. The great boxer Mohammed Ali once said that the purpose of our existence on earth is to be great neighbors to each other."

Daniel's heart was too big for only one country. His love for the people of Nigeria led him back to help them. The violent realities of his home country had not changed much. While in Nigeria working on the school, he was injured in a home invasion and robbery.

This didn't deter him for long. He started coaching wrestling in Nigeria and was the Nigerian Olympic coach at the 2008 Olympics.

Nowadays, he is a state politician in Nigeria and makes laws that help and protect the people.

GR.6-7

LEADERSHIP



SCHOOL PROGRAM

QUALITIES OF A LEADER

LOOKS LIKE...

SOUNDS LIKE...

FEELS LIKE...

EXAMPLES OF...



DANIEL'S JOURNEY TO **LEADERSHIP**

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EFFORTS AND CREATIVITY

The Canadian Olympic School Program wishes to thank and acknowledge the contributions of the following people. Without their efforts, and creativity, this project would not have been possible.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

