



ATHLETE STORIES

A STORY ABOUT PERSEVERANCE

The 1930s were hard years for most Canadians as the country battled through the depression. But there were even more challenges for those who were Black. Ray Lewis and Phil Edwards were the only two Black athletes on the 1932 Canadian Olympic Team. They both ran on the bronze medal winning 4x400m team. Phil also won bronze in the men's 800m and 1500m races.

Their stories demonstrate the perseverance needed to overcome prejudice and systemic racism. But their stories are quite different. While they both faced discrimination and stereotypes throughout their careers, the opportunities that they had through education and family background were not the same.

This resource speaks about the resilience required to overcome injustice and reach your goals. Both men went on to great success off the track. Phil was a doctor who specialized in tropical diseases. Ray was an advocate for racial equity and was awarded for his work, receiving the Order of Canada at 91 years of age.



Source: Athletics Ontario

RAY LEWIS



Source: The Canadian Encyclopedia

PHILIP EDWARDS

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

To persevere means to keep going in spite of challenges, hardship, or injustice. Today we are going to learn about two Olympic runners that persevered through injustice. They kept working towards their dreams even when things weren't fair or just.

1. Partner Sharing (All Grades)

In pairs, ask students to write a definition for "unfair". They can use examples that explain why something is unfair.

2. Class Share (All Grades)

Ask student pairs to share their definitions.

3. Class Discussion: What is unfair? (All Grades)

Discuss the definitions and try to distinguish between what is truly unfair versus what is undesirable. For instance, parent imposed limits on screen time might not be what a student wants, but they may not be unfair. Examples of unfairness could include when people are treated differently because of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, or religion.

PROCESSING

USING STRATEGIES TO ACQUIRE AND USE KNOWLEDGE

Ask the students to read the story silently on their own.
Reread the story with the students.

Comic Creation (All Grades)

Ask the students use the "Be Olympic Comic Frame" to draw a comic strip that shows one of the parts of the Ray and Phil story that shows them persevering through something that was unfair. An example might be the time when Phil was not allowed to stay in the hotel and the team chose to leave.

TRANSFORMING

SHOWING UNDERSTANDING IN A NEW WAY

Letter of Encouragement (Grades 2-5)

In their writing journals, ask the students to write a letter to a friend to encourage them to persevere in the face of something that is unfair. In part of the letter, they are to explain a lesson that can be drawn from the Ray and Phil story.

Journal Entry (Grades 6-7)

Ask the students to write a journal entry about what perseverance means to them. What are the challenges that they face or the obstacles between them and their dreams? What can they do to overcome these challenges and obstacles?



RAY LEWIS & PHILIP EDWARDS

ATHLETICS - 4X400M RELAY TEAM

To be a champion, he have to keep going. You have to overcome challenges. This was true for Ray Lewis and Phil Edwards. They were the only Black athletes on the 1932 Canadian Olympic team.

They ran the 4x400 metre relay at the Los Angeles Olympics. Few of the fans knew the racism that they had to overcome to get there.

At the time in Los Angeles, Black people couldn't eat at many restaurants. They had to go to Black only schools and hospitals. Even one of the coaches on the Canadian team mocked Ray Lewis because he was Black. Ray stood up to the insults. He didn't lose his temper.

"Being treated poorly by others didn't defeat me," said Lewis. "It only made me want to run harder."

Ray and Phil were both fast runners. But they lived different lives.

Ray tried hard in high school. He was a champion sprinter. But that didn't help him get a good job. Sadly, there were few good jobs for Black people in the 1930s. He worked as a porter on the railway.

Porters helped passengers onto the train. They served them food and shined their shoes. The pay was poor. The hours were long. Most porters were Black people. Many white people saw Black people as servants.

Ray did not give up his Olympic dream. He fit his running around his job on long train trips between Toronto and Vancouver.

"My porter's job took most of my time and energy," he said. "I would get only about three hours of sleep a night. Most of my time was spent looking after the passengers."

Still, he made time to run. When he got to Vancouver, he sprinted at the local track. When the train stopped on the way, he ran on the path beside the rails.

Phil Edwards lived a different life. He was born in Guyana. His father was a powerful official. He was met by racism when his family moved to New York City.

The local school wouldn't let Black students attend. His parents threatened to start their own school. Only then did the school back down and let their children attend.

"My parents took their equality for granted," recalls Phil's daughter. "When they met obstacles, they found a way to get around them."

Phil was a track star at university. The rules let him run for Canada. The other athletes respected him so much that they made team captain. That was a first for a Black athlete.

On one trip to England, the hotel manager said that Phil could not stay in the hotel. The hotel rules wouldn't allow Black guests. The whole team left the hotel to support Phil.

At the Los Angeles Olympic Games, both Ray and Phil were racing with something to prove.

Ray Lewis was the lead-off runner. He gave everything he had to get the team a good position. He passed the baton to Jimmy Ball. Jimmy kept the team in the race for medals. Phil was next up. He raced with all that was within him. An Olympic medal was within reach. He passed to the anchor, Alex Wilson.

Canada crossed the finish in third place. They were just seconds behind gold. The top three teams broke the Olympic record. It was an amazing moment.

Ray and Phil kept going after the Olympics. Phil went on to win five Olympic bronze medals. He won so many bronze medals that people called him the "Man of Bronze." He became a doctor.

Ray spoke out against racism. Just before he died, his anti-racism work won him a big award. He was given the Order of Canada. Many people agreed with what he said.

"If people live, work, and learn together, they will overcome racism," he said. "They will see each other as they really are. They will accept their differences."

PERSEVERANCE



SCHOOL PROGRAM

RAY LEWIS & PHILIP EDWARDS

GR.4-5

ATHLETICS - 4X400M RELAY TEAM

All champions need to learn to keep going in the face of challenges. They must persevere. This was certainly true for Ray Lewis and Phil Edwards. They were the only Black athletes on the 1932 Canadian Olympic team.

Over 100,000 cheering fans watched as they walked out onto the Los Angeles Olympic track for the 4x400m relay. Few of the fans knew the prejudice and racism that they had overcome to get there.

At the time in Los Angeles, Black people were not allowed to eat at many restaurants. There were separate schools and hospitals for Black people. Even one of the coaches on the Canadian team mocked Ray Lewis because he was Black. Ray had learned how to stand up to insults without losing his temper.

“Being treated poorly by others didn’t defeat me,” said Lewis. *“It only made me want to run harder.”*

Ray and Phil were both fast runners. But they lived different lives.

Ray worked hard in high school. He was known as a talented sprinter. But none of this mattered when it came time to get a good job. Sadly, there were few opportunities for Black people in the 1930s. He got a job as a porter on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

As a porter, he helped passengers onto the train, served them food, and shined their shoes. The pay was poor, and the hours were long. Most porters were Black because many white people viewed them as servants.

Ray did not give up his Olympic dream. He fit his running around his job on long train trips from Toronto to Vancouver.

“My porter’s job absorbed my time and energy,” he said. *“I would get only about three hours of sleep a night. Most of my time was spent looking after the passengers.”*

Still, he made time to run. When he got to Vancouver he would have a nap and then run at a track. When the train stopped for a few hours on the prairies, he would sprint along the dirt path beside the rails.

Phil Edwards lived a different life. He was born in the former British country now known as Guyana. His father was a powerful government official. He was met by racism when his family moved to New York City.

The local school wouldn’t let Black students attend. His parents threatened to start their own school. Only then did the school back down and let their children attend.

“My parents took their equality for granted,” recalls Phil’s daughter. *“When they met obstacles, they found a way to get around them.”*

Phil was a track star at university. As a British subject he could compete for Canada on national teams. The athletes respected him, and he was made team captain.

On one trip to England, the hotel manager said that Phil could not stay there because he was Black. The hotel rules didn’t allow Black guests. The whole team left the hotel to support Phil.

When the gun signaled the start of their race at the Los Angeles Olympic Games, both Ray and Phil were racing with something to prove.

Ray was the lead-off runner, and raced to get the team a good position. He passed the baton to Jimmy Ball who ran a solid leg and passed the baton to Phil. He raced with all that was in him, knowing that an Olympic medal was in reach. He passed to the anchor, Alex Wilson. Canada crossed the finish in third place, just seconds behind gold. The top three teams broke the Olympic record. It was an amazing moment.

Ray and Phil persevered and overcame racism throughout their lives. Phil went on to win five Olympic bronze medals. He won so many bronze medals that people called him the “Man of Bronze.” He became a medical doctor.

Ray became a spokesperson against racism. A lifetime of speaking out against racism earned him the Order of Canada. He died two years later. Many people embraced the message that he had worked so hard to share.

“If people live, work, and learn together, they will overcome racism,” he said. *“They will see each other as they really are, and will learn to accept not only their differences, but also their similarities.”*

PERSEVERANCE


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RAY LEWIS & PHIL EDWARDS

ATHLETICS - 4X400M RELAY TEAM

All champions need to learn to keep going in the face of challenges. They must persevere. This was certainly true for Ray Lewis and Phil Edwards. They were the only Black athletes on the 160 person 1932 Canadian Olympic team.

Over 100,000 cheering fans watched as they walked out onto the Los Angeles Olympic track for the 4x400m relay. Few of the fans knew the prejudice and racism that they had overcome to get there.

At the time in Los Angeles, there were many restaurants, schools, hospitals, and banks where Black people were simply not allowed to go for services or they had the indignity of having to enter through the back door. Even one of the coaches on the Canadian team mocked Ray with racist stereotypes. Ray had learned how to stand up to insults without losing his temper.

“Being treated poorly by others didn’t defeat me,” said Lewis. “It only made me want to run harder, to prove to everyone that I could achieve great things.”

Ray and Phil were both excellent runners. But they came from very different backgrounds.

Ray tried hard in high school and was well-known as an athlete in his Hamilton, Ontario hometown. But none of that helped him get a good job. Sadly, because few employers welcomed Black applicants, there were few career choices for Black people in the 1930s. The only job he could find was as a porter on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

As a porter, he helped passengers onto the train, served them food, and shined their shoes. The pay was poor, and the hours were long. Most porters were Black because many white people viewed them as servants.

Ray did not give up his Olympic dream. He squeezed his training schedule around his job on long train trips from Toronto to Vancouver.

“My porter’s job continued to absorb my time and energy,” he said. “I would get only about three hours of sleep a night, because most of my time was taken up looking after the passengers.”

Still, he made time to run. When he arrived in Vancouver he would have a nap and then sprint at a local track. When the train stopped for a few hours on the prairies, he would do his training on the dirt path beside the rails.

Phil’s life was much different. Born in the former British colony now known as Guyana, Phil’s father was a powerful government official. It was only when his family moved to New York City, that he faced prejudice for being Black.

The local school refused to let Phil and his brothers and sisters enroll because they were Black. When his parents announced plans to start their own school, the officials gave in, and allowed their children to attend.

“They took their equality for granted,” recalls Phil’s daughter Gwen Emery. “When they were confronted by obstacles they found a way to get around them.”

Phil became a track star at university. As a British subject, he could compete for Canada. His soft-spoken eloquence quickly earned the respect of other athletes, and he was often chosen as team captain.

On one trip to London, the hotel manager said that Phil could not stay there because the hotel rules would not allow Black guests. Outraged, the whole team stood behind Phil and left the hotel.

When the gun signaled the start of their race at the Los Angeles Olympic Games, both Ray and Phil were racing with something to prove.

Ray was the lead-off runner, and raced to get the team a good position. He passed the baton to Jimmy Ball who ran a solid leg and passed the baton to Phil. He raced with all that was within him, knowing that an Olympic medal was in reach. He passed to the anchor, Alex Wilson. Canada crossed the finish in third place, just seconds behind gold. The top three teams broke the Olympic record. It was an amazing moment.

Ray and Phil showed perseverance throughout their lives. Phil won five Olympic bronze medals, so many that his nickname was the “Man of Bronze”. He became a medical doctor who specialized in tropical diseases.

Ray became a spokesperson for racial equality. Just before his death, he was recognized for his fight against prejudice. He was awarded an Order of Canada. Many people embraced the message that he had worked so hard to share.

“If people live, work, and learn together, they will overcome racial stereotypes,” he said. “They will see each other as they really are, and will learn to appreciate not only their differences, but also their similarities.”

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BE OLYMPIC **COMIC FRAME**

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