

# SHOULD PROFESSIONAL SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS BE REQUIRED TO PAY THEIR MALE AND FEMALE ATHLETES THE SAME?

*THIS ACTIVITY SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 90 MINUTES. IF LEARNERS ARE ABLE TO REVIEW MEDIA PRIOR TO THE LESSON, ACTIVITY TIME SHOULD BE 45 TO 60 MINUTES.*

## INVESTIGATE

Read, watch, and listen to the three media resources on the Thinkalong module. Learners can use the Investigate graphic organizer to summarize each piece of media and record new information. Below are summaries of the three pieces of media curated in the Thinkalong module.

### ONE SMALL STEP FOR THE WNBA, ONE GIANT LEAP FOR WOMEN'S SPORTS

Marketplace | January 27, 2020 | Audio  
3:07 minutes

A new collective bargaining agreement between the WNBA Players' Association and the league marks progress in closing the pay gap between male and female professional basketball players.

- While the agreement includes maternity leave and an increase in the average salary for female athletes. Men in the NBA still earn significantly more than their female counterparts in salaries and sponsorships.
- The argument against equal pay has been attendance and viewership, both important for sponsorship and merchandising, are significantly lower for the WNBA.
- Advocates for the WNBA pay increase argue that viewership and attendance will not increase until the league invests in marketing to attract corporate sponsors and draw in fans.
- While a pay gap still exists, the new agreement is seen as a positive step forward for professional female basketball players and other female athletes.

### EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL SHREDS: WORLD SURF LEAGUE WILL AWARD SAME PRIZES TO MEN AND WOMEN

NPR | September 7, 2018 | Article  
896 words

In 2019, the governing body of international surfing started to award equal prize money to male and female athletes.

- The CEO of the World Surf League said the league has undertaken several steps to better showcase female athletes, which includes access to the same quality of waves, better competition locations, and increased investment and support.
- Pressure over equal prize money began when people responded to a photo of a junior surf competition, where the boys' winner displayed a check for double the amount of the girls' winner.
- The California State Lands Commission required equal prize money be awarded to men and women for competitions held on its lands.
- The World Surf League said they want to lead the way in reflecting broader societal values as the first American-based global sports league to offer gender pay equity.

*Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help learners to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.*

## FEDERAL JUDGE DISMISSES U.S. WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM'S EQUAL PAY CLAIM

WNYC | May 2, 2020 | Article

600 words

Following a 2019 lawsuit filed by the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team claiming they are paid less for the same work as the men's team, a federal judge rejected their argument and dismissed the lawsuit.

- The judge pointed out that the Women's National Team had agreed to contracts that were structured differently than the men's team. In the contract, the women's team players are granted a higher base compensation than the men and are guaranteed a higher number of contracted players.
- Unlike the men's team, who are paid only if they participate in a match, the women are guaranteed pay whether or not they play.
- The women's team has expressed disappointment with the judge's decision and plan to appeal the ruling.

### KEY WORDS

Look out for these important keywords in the news stories. Discuss the definitions with your learners and see how they affect the understanding of the story.

- Commission
- Equity
- Compensation
- Sponsorship

### CONTEMPLATE

Learners will use media literacy questions to critically engage with news by thinking about its purpose, searching for bias and discussing missing perspectives. They will answer the 5 Key Questions of Media Literacy created by the Center for Media Literacy, which are:

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently than me?
4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

A graphic organizer is included in this guide and the Thinkalong website to help learners answer these five questions about each piece of media.

### DEBATE

Use the debate tool on the module webpage to help form evidence-based responses to the debate question.

Thinkalong is designed to help learners engage with real issues that are relevant to their lives. [Structured discussions](#) allow learners to practice their critical thinking skills through evidence-based debate with their peers. Discussions are designed to take about 30 minutes. Educators are encouraged to modify aspects that work best for their learners.

To encourage civil discourse, please review the [Code of Conduct](#) with your learners.

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