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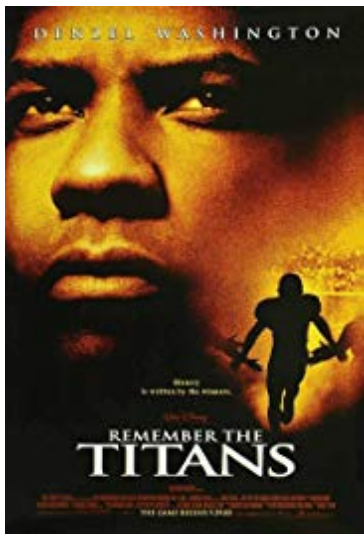
MOVIE & TELEVISION WORKSHEETS ▾

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Remember the Titans





REMEMBER THE TITANS

SUBJECTS — U.S./1945 – 1991, Diversity, & Virginia; Sports/Football;

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING — Breaking Out; Friendship; Teamwork; Leadership; Male Role Model;

MORAL-ETHICAL EMPHASIS — Trustworthiness; Respect; Responsibility; Citizenship.

AGE; 11+; MPAA Rating — PG for thematic elements and some language;

Drama; 2000; 113 minutes; Color. Available from **Amazon.com**

([https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000056VP4/ref=as_li_ss_tl?](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000056VP4/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=teachwithmovieso&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B000056VP4)

[ie=UTF8&tag=teachwithmovieso&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B000056VP4](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000056VP4/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=teachwithmovieso&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B000056VP4)).



THE BEST OF TWM

One of the Best! (<http://teachwithmovies.org/the-best-of-twm-u-s-history-for-high-school/>) This movie is on TWM's short list of the best movies to supplement classes in United States History, High School Level.



MENU

Benefits of the Movie

Possible Problems

Parenting Points

Selected Awards & Cast

Helpful Background

Using the Movie in the Classroom

Discussion Questions

Social-Emotional Learning

Moral-Ethical Emphasis



MOVIE WORKSHEETS & STUDENT HANDOUTS

TWM offers the following movie worksheets to keep students' minds on the film and to focus their attention on the lessons to be learned from the movie.

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DESCRIPTION

This film chronicles true events that occurred during 1971 in Alexandria, Virginia, when the school board came under court order to integrate both faculty and students in the public schools. At the time, high school football was the city's most popular sport. The Titans become a model of integration for a city in troubled times.

The film combines four stories: (1) the time-tested formula of the triumph of an underdog sports team; (2) the friendship between the two coaches, the black head coach and his white assistant, despite the fact that many thought that the white coach's experience and years of service meant that he should be the head coach; (3) the friendship of two players, Gerry Bertier, the white team captain, and Julius Campbell, a talented black player; and (4) the story of a racially divided team coming together and playing as a unit despite the racial hatred roiling the community around it. The story of the underdog sports team is an invention of the filmmakers. Once the team coalesced at training camp, they were favored and had only one close game in their regular season. The important stories, those of the two coaches and the two players are true although many specific facts may have been supplied by the script writer. The two coaches were lifelong friends, as were the two players. The team pulled together despite the racial tensions.

SELECTED AWARDS & CAST



Selected Awards:

None.

Featured Actors:

Denzel Washington, Will Patton, Wood Harris, Ryan Hurst, Donald Adeosun Faison, Craig Kirkwood.

Director:

Boaz Yakin.



BENEFITS OF THE MOVIE

Remember the Titans is useful in clarifying the shifts in attitudes and the various personal decisions that were an important part of the progress in the early days of the process of integrating public schools in the South. Students will see how combination of self-sacrifice and self-interest motivated many of the people who struggled through these trouble

Students can exercise writing and research skills through assignments at the film's end which include the role played by both high school and professional sports in the Civil Rights Movement.



POSSIBLE PROBLEMS

Minor racial violence is shown. There is a quick non-consensual male-to-male kiss, not properly introduced or followed up, that may leave the audience confused. A major character is critically injured in a car accident.



PARENTING POINTS

Tell your child that the story is accurately portrayed as to the personal relationships between the coaches and the players. Point out how the courage of both adults and young people shown in the film was a major factor in the long and on-going story of racial integration in this country.

HELPFUL BACKGROUND



What's True and What's Fiction:

In 1971 high school football was the most important fall activity in many towns in Virginia. The head football coach for a large high school was an important public figure whose job could be forfeited if the season didn't go well. If the team was a winner, the coach was a revered and powerful man. The stars of the team were heroes.

In that year, the Alexandria school board decided to comply with court orders to integrate public schools by consolidating the junior and senior classes from its three high schools into one of the schools, T.C. Williams. The Titans became the city's most important football team. Its head coach was now the prime head coach for the city. Its players represented the entire town. In 1971 Alexandria's star football player was Gary Bertier, the city's only All-American. Bertier was a remarkable leader and was respected by much of the city.

The concentration of older, larger, and more experienced players gave T.C. Williams a substantial advantage over most other football teams in its division. The 1971 Titans were expected to win a championship. Consolidation also meant that players were competing for starting positions with nearly three times as many other students as before. Many players who were good enough to be on the starting team at most high schools in the country, or who had been starters the previous year, or who had rightfully expected to be starters in the coming year, would never make it off the bench. In addition, the white players from one of the schools (Hammond High) had never played with blacks. There was also a class division because Hammond had served a relatively wealthy district.

⊞ The Sports Story

⊞ The Racial Integration Story -- The Coaches

✚ The Racial Integration Story -- The Two Players, Bertier and Campbell

✚ The Racial Integration Story -- The Team

✚ The Titans 20 to 30 Years Later



USING THE MOVIE IN THE CLASSROOM

Before showing the movie, consider telling students the following: The stories of the coaches and the two players are reasonably accurate portrayals showing how these individuals rose to the occasion and became friends. The story of the successful integration of the team as a whole has been simplified and enhanced by the filmmakers, but it still captures the spirit of the team and of its time.

For a detailed description of what is accurate and what was changed in the adaptation of this story to the screen, see the Helpful Background section above.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After the film has been watched, engage the class in a discussion about the movie.

1. How did the individuals portrayed in this film make racial integration work?

Suggested Response:

Answers will vary. A good discussion will include the following concepts: It took respect for others, the ability to communicate, the moral courage to change when necessary, and a commitment by the coaches not just to win football games but also to help the players mature. These coaches understood that their primary responsibility was to help prepare their players for life as adults.

2. What is the significance of this exchange between the Bertier character and the character of his mother. Bertier: "Mom, just get to know him." Mother: "I don't want to know him." We do not know if this exchange really occurred, but it exemplifies one of the themes of the movie. What is it?

Suggested Response:

Hatred and prejudice are born of ignorance. If you get to know someone, hatred and prejudice are harder to maintain.

3. What was most difficult for the players to accept in the changes the team had to face?

Suggested Response:

Answers will vary. Adjusting to a new coaching style, accepting lesser roles on the team, having to work close team members very different from themselves and fear of failure may all have worked against a quick adjustment.

4. What factors were helpful in terms of players and coaches adjusting to the changes?

Suggested Response:

Answers will vary. Earned respect, the necessity of working together in order to win, and the power of individual personalities all served to help both players and teammates to cooperate.

✚ **Additional Discussion Questions.**

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

BREAKING OUT & FRIENDSHIP

1. How did playing football help the students overcome their racial prejudice? What other activities can help people overcome their differences and begin working together?

Suggested Response:

There is no correct answer to this question. The purpose of the question is for students to realize that one of the primary ways that racial prejudice is overcome is for people to have a goal that is more important than their prejudice. In this case, the goal was having a winning team (for the players) and educating the students (for the coaches). As shown in this film, once people start working together for a common goal, they realize that they have much in common and some become friends. In the situation of the Titans, not only was the goal of winning a uniting factor, but Coach Boone designed the training camp so that it was extremely rigorous and that all the players would have to work together in order to avoid very unpleasant consequences such as three times a day practices. For a story in which a woman consciously rids herself of racial prejudice in order to keep the affection of a man she loves, see Learning Guide to “**Gentleman’s Agreement** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/gentlemans-agreement/>)”.

2. Which of the characters in this film forged new ground in their relationships with others?

Suggested Response:

All of them (including the black players) except perhaps Sunshine and Lastik who from the beginning were able to accept people without regard to their race.

3. Why did Coach Yoast stay on as an assistant to Coach Boone?

Suggested Response:

According to the film, he wanted to make sure that the white students that he had coached, in some cases since junior high school, were treated fairly. One of the things that impressed Yoast about Coach Boone was that he was fair, dishing out the same harsh treatment to the black players as well as white players.

4. If you had been Coach Yoast would you have given up your chance to be in the hall of fame in order to help Coach Boone and the team?

Suggested Response:

The answer should be yes. It was the honorable and ethical thing to do. If Coach Yoast could not have given his full allegiance to the team or fulfilled his responsibilities to the players, he should not have taken the job as the coach under Coach Boone. Once Coach Yoast joined the team he had the same obligation as the players: to

best and be completely loyal. Actually, he had more of a responsibility since he was an adult and employed to teach the students. Coach Yoast more than complied with these obligations.

TEAMWORK & LEADERSHIP

5. Would the team have bonded had it not won?

Suggested Response:

According to Coach Boone, winning was very important to the bonding experience, along with communication, and getting to know the other team members.

6. What do you think would have happened if the team had bonded, had lost a game in the middle of the season, and the school board had tried to replace Boone as head coach?

Suggested Response:

The right thing would have been for the players to have gone on strike in support of Coach Boone and for Coach Yoast to have declined promotion to the position. That's asking a lot of people, but having come to know these individuals through the research for this Learning Guide, the authors believe that this probably would have happened.

7. Coaches Boone and Yoast agree that a coach is first and foremost a teacher. How does a coach teach?

Suggested Response:

Coaches teach by example, by expecting excellence, and by setting standards.

8. If coaches are first and foremost teachers, list what they should teach their students in order of importance.

Suggested Response:

(only the first item is a right answer; the others can vary): (1) sportsmanship (the ethical principles of Trustworthiness, Responsibility, Respect and Fairness); (2) commitment to the team; (3) commitment to win; (4) hard work and perseverance; (5) striving to win while accepting loss. We are sure there are more.

9. Do you agree that Coach Yoast was too soft on the black players?

Suggested Response:

There is no right answer. Everyone has their own approach. The issue is whether this was an unintended and subtle racist attitude because it was applied to blacks more than it was to whites. Prejudice is a pernicious and subtle foe that everyone, even those who do not consider themselves to be racist, must fight. See Learning Guide to "**Gentleman's Agreement** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/gentlemans-agreement/>)".

10. Have you had a teacher, or a coach who inspired you to do your best? How did they do it?

Suggested Response:

The purpose of this question is to get students to think objectively about people who have made a difference in their lives.

11. Describe the different methods of motivating the team favored by Coach Boone and Coach Yoast. Remember Yc statement to Boone: "There's a fine line between tough and crazy and you're flirting with it." Why did Coach Boone p boys so hard?

Suggested Response:

Boone's coaching style was very harsh. Yoast sought to be more obviously nurturing. Boone felt that the boys would come against a difficult world and needed to learn about that world on the team. Coach Boone pushed the players so hard because he wanted to give the boys, white and black, a very tough experience that they would have to go through together. This was part of his effort to unite them. It wasn't that he wanted the players to hate him, but that he saw the need for them to go through a common searing experience.

12. What were the similarities in the coaching styles of Boone and Yoast and were those similarities more or less important than the differences?

Suggested Response:

While there was at least one important difference between the coaching styles of Boone and Yoast, the similarities of their approaches to coaching were predominant and were a major factor in permitting them to work well together. Both men saw coaching as a teaching enterprise, they dealt honorably with other people, and they had a strong desire to win.

MALE ROLE MODEL

13. This story has several male role models. Look at the coaches and the players Bertier and Campbell. What characteristics of each do think is their best trait as a male role model?

Suggested Response:

There is no one correct response. The effort should be to get students to discuss what makes a male role model and what they respect most about the actions taken by the characters in the film.

MORAL-ETHICAL EMPHASIS (CHARACTER COUNTS)

Discussion Questions Relating to Ethical Issues (<http://teachwithmovies.org/discussion-questions-relating-to-ethical-issues/>) will facilitate the use of this film to teach ethical principles and critical viewing. Additional questions are set out below.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

(Be honest; Don't deceive, cheat or steal; Be reliable — do what you say you'll do; Have the courage to do the right thing; Build a good reputation; Be loyal — stand by your family, friends and country)

1. What was wrong with the actions of Bertier's friend, the white boy that Bertier eventually cut from the team?

Suggested Response:

Disloyalty to the team and dishonesty to his teammates. By being on the team he was promising that he would work hard for the benefit of the team, which included the black players for whom he was supposed to block. By deciding not to do that in a key play, he was being dishonest. This is the essence of disloyalty.

2. When Coach Yoast's friends wanted to make the Titan's lose and tried to enlist Coach Yoast in that effort, what Pillar of Character did they ask him to dishonor?

Suggested Response:

There are several Pillars that they asked him to violate, but primarily, it was the Pillar of Trustworthiness. (Other Pillars involved are: Respect (for Coach Boone, the game, the players etc. which would have been violated had Coach Yoast cooperated in the conspiracy; Citizenship because it would have been bad for the City to raise racially divisive issues; Caring because he cared for the players and they for him.)

RESPECT

(Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule; Be tolerant of differences; Use good manners, not bad language; Be considerate of the feelings of others; Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone; Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements)

3. Is there prejudice other than racial prejudice shown in the film?

Suggested Response:

Boone's patronizing attitude toward Yoast's daughter is an example of male chauvinism, and the initial prejudice against Sunshine is an example of prejudice against persons with a different lifestyle.

4. What is the Pillar of Character that is dishonored by racial prejudice?

Suggested Response:

Primarily the Pillar of Respect, but also the Pillars of Citizenship and Caring. In addition, racial prejudice leads one to other wrongful actions, as it did Bertier's former friend.

See Teamwork-Friendship section above.

RESPONSIBILITY

(Do what you are supposed to do; Persevere: keep on trying!; Always do your best; Use self-control; Be self-disciplined; Think before you act — consider the consequences; Be accountable for your choices)

5. Could the team have succeeded if the players had not followed the Responsibility Pillar of Character?

Suggested Response:

No. In a competitive football league (high school, college, or professional), each player must do his or her best for three reasons. First for self-respect, second out of caring and respect for teammates, and third, to win.

FAIRNESS

(Play by the rules; Take turns and share; Be open-minded; listen to others; Don't take advantage of others; Don't blame others carelessly)

6. In real life, Ronnie Bass got the quarterback position because he beat out "Rev" Harris. Coach Boone was in direct charge of the offense and made that decision. If Coach Boone had favored the black players, would the Titan's have been a success? Why not?

Suggested Response:

They would not have been a success because the cancer of racial preference, this time in favor of blacks, we have wrecked the efforts to build the team.

CITIZENSHIP

(Do your share to make your school and community better; Cooperate; Stay informed; vote; Be a good neighbor; Obey laws and rules; Respect authority; Protect the environment)

7. Should Coach Boone have taken the job in the first place or should he have insisted that Yoast get the job?

Suggested Response:

There is no right answer. The issue is pretty well described in the film. Certainly, normally, Yoast had the right to the job and Boone should have turned it down. However, there were some intervening factors that added unusual values and unexpected stakeholders into the decision. The black community in Alexandria needed a black man to take a prominent position, as did the struggle for integration as a whole. Despite his initial reluctance, these considerations convinced Coach Boone to take the position. There is no dispute that Coach Yoast deserved the position by custom and seniority and by a wide margin at that. As it turned out, Coach Boone was able to unite the team and guide it to victory. He made all the key decisions correctly, such as changing the seating on the bus, making black and white players room together, making the boys learn about each other, and bringing Yoast onto the team and trusting him. As Yoast recognized by the end of the season, Boone was the right man for the job. But then again, none of them knew this when Boone took the job.

8. Who honored the Citizenship Pillar of Character in this film and how did they do it?

Suggested Response:

Many people, including the coaches and the players on the team.



ASSIGNMENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES



Any of the discussion questions can serve as a writing prompt. Additional assignments include:

1. Research the actual history of the Titans football team and write a report detailing what is correct about the movie and what is incorrect. Use at least four sources.
2. Research information about the significance of sports in the Civil Rights Movement. Present your findings in an oral report to the entire class. Consider the integration of professional as well as school associated teams in your analysis.
3. Research information to create a sports integration timeline that begins with the first blacks admitted to the ranks of professional sports and continues until today. Prepare a power point presentation for the class that shows the results of your research. Suggest specific concerns about aspects of sports that are not yet fully open to all races.
4. Write an opinion essay on what you see as the most important element in integrating two of the following institutions: public schools, sports teams, workplaces, the military, and the courts. Consider the force of law, the concern for the common good, a sense of justice and even self-interest as possible factors.

Additional Assignments.



Pro Football Hall of Fame by Terry Dunnahoo – Nonfiction – Grades 4 – 6; America’s Greatest Game by J. Buckley – Nonfiction – Grades 4 and up; Football by J. Buckley – Nonfiction – Grades 4 and up; Quarterbacks! – Nonfiction – Grades 4 and up; The Story of Football by Dave Anderson – nonfiction – Grades 4 – 8; Crash by J. Spinelli – Fiction – Grades 5 and up; Quarterbacks! by G. Sullivan – Nonfiction – Grades 5 and up; and I am Third by Gale Sayers and Al Silverman – Nonfiction – Grades 6 and up.



LINKS TO THE INTERNET

- **1971 Original TC Williams Titans Foundation** (<http://www.71originaltitans.com/>);
- **This is the stuff legends – and Titans – are made of** (<http://www.seafordstar.com/030101/article1.html>);
- **ESPN Page 2: Reel Life – Remember the Titans** (<http://www.espn.com/page2/s/closer/020808.html>);
- **Production Notes from the scriptwriter, director, actors, Coach Boone, and Coach Yoast** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/production-notes-scriptwriter.pdf>);
- **The Real Titans Story by J.E.** (<http://web.archive.org/web/20050511222727/http://www.tcwilliams.com/tcw/jestory.html>);
- **The Home Page for the 1971 T.C. Williams High School Football Team** (<http://www.71originaltitans.com/>);
- **Review by Tobias Peterson at Topmatters Film** (<http://web.archive.org/web/20071222100110/www.popmatters.com/film/reviews/r/remember-the-titans.shtml>);

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to websites which may be linked in the Guide and selected film reviews listed on the **Movie Review Query Engine** (<https://www.mrqe.com/>), the following resources were consulted in the preparation of this Learning Guide: drafts of the Guide were submitted to Coaches Boone and Yoast for their comments. Coach Yoast replied, but to date, Coach Boone has not. The following additional resources were consulted in the preparation of this Learning Guide:

- “Does Anyone Remember the Titans?”, Sports Illustrated, October 15, 2001, pp. 72 et seq.
- Best Books for Young Adults by Betty Carter, Second Edition, Young Adult Library Services Association; 2000;
- Children’s Catalogue, Eighteenth Addition, edited by Anne Price and Juliette Yaakov, the H.W. Wilson Company, New York and Dublin, 2001;
- Best Books for Children – Preschool through Grade 6, Sixth Edition, edited by John T. Gillespie, R.R. Bowker, New Providence N.J., 1998.

*This Learning Guide was written by **James Frieden** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/who-we-are/>) and **Mary RedClay** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/who-we-are/>) and was last updated on October 14, 2012.*



THE BEST OF Teach with Movies

TWM recommends these movies as the best of the best in meeting curriculum standards while providing students with stellar educational experiences.

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- Benefits of the Movie
- Possible Problems
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- Helpful Background
- Using the Movie in the Classroom
- Discussion Questions
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- Assignments and Projects
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Click on the link for a discussion of Segregation and Its Corrosive Effects in the *Learning Guide* to "**A Force More Powerful**" (<http://teachwithmovies.org/a-force-more-powerful/>).

MOVIES ON RELATED TOPICS:

See **Brian's Song** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/brians-song/>) and **Edge of America** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/edge-of-america/>). See also movies relating to the **U.S. Civil Rights Movement** (<http://teachwithmovies.org/subject-matter-united-states-history-culture-2/#unique-identifier5>).