Marcus Rashford’s Free School Meals Campaign

Subject Area – P.E., citizenship, English.

Age Range – KS 3

Time – 1-2 lessons

Aims and Objectives:

* To considers how Marcus Rashford used his personal experience and his position as a celebrity to campaign for children struggling with the impact of COVID on their day-to-day life
* To look at the prevalence of racism in football
* To consider ways in which racism in sport could be tackled and the role that sportspeople can play in doing so

Resources Required

* Computers with internet access, or printouts of the relevant materials

Activity

Marcus Rashford is a footballer who plays for Manchester United. You can read about him [here](https://www.manutd.com/en/players-and-staff/detail/marcus-rashford).

In 2020 he hit the headlines because of his campaign to provide free school meals for pupils during the summer holidays, after the Covid-19 lockdown.

Read the [letter](https://www.theguardian.com/football/2020/jun/15/protect-the-vulnerable-marcus-rashfords-emotional-letter-to-mps) that he wrote to MPs.

1. What arguments does Marcus Rashford make for pupils being given free school meals?
2. How does he use his own personal experience to make his point?
3. How does he persuade MPs to do as he asks? What sorts of examples does he use? What sort of language?

Now read the [report](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jun/16/boris-johnson-faces-tory-rebellion-over-marcus-rashfords-school-meals-call) of the government’s response to his campaign.

1. What sort of language is used to describe the government’s actions?
2. The Prime Minister is quoted as saying that he “welcomes Marcus Rashford’s contribution to the debate around poverty, and respects the fact that he has been using his profile as a sportsman to highlight important issues”. How important do you think it is for people in the public eye to use their influence?

Along with other players, Rashford has been subjected to [racial abuse](https://www.theguardian.com/football/2019/sep/06/marcus-rashford-football-going-backwards-in-fight-against-racism). In 2019, he said:

To be honest, I’ve always said that the more we speak aobut it, it doesn’t have much of an impact. We’ve tried. There’s been examples everywhere where people have spoken out and I wouldn’t say they’ve been ignored, but nothing has really changed. To see it spike in the last couple of months has been unbelievable, so we want to nip it in the bud while it’s happening.

There is a campaign called [KickItOut](https://www.kickitout.org/) which seeks to stop racism in football. This has been going for 25 years.

1. Are you surprised by how many reports of racism there were in 2018/19?
2. How have the statistics changed over the past few years?

What do you think we should do to end racism in sport? In your group, discuss what you might do. You could think about:

* How you would use the media/social media to challenge ideas
* What role sportspeople would play? Who do you think would be good ambassadors?
* Whether you think people should be punished for racist language or actions and what those punishments might be
* Who you would need to aim your campaign at
* How you would know if you were being successful