

Athlete Salaries

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. How much money do you think Tiger Woods earns each year?
2. Should athletes earn more money than doctors?
3. Do most professional athletes “give back” to their communities?
4. What is more important to athletes, money or fame?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ___ 1. salary | a) the state of being well known |
| ___ 2. sponsorship | b) to have enough money |
| ___ 3. appearance fee | c) to give money or goods for a good cause |
| ___ 4. celebrity | d) a story that is popular in the media |
| ___ 5. fame | e) to earn from work |
| ___ 6. afford | f) to show thankfulness by offering support to others |
| ___ 7. bring home | g) a famous person |
| ___ 8. give back | h) the amount of money earned each year |
| ___ 9. donate | i) the giving of money, time, or support to those in need |
| ___ 10. charity | j) money celebrities earn for showing up to an event |
| ___ 11. headline news | k) money in exchange for promoting a product or service |

Reading

ATHLETE SALARIES

How much is too much?

1. In 2009, Tiger Woods became the first billion-dollar man in sports. These days, professional athletes earn money without even picking up a golf club or hockey stick. Much of their earnings are from **sponsorship** deals or **appearance fees**.
2. Tiger Woods' personal life fell apart one year after he broke the billion-dollar record. Like many **celebrities**, he learned the hard way that money can't buy you love. Do your favorite athletes love the **fame** more than the game?
3. Some fans cannot **afford** to pay for tickets to their favorite sporting events. If athlete **salaries** were cut in half, could we all afford to buy tickets? The highest-paid American baseball players **bring home** over 20 million dollars per year. How much does the average American doctor make?
4. Most professional athletes **give back** to their communities in some shape or form. In 2010, Vancouver Canucks hockey stars Daniel and Henrik Sedin **donated** 1.5 million dollars to a Canadian children's hospital. This donation equaled about 10% of the twins' annual earnings. Why didn't this act of **charity** make the world **headline news**?

"Money and fame made me believe I was entitled. I was wrong and foolish."

—Tiger Woods

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What record did Tiger Woods achieve in 2009?
2. Besides playing sports, how do professional athletes earn money?
3. How do athlete salaries affect fans?
4. What does the reading say about baseball players?
5. What did the Sedin twins do in 2010?

Vocabulary Review

A. Choose the Correct Word

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

1. The hockey players donated their jerseys to a public school.
 - a) removed
 - b) paid for
 - c) gave away
 - d) purchased
2. We asked a few celebrities to come to the charity event.
 - a) famous people
 - b) players
 - c) actors
 - d) friends
3. Amateur players don't bring home much money, but they still love their sport.
 - a) care about
 - b) pay
 - c) earn
 - d) offer
4. Some athletes care about winning, while others care more about fame.
 - a) skill
 - b) money
 - c) prizes
 - d) popularity
5. The baseball pitcher's salary was 15 million dollars this year.
 - a) yearly income
 - b) donation
 - c) goal
 - d) winnings

B. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1. You may need to change the word forms.

1. Did you hear about the hockey players' strike? It was in the _____.
2. Some of the school children cannot _____ to go to the basketball game.
3. Tiger Woods receives an _____ just for attending a tournament.
4. Popular athletes often get _____ deals that are higher than their salaries.
5. The coach believes it is important to _____ to the community.

Discussion

1. Why do professional athletes earn so much money?
2. Which sport should have the highest-paid athletes? Why?
3. What is the best way for a professional athlete to give back to his or her community?
4. Do you often buy products that are promoted by celebrities?

Class Survey

Walk around the class and ask your classmates questions. Write their answers in the chart below.

Classmate's name:	Do you think athletes are paid too much?	What is the best way for professional athletes to give back?	Do high salaries motivate athletes to win?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

ATHLETE SALARIES

How much is too much?

1. In 2009, Tiger Woods became the first billion-dollar man in sports. These days, professional athletes earn money without even picking up a golf club or hockey stick. Much of their earnings are from _____ deals or _____ .
2. Tiger Woods' personal life fell apart one year after he broke the billion-dollar record. Like many _____ , he learned the hard way that money can't buy you love. Do your favorite athletes love the _____ more than the game?
3. Some fans cannot _____ to pay for tickets to their favorite sporting events. If athlete _____ were cut in half, could we all afford to buy tickets? The highest-paid American baseball players _____ over 20 million dollars per year. How much does the average American doctor make?
4. Most professional athletes _____ to their communities in some shape or form. In 2010, Vancouver Canucks hockey stars Daniel and Henrik Sedin _____ 1.5 million dollars to a Canadian children's hospital. This donation equaled about 10% of the twins' annual earnings. Why didn't this act of _____ make the world headline news?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about and discuss athlete salaries and whether or not they are justified.

TEACHING TIPS:

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, athlete salaries, sports, Tiger Words, money

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. h | 3. j | 5. a | 7. e | 9. c | 11. d |
| 2. k | 4. g | 6. b | 8. f | 10. i | |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

1. Tiger Woods became the first billion-dollar man in sports in 2009.
2. Professional athletes also earn money through sponsorship deals and appearance fees.
3. Athlete salaries drive the prices of tickets up for sporting events. Some fans cannot afford tickets.
4. The top baseball players earn more than 20 million dollars per year.
5. The Sedin twins donated 1.5 million dollars to a Canadian children's hospital.

Vocabulary Review

A. CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

1. c 2. a 3. c 4. d 5. a

B. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. headline news | 4. sponsorship |
| 2. afford | 5. give back |
| 3. appearance fee | |

Discussion

Answers will vary.
Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Class Survey

Have students walk around the class and ask their classmates questions. They should record their answers in the chart.

Listening

1. sponsorship, appearance fees
2. celebrities, fame
3. afford, salaries, bring home
4. give back, donated, charity

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Favorite*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Favourite*. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.