

SERENA'S FAREWELL



THE GREATEST

After 27 years, Serena Williams is ready for life away from tennis.

LEXILE: 1010L (860L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Individual identity and Development

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.4, RI.6-8.5, W.6-8.2

ENGAGE THE READER

Tell students that they will read an article about tennis star Serena Williams, who has said she will retire from the sport. Ask: Why might an athlete's retirement make the news? Why are athletes like Williams important to people? Why are some athletes known for more than their contribution to their sport? Can you name others? As students read the article, have them note details that add to their initial responses.

QUESTIONS FOR CLOSE READING AND DISCUSSION

- On being a parent, Williams says, "I think I'm good at it. But I want to explore if I can be great at it." What might this quote tell us about Williams and her renown? Explain.
- Why have other athletes admired Williams? Why does having a role model help in building a career?
- Review the quote by Williams at the end of the article. Why does the author end with this quote? How does it help support the article's purpose?

EXTEND LEARNING

Challenge students to create their own profiles of notable athletes. Start by having them research athletes whose impact has gone beyond their sport, using historical examples, as well as more recent ones. Have students take notes, which they will use to write a paragraph or two describing the athlete's accomplishments on and off the playing field. Have students gather images that reflect these accomplishments, as well. (Students might use the photo selection in "The Greatest" as a model for selecting images that reflect the story.) Before students assemble their profiles, have them gather in small groups to read one another's paragraphs, look at photos, and ask questions that might help their classmates' profiles. When group work and rewriting are completed, students can assemble their profiles in a paper book or in a digital format, and share them with the class.

COVER STORY QUIZ + ANSWER KEY

The cover quiz can be found on page 3 of this guide.
For the Google Forms quiz, click [here](#).

- 1. C** (RI.1) **2. D** (RI.2) **3. C** (RI.8) **4. B** (RI.8) **5. B** (RI.1)
6. A (RI.6) **7. Answers will vary.** (W.8)



JACKSON WATER CRISIS

For nearly seven weeks, residents of Jackson, Mississippi, had to boil tap water before using it.

LEXILE: 980L (830L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Power, Authority, and Governance

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.4, RI.6-8.5, RI.6-8.6

BEFORE READING

Start a discussion by asking: Why is tap water important in your home? What do you think your everyday life would be like without access to clean water? Whose responsibility is it to provide clean water to a town? Do you think people have a right to clean water? Explain. Tell students that they will read about a city in the United States that did not have clean tap water for several weeks. Ask: Are you surprised that a U.S. city would not have clean tap water? Why or why not? As students read the article, have them note details that confirm or challenge their initial ideas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What caused Jackson to lose access to clean tap water? Why was the city's water system unprepared?
- Who do you think should bear the responsibility of maintaining Jackson's water system? Explain.
- How would you describe the tone of Governor Tate Reeves's quote? How do you think he views the crisis in Jackson? Explain.



FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS

Rusty Kanokogi was a judo champion and a trailblazer for gender equality in sports

LEXILE: 990L (820L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Time, Continuity, and Change

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.4, W.6-8.1

BEFORE READING

Ask students what they know about the law called Title IX, or have them do some brief research on the topic. Ask: Why are laws needed to ensure social equality? How might these laws affect a society over time?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did Kanokogi disguise herself as a man? What might her actions tell us about life in the United States before Title IX?
- What does *equality* mean? How do we measure it? Do you think we need laws to ensure equality? Explain.

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Challenge students to write an essay on what equality means to them and why it is important in our society. Students might offer a definition of equality, and think about how ideas about it can affect people's opportunities and growth as individuals. Students might also reflect on how inequality affects a whole society. Encourage them to refer to examples to illustrate their ideas. This week's articles might be a place to start.

Name _____ Date _____

Use this week's cover story, "The Greatest," to answer the questions below. For questions 1–6, circle the letter next to the best answer. If you need more space to write your response to question 7, you may use the back of this page.

<p>1. For how long did Serena Williams play professional tennis?</p> <p>A. five years</p> <p>B. 15 years</p> <p>C. 27 years</p> <p>D. since 1968</p>	<p>4. What reason does Williams give for retiring from professional tennis?</p> <p>A. She has lost her passion for the sport after so many years.</p> <p>B. She wants to focus on other important things in her life, such as parenting.</p> <p>C. She wants younger athletes to be in the spotlight.</p> <p>D. She is overwhelmed by her fans' attention and support.</p>
<p>2. Which detail in the article's first section best supports the claim that Williams is the greatest tennis player?</p> <p>A. She played what might have been her final match at the 2022 U.S. Open.</p> <p>B. She has been a role model for younger tennis greats, such as Naomi Osaka.</p> <p>C. She wants to find out if she can be a great mom, too.</p> <p>D. She has won more major championships in the Open Era than any other tennis player.</p>	<p>5. Williams won her first major championship at</p> <p>A. the 2022 U.S. Open.</p> <p>B. the 1999 U.S. Open.</p> <p>C. the 1968 Grand Slam Tournament.</p> <p>D. the age of 14.</p>
<p>3. Which of the following statements from the article is best described as a claim?</p> <p>A. "Williams won her first major tournament when she was 17."</p> <p>B. "For tennis star Naomi Osaka, Williams is a role model."</p> <p>C. "'No one else has changed the sport as much as she did, and against all odds.'"</p> <p>D. "It isn't just women and girls who have looked up to the Williams sisters."</p>	<p>6. This article would best be described as</p> <p>A. a profile.</p> <p>B. a breaking-news story.</p> <p>C. an editorial.</p> <p>D. play-by-play coverage.</p>

7. Why do you think professional sports are such an important part of our culture?
