

Lesson  
**1**

# The Worth of Top Athletes

## New Words

benefit  
capitalism  
consumerism

debate  
economics  
endorsement  
exorbitant

inequitable  
significant  
society

## Activating Knowledge

Although the theme of this lesson is about the pay professional athletes earn, the vocabulary has an economic emphasis.

Write the words *capitalism*, *value*, and *consumerism* on the board. Start by asking your students if they know the **value** of a dollar (100 cents). Ask if they know the value of someone’s wage (his/her livelihood; what he/she lives on). Ask if they know the value of \$65,000,000. (Most students will be stupefied at that amount!) Tell them this is a staggering amount of money, an amount that very few people make or can even imagine.

Next, ask if they know which word on the board represents our economic system (capitalism) or how we behave when it comes to spending and making money.

Say, “I’ll ask you some questions about economics. Your answers, hopefully, will start to describe capitalism or how we behave when we earn and spend.”

- If someone wants to sell something, who sets the price? (the seller)
- If someone wants to buy something, does he say how much he’ll pay? (No, he pays the asking price.)
- Does our government regulate what a person is paid? (not unless he is a governmental worker)
- What is the difference between being paid an exorbitant amount of money and a tiny amount? (Students should use the context clue of *tiny* to determine the meaning of exorbitant.)

## Materials

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## Interview: Change the Vote



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Host: Welcome back, listeners. This is KUY, and I'm your host Lynn Favor. Today we're talking with anti-voting **activist** Sherman Wilts. So you don't believe in the **democratic** process, Mr. Wilts?

Guest: No, no I do not. I'm afraid I can't take part in a system where the **majority** rules, and the majority of people are stupid.

Host: Well, that's a pretty **cynical** view. So are you stumping for your own system of elections?

Guest: Yes, I think it's only **logical** that the smartest, most informed citizens be allowed to vote.

Host: So would there be a test or something?

Guest: Exactly. All voters would have to pass a test to show they understand capitalism, economics, etc.

Host: That sounds pretty extreme. So you would **persecute** people who don't pass the test?

Guest: No, not at all. I believe it's the **primary** responsibility of those of us who are intelligent to nurture the less fortunate.

Host: Wow, interesting. There you have it, listeners. Call in and let us know what you think of this idea. Personally, I believe it's ruinous to the **democratic** system, but I want to hear your thoughts.

## Opinion: Don't Complain if You Don't Vote



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There's no excuse. That's what I say — there's no excuse to not vote. My parents came here from an island ruled by a **dictator**. You can bet there wasn't a whole lot of voting going on there. The people didn't have a voice in the way they were ruled. And there were no compromises — you did what the dictator told you to do or you disappeared.

That's why I vote every chance I get. I want my voice heard. I vote in **primary** and **municipal** elections. Any time the polling place is open, I'm there. You see, I don't vote because I see visions of a billowing American flag every time I drop a ballot in the box. I vote because I want **representatives** in office who I can trust. I believe good government is a by-product of voters who do their homework. And if you choose not to vote, you also choose to keep your mouth shut. You can't criticize a government when you didn't take part in the process.

And I don't care which side wins an election. Once the winner is in office, he's working for all of us. It's his job to compromise when needed and do the right thing.

## Definitions, *continued*

**relishes** (verb)  
 Definition: thoroughly enjoys  
 Usage tip: when taking part in an activity that fully satisfies  
 Correct: After the hustle of the holidays, Mom **relishes** the quiet of the winter months.  
 Incorrect: After the busy holidays, Mom **relishes** cleaning up the mess left behind.

**resilient** (adjective)  
 Definition: able to recover  
 Usage tip: to describe someone who bounces back from adversity  
 Correct: Dad was **resilient** after his heart attack and went back to work.  
 Incorrect: Dad was **resilient** after his heart attack and retired from work.

**susceptible** (adjective)  
 Definition: giving in to; easily open to  
 Usage tip: to describe someone who is easily affected (usually negatively) by someone or something  
 Correct: People with allergies are **susceptible** to pollen and dust.  
 Incorrect: People with allergies are **susceptible** to marble and slate.

## Making Associations

- |            |                |              |             |                |
|------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| A. atrophy | C. erratic     | E. gravitate | G. pruning  | I. resilient   |
| B. bolster | D. fluctuation | F. impulsive | H. relishes | J. susceptible |

Write the letter of the choice that goes best with:

1. unpredictable, all over the place, unstable. \_\_\_\_\_
2. bouncing back, springy, won't stay down. \_\_\_\_\_
3. be attracted to, move toward, favor. \_\_\_\_\_
4. become less important, wither, weaken. \_\_\_\_\_
5. emotional, quick to judgment, unconcerned with consequences. \_\_\_\_\_
6. giving in, prone to, influenced by. \_\_\_\_\_
7. raise up, support, increase confidence. \_\_\_\_\_
8. trimming, lessening, reducing effectiveness. \_\_\_\_\_
9. completely enjoys, be fulfilled by, takes pleasure in. \_\_\_\_\_
10. up and down, changing, variation. \_\_\_\_\_

## Word Flexibility *, continued*

6. **flounder** floundering floundered

- My cousin \_\_\_\_\_ and was underemployed until he joined the military.
- Mom told me outright that if my \_\_\_\_\_ on the guitar continued, she would stop paying for lessons.
- Lots of people \_\_\_\_\_ for a long time before they pursue a vocation.

7. **foresee** foreseeable foreseen

- It was easy to \_\_\_\_\_ what would happen if the boy ingested the hot pepper.
- Nobody could have \_\_\_\_\_ the fatal turn the expedition would take.
- The cafeteria will not serve pizza again for the \_\_\_\_\_ future.

8. **frugal** frugality frugally

- Most people felt the ulterior reason for his extreme \_\_\_\_\_ was selfishness.
- After growing up with her parents, it was no surprise that she was intrinsically \_\_\_\_\_.
- With all the products available, trying to live \_\_\_\_\_ is a difficult burden.

9. **underemployed** unemployment unemployable

- You can acquire \_\_\_\_\_ payments if you've worked long enough to qualify for them.
- A preponderance of people who are \_\_\_\_\_ have no special skills.
- Although he had plenty of training, he remained \_\_\_\_\_.

10. **vocation** vocational avocation

- He went to a \_\_\_\_\_ school to get his certification in carpentry.
- She embarked on her quest to find a \_\_\_\_\_ by doing a lot of research.
- Building model trains was an \_\_\_\_\_ he shared with his grandpa.