

## LESSON PLAN

# The Sound of Silence in Football: Derrick Coleman

*Compelling Question: What can we learn from Derrick Coleman's story about people with hearing disabilities?*

Grade Level		Time	Common Core Standards
K-1	2-5	45 minutes	Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language
6-8	8-12		



## Web Related Connections

### LESSON PLANS

#### Dolls are Us

[Equal Treatment, Equal Access: Raising Awareness about People with Disabilities and Their Struggle for Equal Rights](#)

["The Present" and Living with a Disability](#)

[The Tools I Need: Disability and Accommodations](#)

[Understanding and Challenging Ableism](#)

#### Other Resources:

[A Brief History of the Disability Rights Movement](#)

[People with Disabilities and the Accommodations they Need](#)

#### Key Words from the Reading

ableism  
advocate  
ASL  
confident  
Deaf  
disability  
discrimination  
diverse

### LESSON OVERVIEW

In 2014, Derrick Coleman, a football player with the Seattle Seahawks, was the only legally Deaf athlete in professional football history to play offense. In early January 2014, he made a commercial\* where he talks about the impact his hearing loss has had on his life. The video went viral and quickly had more than 9 million views. Coleman's story provides an excellent teaching opportunity to discuss disabilities and the importance of safeguarding the rights and dignity of people with disabilities in our communities and around the world. During that time as the U.S. Senate debated whether to ratify an [international treaty on disability rights](#), Coleman's story provided an opportunity to put a human face on the impact that fair policy can have on people's lives.

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to learn about this inspiring football player, reflect on and write about Derrick Coleman's life and read a story written by a teenager who is Deaf.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about disabilities, hearing disabilities and ableism.
- Students will reflect on the video Derrick Coleman made and learn more about his life.
- Students will learn more about the perspective of a young person who is Deaf.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- [Duracell: Derrick Coleman Commercial](#) (Video, 1 min, 36 sec.)
- [Deaf NFL player inspires and excels on field](#) (Video, 4 min., 19 sec.)
- [What Inclusion Really Means to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Kids: Joecelyn's Story](#) (one copy for each student)

**Note to Teacher:** In advance of the lesson, consider whether you have any students in your class who have a disability, are Deaf or who have hearing loss. Sometimes students feel relieved to discuss a topic so relevant to their lives while others might feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or scared. This does not mean you should not discuss the topic, however, be mindful not to highlight their situations, put them on the spot or use them as an example of a person with a disability. Be aware that strong feelings could arise and plan in advance for how to handle it. Also, consider talking with the students or their parents in advance.

### Key Words from the Reading (continue)

Hard of Hearing  
inclusion  
interpreter  
misjudged  
showcasing  
stigma  
subtitles

### Warm-up: True or False?

1. Explain to students that today we are going to learn about a former football player with a hearing disability and learn more about him and his disability. Read the statements below. Invite students to either raise their hands for “true” and “false” or have them walk to one part of the room for “true” and another part of the room for “false” based on their opinion about the statement.
  - Most people who are Deaf have parents who are deaf. (False)
  - On average, people who read lips catch about 25-30% of what is said. (True)
  - People who are Deaf are not allowed to drive. (False)
  - Most people with hearing loss do not use sign language or ASL (American Sign Language). (True)
  - There are more than 120 different sign languages around the world. (True)
2. After going through all the statements, share with students which are true and false. Engage students in a brief discussion by asking: *What, if anything, surprises you about the answers? What did you already know? What do you want to learn more about Deafness and hearing loss?*
3. (Optional) Invite students to pick one of the above statements that they want to learn more about. Have them conduct research and write a paper which summarizes their findings.

### Disability and Ableism

1. Ask students: *What is a disability? What do we mean when we say “people with disabilities?”* Explain that a disability is “a mental or physical condition that restricts an individual’s ability to engage in one or more major life activities (e.g., seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, communicating, sensing, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, working or caring for oneself).

To help students understand the definition, here are some important things to keep in mind while unpacking the definition:

- **A mental or physical condition** affects a person’s thinking, emotions or behavior. A physical condition affects someone’s body or specific parts of their body (i.e., eyes, legs, fingers, ears, etc.).
  - **Restricting an individual’s ability** means to limit or prevent something from happening. Restricting an individual’s ability means they are unable to or have limitations in doing certain things.
  - **To engage in one or more of major life activities** means to do, engage in or participate in one or more of major life activities (seeing, hearing, speaking, etc.), so being restricted from this means not to be able to do these tasks or activities.
2. Ask: *What is a hearing disability?* Explain that a hearing disability includes hearing loss, being Hard of Hearing or Deaf. Explain that there are several reasons a child can be born Deaf or become Deaf early in life. Deafness can be genetic and can also be caused by pregnancy complications, certain medicines

taken during pregnancy or problems during birth. In early childhood, certain illnesses and infections can cause deafness and occasionally deafness can be caused by a head injury or exposure to loud noise.

3. Ask: *What is ableism?* Have students use their knowledge of other “isms” to define the word. Elicit/explain that ableism is defined as follows: “The marginalization and/or oppression of people who have disabilities, including temporary, developmental, physical, psychiatric and/or intellectual disabilities.”
4. Ask students: *What are some examples of ableism?* Share some/all of the following examples if needed:
  - Underestimating people with disabilities.
  - Not providing accommodations at school or work for people with disabilities.
  - Not getting hired or promoted for a job because of a disability.
  - The stereotypical and one-dimensional ways that people with disabilities are portrayed in the media.
  - Using ableist language (ableist language are words or phrases that devalues people with disabilities).
  - Mocking/bullying/harassing people with disabilities.
  - Buildings that are not accessible.

### Who is Derrick Coleman?

1. Ask students: *Do you know who Derrick Coleman is?* Invite students to share what they already know about Derrick Coleman.

Elicit/explain that Derrick Coleman is a former football player, who played with the Seattle Seahawks and was part of their Super Bowl XLVIII (48) championship team. Coleman is legally Deaf and he made an inspiring commercial video where he discussed his disability and the impact it has had on his life. At the time the video was made in 2014, it went viral and quickly had more than 9 million views.

2. Ask if anyone has seen the video. Then show the video: [Duracell: Derrick Coleman Commercial](#).

Engage students in a discussion by asking some/all of the following questions:

- What thoughts and feelings came to mind as you watched the video?
- What was Derrick Coleman’s childhood like?
- How was he treated as a result of his hearing disability?
- Why do you think Derrick Coleman made the commercial and has given so many interviews?
- What is your biggest takeaway after watching the video?
- What more do you want to know about Derrick Coleman?

### Writing Activity: Learn More about Derrick Coleman

1. Have students learn more about Derrick Coleman by viewing the video [Deaf NFL player inspires and excels on field](#). If time permits, engage students in doing online research to learn more about Derrick Coleman by finding and reading articles. After watching the video and/or reading articles, write or project the following questions on the board/smart board and have students respond in writing.
  - How did you feel while watching the video or reading the articles?
  - How does Derrick Coleman communicate with his teammates?
  - How did his parents feel about his hearing loss?
  - Why was he teased and bullied?
  - Do you think he experienced discrimination? If so, how?
  - How has he directed his disability to help others?
  - What are your overall impressions of Derrick Coleman and what makes you say this?

2. Invite students to choose at least 3 questions to answer. When they are finished, have some students share their responses aloud with the class or with a partner.

### Reading Activity:

1. Distribute a copy of the article [What Inclusion Really Means to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Kids: Jocelyn's Story](#) to all students. Provide ten minutes for students to read the article silently or distribute the article the night before for them to read for homework. After reading, engage students in a discussion by asking some/all of the following questions:
  - What are some of the ways that ableism impacted Jocelyn?
  - What assumptions did Joceyn's teachers make about her? How did this affect her?
  - How did Jocelyn and her parents advocate for her? Have you ever had to advocate for yourself or others when faced with bias?
  - How did Jocelyn feel when she was asked to participate in the "Youth of the Year" program? How did she overcome her fears?
  - What does Jocelyn mean when she says that "people do not have to be defined by their disabilities."
  - What did you learn from the article that you didn't know before?
  - What did you learn from reading Jocelyn's story?

### Closing

Do a go round and invite each student to name something they can do to address ableism either at home, school or their community.

### Additional Reading and Resources

- [Cardinals' running back Derrick Coleman shares his journey with deaf students](#) (Cronkite News, November 28, 2018)
- [Deafness and Hearing Loss](#) (World Health Organization)
- [National Association of the Deaf](#)
- [Through Deaf Eyes Discussion Guide](#) (PBS)
- [Inclusive Language Guide](#) (GIVE: Growing Inclusivity for Vibrant Engagement)

# Common Core Anchor Standards

CONTENT AREA/STANDARD
<p>Reading</p> <p>R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.                      R2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.                      R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.</p>
<p>Writing</p> <p>W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.                      W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.</p>
<p>Speaking and Listening</p> <p>SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.                      SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</p>
<p>Language</p> <p>L4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.                      L5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.                      L6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.</p>

# CASEL's SEL Competencies

COMPETENCIES
<p>Self-Awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.</p>
<p>Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, &amp; contexts.</p>
<p>Relationship Skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.</p>
<p>Responsible Decision-Making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.</p>

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