

A legend.
A legacy.
A lifetime of inspiration.

Eric Why did you do that?

Key Information

Subject area: History

Time required: This resource is planned to be taught as two 50 minute lessons. Depending on the pace at which your class progresses through the activities you may wish to utilise the content over a series of lessons.

Eric Liddell values: Passion, Compassion, Integrity

Key skills: Critical thinking

Learning intentions:

- To understand the context of Eric Liddell's life.
- To understand the motives Eric and his family had for making key decisions

Success criteria:

- I can link context and motive to help understand why Eric Liddell made the decisions he did.

Experiences and outcomes:

- *(SOC 1-06a)* Having selected a significant individual from the past, I can contribute to a discussion on the influence of their actions, then and since.
- *(SOC 2-06a)* I can discuss why people and events from a particular time in the past were important, placing them within a historical sequence.
- *(SOC 3-06a)* I can discuss the motives of those involved in a significant turning point in the past and assess the consequences it had then and since.

Supporting Materials:

- [Presentation](#)
- [Passion Compassion and Integrity sorting cards \(these need to be cut up before in preparation for the lesson\).](#)

Lesson Format

In this lesson, pupils will be introduced to pivotal moments in Eric's life where he faced crucial decisions that would impact not only his life but the lives of others. Pupils will be asked to judge the decisions Eric made, taking into account the wider historical context which will be covered in the lesson. Pupils will be asked to think about Eric's motives and values, to answer the question of why he made the decisions that he did.

If the class hasn't seen the '[Eric Liddell 100 introductory video](#)' please show this now.



Uncle Eric Fact

Eric is often referred to as the most famous, most popular and best loved athlete Scotland ever produced. This isn't down to how fast he could run or the medals he earned but is down to how he conducted himself at athletic meets, as a missionary, and as a human being. Eric was passionate, and compassionate and lived his life with integrity. He was equally respected by teammates, adversaries, and fellow prisoners.

Eric Why did you do that?

Starter Task

Hand out the [sorting value cards](#) to pupils (giving one or two to each pupil depending on class size). Ask pupils to think about what is written on their card, what other words could they use to describe what is on their card? Now ask pupils to find others in the class who have the same coloured cards. Do the words on their cards have a similar meaning? The class should now be split into 3 groups (those with red cards, those with blue cards and those with grey cards). Explain to the groups that all the same coloured cards are associated characteristics of one of the values Eric Liddell lived his life by. Ask groups to discuss what they think the value is that their coloured cards represent.

After a few minutes of discussion, bring up the second slide of the presentation. Give pupils time to discuss with the person next to them the three values Eric lived his life by and their associated characteristics. After a few minutes have a whole class discussion on the three values. You could use some of the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What do the three values mean to you?
- Can you add any other characteristics to any of the three values?
- Can you describe a time you have acted with one of the three values?
- Can you describe a time someone has treated you with one of the three values?
- Can you think of any famous people who show these qualities? Or do not?

Share the lesson objective with the class using the information on slide 6 of the presentation.

Using the information on slides 6 - 11 of the presentation share with the class details on Eric's family background, what was going on in Britain and China in the 18th century, Eric's early life, and Eric's involvement in the 1924 Olympic Games.

Task 1

Ask pupils to read source A outlined on slide 12 of the presentation. Source A is a statement from Eric's roommate at University. Ask pupils to answer the following questions:

- Is the source reliable? Explain why.
- Why do you think Eric was so calm?
- What was the choice facing Eric?
- Do you agree with his decision?
- Which of the three values of passion, compassion, and integrity do you think had the most influence on his decision? Explain your answer.

Using slides 13 and 14 of the presentation provide pupils with information on Eric's decisions around the 1924 Olympic Games.

Task 2

Ask pupils to read source B outlined on slide 15 of the presentation. Source B is a statement Eric made about his decision to give up his athletics career and instead return to China to work as a missionary. Ask pupils to answer the following questions:

- What other options did Eric have after winning the gold medal?
- Which of the three values we have looked at fits with his decision? Explain your answer.
- Do you think he could have taken a different course of action without compromising (weakening) his beliefs? Explain your answer.

Using slides 16 - 18 of the presentation provide pupils with information on what life was like for Eric from the moment he went back to work and live in China after the 1924 Olympic Games, to the moment he decided China was too unsafe and sent his family to Canada to live.

Eric Why did you do that?

Task 3

Ask pupils to choose one of the two following arguments and complete a short paragraph explaining their opinion.

- I agree with Eric Liddell's decision to send his family away to the safety of Canada because...
- I disagree with Eric Liddell's decision to send his family away to the safety of Canada because...

Using slides 20 - 22 of the presentation provide the class with information on what life was like for Eric and the other internees in the internment camp.

Task 4

Ask pupils to answer the following question.

- Why do you think someone like Eric Liddell was so important to his fellow prisoners in the internment camp?

Plenary

Now that pupils have spent time learning about Eric's life and looking in detail at some of the pivotal decisions he made, ask pupils to answer the following question.

- Do you agree that Eric was a man of passion, compassion, and integrity? Why?