

What's The "Take-A-Knee" Controversy All About?

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News.

People are talking about some athletes going down on one knee during the American national anthem.

Some people think it's a good idea, and some people think it's a bad idea.

The idea of going down on one knee (known as "taking a knee") started in 2016. That's when American football player Colin Kaepernick took a knee before games during the American national anthem.

He did it to protest people of colour being treated unfairly by police (in this case, in the United States). For instance, many African Americans may be questioned by police (when they have done nothing wrong) or pulled over when they are driving (again, when they have done nothing wrong).

Last year, several WNBA (women's basketball) teams also protested the way people of colour in America are often treated. Before some of their games, they wore t-shirts that said "Black Lives Matter."

Recently, many football players have been "taking a knee" during the anthem to protest.

American president Donald Trump doesn't like them doing that. In fact, he suggested that those players should be fired by the owners of their football teams.

However, many of those football team owners said the players should be free to protest, because it is a human right.

The issue became more heated after popular basketball player Stephen Curry, turned down an invitation to visit the White House and meet President Trump. In response, the president then took back the invitation.

People on both sides of the issue are very upset and discussions on social media (for instance, Twitter and Facebook) are often very tense. Each side thinks they are right. One side believes people should be allowed to protest during the anthem. The other side—including the US president—believes athletes should stand up during the anthem, as a sign of respect for the United States and its military.

Intermediate

Extend understanding of texts, including increasingly complex or difficult texts, by connecting the ideas in them to



Colin Kaepernick. Image: Mike Morbeck

their own knowledge, experience, and insights, to other familiar texts, and to the world around them (OME, Reading: 1.6).

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