PAIRED PASSAGES: SPORTS KNEELING VS STANDING

**DIRECTIONS:** Remember that as part of your independent reading assignment, you’ll be creating questions for your articles on opposing viewpoints. Let’s practice!

**ARTICLE 1**: “Still Standing” by Doug Glanville, *US News and World Report*, 9/2/16

Glanville is an African American ESPN analyst, author and former Major League Baseball player.

1 [Colin] Kaepernick made me think of why I salute the flag and I am thankful that I finally had to answer that question. I have come to realize people salute it for a variety of reasons. It could be nostalgia, thinking about the good old days, the traditions, the memories, the way it used to be, the way it should still be, the sacrifice, honoring history. It could be about today, the America that has a world presence, a fantastic Olympic team, a lot of resources, more diversity than ever, a black president, a female nominee, an inspiration to freedom. It could be about the future, what I hope for, what I see in America's greatest potential, the dreams of people who came before me. It accepts that we are not there yet and what makes us American is our constant competitive spirit to get there.

2 When up against the most difficult aspects of our racial reality, it is important to understand that so many people do not even know what to fight or how to fight it. Fighting an enemy that is so clearly visible in the moment, that instantaneously retracts into the shadows in its aftermath, creates desperation. We have seen horrific violence as a response, we have seen a rejection of our sacred symbols and servants in the most public forums. It stems from deep, unaddressed issues that have festered since the dawn of our country, and via institutions that perpetuate it to a privileged gain. So people are scared, as I imagine Kaepernick is, lost, afraid to get pulled over, having conversations like I am with their eight-year-old son because he is on the darker side of the color scale. Conversations that should be reserved for an 18 year old.

3 Yet I choose to stand and still stand facing our flag, even after I am profiled, because my hometown Teaneck police department is full of baseball teammates from my childhood; even after I watch school systems ignore an entire generation of urban children, because I have seen caring city teachers who genuinely love the children; even knowing that the fear generated from every exchange between citizens of color and law enforcement is palpable, because we can exercise the right to change the culture as taxpaying citizens; even after fitting the description of every suspicious black man walking in the wrong neighborhood because I still can breathe for those who can't; even after knowing poverty is a business and sometimes, so is racism, because we cannot foreclose on the next generation who could be better versions of ourselves.

4 People are people, we have flaws, we are all biased, we can be selfish, we can be great, we can change the world, we can also be divisive, provincial, and complex, but I have decided that the tenets are worth supporting, history worth recognizing, the laws worth upholding, the future is worth seeing in our children and in our symbols. We must keep standing for something, even if you are just standing for your rightful belief. We ask people to stand up, so let them take a stand so we can know where we stand. I certainly know Kaepernick made me stand. Now we have to ask if we will continue to stand divided.

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**ARTICLE 2:** “Why Colin Kaepernick and I Decided to Take a Knee” by Eric Reid, *The New York Times*, 9/25/17

Reid is an African American NFL player.

5 In early 2016, I began paying attention to reports about the incredible number of unarmed black people being killed by the police. The posts on social media deeply disturbed me, but one in particular brought me to tears: the killing of Alton Sterling in my hometown Baton Rouge, La. This could have happened to any of my family members who still live in the area. I felt furious, hurt and hopeless. I wanted to do something, but didn’t know what or how to do it. All I knew for sure is that I wanted it to be as respectful as possible.

6 A few weeks later, during preseason, my teammate Colin Kaepernick chose to sit on the bench during the national anthem to protest police brutality. To be honest, I didn’t notice at the time, and neither did the news media. It wasn’t until after our third preseason game on Aug. 26, 2016, that his protest gained national attention, and the backlash against him began.

7 That’s when my faith moved me to take action. I looked to James 2:17, which states, “Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” I knew I needed to stand up for what is right.

8 I approached Colin the Saturday before our next game to discuss how I could get involved with the cause but also how we could make a more powerful and positive impact on the social justice movement. We spoke at length about many of the issues that face our community, including systemic oppression against people of color, police brutality and the criminal justice system. We also discussed how we could use our platform, provided to us by being professional athletes in the N.F.L., to speak for those who are voiceless.

9 After hours of careful consideration, and even a visit from Nate Boyer, a retired Green Beret and former N.F.L. player, we came to the conclusion that [we should kneel](https://www.colorofchange.org/campaigns/kneel-with-colin-kaepernick/), rather than sit, the next day during the anthem as a peaceful protest. We chose to kneel because it’s a respectful gesture. I remember thinking our posture was like a flag flown at half-mast to mark a tragedy.

10 It baffles me that our protest is still being misconstrued as disrespectful to the country, flag and military personnel. We chose it because it’s exactly the opposite. It has always been my understanding that the brave men and women who fought and died for our country did so to ensure that we could live in a fair and free society, which includes the right to speak out in protest.

Writing Questions Reminders:

Your independent reading assignment requires you to create/type the following questions with 4 answer choices and an explanation of the correct answer:

* One question on *either* Passage 1 *or* Passage 2 (tone, main idea, central claim, purpose, vocab in context, speaker, or supporting evidence)
* One question that asks the reader to address the relationship (contrasts) between the two (based on tone, main idea, central claim, or purpose)

❖ Remember that these kinds of questions ask about:

* Differences between the two
* Conclusions that can be made after reading both pieces
* How the authors of the passages may respond to the other’s claim

**TASK:** Select TWO of the following options. Create questions, 4 answer choices, and an explanation of the correct answers. Type your work directly into an email and send to me as well your group members. Be sure to label your question so I know which ones (from choices below) you are addressing, AND include textual evidence (just a snippet is good) in your answer explanations.

1. Question about the fact that BOTH articles mention Kaepernick
2. Question about how BOTH articles address violence against African Americans
3. Question about the authors’ personal decisions to stand vs. kneel
4. Question about the author’s concluding sentences.
5. Question about tone (towards whom? What? Be sure to make that clear in the question)
6. Question about how authors have a different stance and yet still share some similar ideas/values