

who inspires you?



# Every Problem Has a Solution

Norma Foster (Suggested Grades: 4-7)

## Objectives:

Students will...

1. Learn about Norma Foster, karate 7th degree black belt
2. Discover challenges that women athletes have faced
3. Read and collect information identify and record problems and solutions using a graphic organizer

## Curricular Links:

- English
- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- Personal Planning (see Appendix 2.1)

## Materials:

- Appendix 2.2 (one per student)
- Appendix 2.3- graphic organizers (one per student plus extras)
- Appendix 2.4 (Answer Key)
- envelopes

## The Big Idea

Norma Foster fought against society's idea that women could not participate equally in sports. Students will learn how she battled discrimination to succeed in the world of karate.

## Opening Motivator - Sort and Predict Activity (30 min)

Write the word DISCRIMINATION on the blackboard or overhead projector. Divide your class into groups of five. Ask your students to:

- Work together to come up with a definition of the word DISCRIMINATION
- Make a list of types of discrimination (e.g. age, racial)
- Choose a recorder and presenter for each group

## Classroom Activity (30 min)

1. Tell your students that they are going to read about someone who faced discrimination and fought against it. Distribute copies of Appendix 2.2 and have students read Norma Foster's story. Alternately, if you have access to a computer lab, you can view and read more information online at [bcsportshalloffame.com](http://bcsportshalloffame.com) then click on Hero In You, then Student Area, then In Her Footsteps Lesson Two.
2. After students have read the Norma Foster story, they should return to their group and discuss what they have read. Ask students to focus their discussion on these questions:
  - a) What type of discrimination did Norma Foster face?
  - b) Norma was told she could not participate in karate. What were some of the reasons people gave for telling her "no"?
  - c) What did Norma do to prove she could participate?

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## Individual Activity (30 min)

After students have had discussion time, give each student a copy of the Problems & Solutions graphic organizer (Appendix 2.3). (You could also choose to have students work in groups or pairs.) Decide whether you would like students to use point-form or sentence answers. Ask students to re-read Norma's story and record each negative reason she was given as to why she could not participate in karate in the Problem box. Norma's solution to each problem should be recorded in the Solutions box.

Search for the first problem and solution together and write it on the blackboard or overhead. When finished, you may choose to collect the graphic organizers or review them together as a class

## Conclusion and Reflections:

Norma Foster faced constant discrimination in her sporting career yet she never gave up. Norma persevered, changing her own life, and those of the women to follow in her path. You may choose to have your students write reflections on this lesson. These questions will guide students in their writing:

- Have you faced or observed discrimination in your life? How did you react?
- What does "belief in yourself" mean to you?
- Tell about a problem you have faced and your solution to it.
- Why is Norma Foster a role model for others?

## Extension Idea:

Have your students design an anti-discrimination poster. You could narrow the focus to one type of discrimination or allow students to choose which type to represent.

## Assessment:

Use Appendix 2.4 Answer Key to check students' work.

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## Appendix 2.1-Curricula Links for Grade 6

Prescribed Learning Outcomes for this lesson

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| English Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organize details and information they have read, heard, or viewed using a variety of written and graphic forms, including charts, webs, and maps</li><li>• Locate and interpret details to answer specific questions or complete tasks</li><li>• Compare the portrayal of males and females in mass media with their own experiences</li></ul> |
| Social Studies        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and clarify a problem, issue, or inquiry</li><li>• Research information using print, non-print, and electronic source</li></ul>   |
| Personal Planning     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the talents and skills of positive role models in a variety of occupations and career</li></ul>   |
| Physical Education    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and demonstrate positive behaviours that show</li><li>• Respect for individuals' potential, interests, and cultural backgrounds</li><li>• Identify careers related to physical activity</li></ul>   |

\*From BC Ministry of Education Integrated Resource Package

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## Norma Foster's Story

### Beginnings

Norma Foster was seventeen years old when she started training in karate in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1969. Norma noticed that men were talking enthusiastically about karate and thought "I'd like to try that!" The men decided that they weren't going to let Norma train in karate. Norma's reaction was to want to do it even more. The men told her that karate training was too hard and that she would have to do push-ups. Norma replied "I've been doing push-ups since I was seven!" Next, the men told her that she might get hit. Norma told them, "I've been hit before and it wasn't nice but I coped." The men didn't give up trying to dissuade Norma. They told her that she would start crying when she got hit. Norma made a deal with the men. She said that if she cried she would quit and if she didn't cry they would have to let her continue.

### Norma's First Goal

Norma set goals for herself when she started her training. You might think her first goal was to get a yellow or green belt in karate but it wasn't. Her first goal was to be accepted by the instructor as a valid student. For the first six months that Norma trained, she was condescended to and patronized by the instructor. He didn't take her seriously. Norma thought if she passed her first fight test it might change her instructor's mind. She worked hard to pass the first test but she was late showing up to the test. All her classmates had left. The test instructor was only in the city for one day so Norma talked him into letting her take the fight test. She passed! Norma hoped her instructor and classmates would take her seriously now but, because they didn't see her take the test, they still didn't accept her.

### A New Instructor

Norma passed her next test but her karate club merged with another club and now she would have a new instructor. This instructor said, "there's no women training in my club!" Norma replied, "I've been training now for nine months and I have a rank in this sport and I want to continue and train here." "Impossible!" said the instructor. "Why not?" said Norma. The instructor told her that there were no changing rooms. Norma asked if there was a bathroom. "Of course," answered the instructor. "Well, I'll change in the bathroom then," was Norma's reply.

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## A New Goal

Norma had battled for the chance to participate but she was still not treated the same as the men in her class. Her instructor would walk along the line of students and correct every single student. But he didn't say a word to Norma. She was ignored. Norma's new goal was to make the instructor correct her just like he did for the men. Norma persevered and passed the next test and now she got her first coloured belt. Karate ranks its athletes with coloured belts (white, yellow, orange, green, blue, purple, brown and black). Now Norma had a yellow belt and her instructor started to correct her. This inspired Norma and her next goal was to be so good that the instructor would stop correcting her!

## Karate's First Female Referee

Norma continued to train in karate and went to work in Japan in 1989. Norma had a new goal. She wanted to become a karate referee! No woman had ever become a referee and the karate world was shocked. Once again, Norma was told that her dream was not possible, women cannot referee men. Norma was surprised that she still had to battle against barriers to participate in her sport. Norma worked hard and became the first female referee in karate. By 1990, Norma was the only woman refereeing at world-level karate sporting events.

## Conclusion

Norma fought for the right to participate in karate. She stood up for herself against the people who discriminated against her. Not many girls and women train in karate and there are eleven female referees who are qualified to referee at world-level sporting events. Norma overcame and knocked down many barriers in the world of karate. Norma would have preferred not to have had to face these barriers and challenges but says "I will fight when I see something that does not make sense or seems wrong. Someone has to do it." Norma's advice for young women who would like to become involved in sports is to "believe in yourself"

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# Every Problem Has a Solution

Norma Foster Appendix 2.3



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Problems & Solutions

Problem	Solutions

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# Every Problem Has a Solution

Norma Foster Appendix 2.4



Name: ANSWER KEY

## Problems & Solutions

Problem	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Told she would have to do push-ups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had done push-ups since the age of 7</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Told she might get hit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had been hit before and said she could cop</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Told she would cry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Said she would quit if she cried and if she didn't they had to let her continue</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wasn't accepted by her instructor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passed her first fight test</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Started at a new club with new instructor</li> <li>Told "there's no women training in my club" and that there was nowhere to change clothes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>changed in the bathroom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructor ignored her and wouldn't correct her</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Got her yellow belt and her instructor started to correct her</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Told that she couldn't be a referee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked hard and became karate's first female referee</li> </ul>

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