Promoting critical thinking through HSC Core 2 Factors affecting performance

Duration: 1-2 lessons (50-60 minutes in length)

**Educative purpose**

This teaching and learning activity is designed to support the HSC Core 2 content. Students will increase critical thinking skills and require application of knowledge and understanding.

This activity uses the population health based decision to apply social distancing and remove crowds from sporting venues and activities. Students will examine the impact on athlete motivation. It is designed to fit within an existing teaching program or be used as a revision exercise on the conclusion of the Core

## Syllabus outcome(s)

* **H11** designs psychological strategies and nutritional plans in response to individual performance needs
* **H16** devises methods of gathering, interpreting and communicating information about health and physical activity concepts
* **H17** selects appropriate options and formulates strategies based on a critical analysis of the factors that affect performance and safe participation.

All outcomes referred to in this unit come from [PDHPE Stage 6 syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/pdhpe/pdhpe-syllabus) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2009.

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| **Critical question(s)** | **Syllabus content** |
| How does psychology affect performance? | * Motivation   + positive and negative   + intrinsic and extrinsic * Anxiety and arousal   + trait and state anxiety   + sources of stress   + optimum arousal * Psychological strategies to enhance motivation and manage anxiety   + concentration/ attention skills (focusing)   + mental rehearsal/ visualisation/ imagery   + relaxation techniques   + goal-setting |

## Resources/preparation

* Access to the case study and instructions (class blog, Microsoft Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom).

## Learning activity description

Due to the restrictions surrounding the COVID-19 (Coronavirus), elite sporting teams were temporarily taking to the fields to play their sport without any spectators.

Individually, students apply the information and resources gathered to the syllabus content of :

* motivation
* anxiety and arousal
* psychological strategies to enhance motivation and manage anxiety.

Students need to:

1. Read the newspaper article “Bresciano and Holman reveal the challenges of playing games behind closed doors. Daily Telegraph 21st March, 2020.” (Appendix 1)
2. Watch the following YouTube clips:

* [The Sydney Roosters have won the NRL Grand Final 14-8 in controversial circumstances](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBQlXOQyY2Q)
* [Raise the roof - AFL grounds incredible atmospheres](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3Kkt0wEaHM)
* [AFL eerie scenes as teams run out for season opener](https://www.heraldsun.com.au/sport/afl/eerie-scenes-as-teams-run-out-for-season-opener/video/d5b0c7fb632157d67ba12947b2c75466)

1. Read syllabus content notes on motivation.
2. Using your gathered knowledge and understanding resources, brainstorm how it applies to the motivation of athletes.
3. Share your brainstorm with a peer or class to view, e.g. class blog, MS Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom.
4. From the article you have read and your knowledge of sports that were played without crowds in attendance, answer: Explain TWO different types of motivation that are impacted when there is no crowd at the venue. Use examples to support your answer. (4 marks)
5. Share your response with a peer or class to view, e.g. class blog, MS Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom.
6. Read syllabus content notes on anxiety and arousal.
   1. Using your gathered knowledge and understanding resources, brainstorm how it applies to the anxiety and arousal of athletes.
   2. Share your brainstorm with a peer or class to view, e.g. class blog, MS Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom.
7. From the article you have read and your knowledge of sports that were played without crowds in attendance, answer: Describe how competing in an empty venue would impact an athlete’s optimal levels of arousal. (4 marks)
8. Share your response with a peer or class to view, e.g. class blog, MS Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom.
9. Read syllabus content notes on psychological strategies to enhance motivation and manage anxiety.
   1. Using your gathered knowledge and understanding resources, brainstorm how it applies to the different psychological strategies of athletes.
   2. Share your brainstorm with a peer or class to view, e.g. class blog, MS Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom.
10. From the article you have read and your knowledge of sports that were played without crowds in attendance, answer the following two questions: Compare two psychological strategies that athletes in these sports could employ to enhance their motivation or manage anxiety. (6 marks) How can psychological strategies enhance motivation and manage anxiety in athletes when they do not have access to all extrinsic factors? Include examples in your answer. (8 marks)
11. Share your response with a peer or class to view, e.g. class blog, MS Teams, OneDrive, Google classroom.

Within the class, peers are invited to critique and provide feedback to another student.

## Appendix newspaper article

Bresciano and Holman reveal the challenges of playing games behind closed doors. Daily Telegraph 21st March, 2020.

Former Socceroo Mark Bresciano saw most things in his long career – including the “surreal” sight of an empty stadium as he prepared to play a game.

As the A-League steps into uncharted territory, playing the rest of its games this season behind closed doors, Bresciano warned that certain kinds of players would brush off the peculiar vibe of a fan-less game, but others might struggle without the oxygen of atmosphere.

Saturday night’s derby more than any other fixture will underline the unique, COVID19-induced circumstances for sport; last time there were almost 30,000 people in Bankwest Stadium, but this time it will be empty.

Spending almost his entire career in Serie A, Bresciano was at the centre of an episode that cast a black pall over the game – the crowd violence at a match between his side, Palermo, and Catania in February 2007, when a policeman was killed as fans rioted.

In response the league shut the majority of grounds to spectators until safety measures were put in place, leaving Bresciano and several hundred more players to continue the league in sombre circumstances.

“Leading up to the game everything is normal, the effort in training, the preparations, the meals – but on game day everything feels different, and that can really affect footballers,” Bresciano recalled.

“When you step off the bus at the stadium, the impact is straightaway. Even driving there, in Italy there were no fans on the streets, no crowds, no traffic, it’s surreal.

“The game itself – like a training session is the best way to describe it.”

For some players, Bresciano believes, that will directly impact on their performance.

“Those who don’t rely on the crowd, on the buzz, to get themselves going or be motivated, they’ll be the ones who adapt and play as if things were normal,” he said.

“They’re generally the good trainers, they’re self-motivated. But the players who feed off the crowd noise, the atmosphere and the sense of an occasion, they could struggle.”

Bresciano’s international teammate, Brett Holman, played in an infamous fixture behind closed doors, a replay between AZ Alkmaar and Ajax ordered by the Dutch FA after a fan invaded the pitch and attacked the visitor’s goalkeeper.

“This is unique in the A-League, though, because it’s open-ended,” Holman said. “Coaches will have to watch their players – some like routines to be just so, and if something changes it can affect them.

“Everyone’s in the same boat but it’s the mentally tougher guys who should adapt the best. In every code, there are players who lift with the crowd, even if – or especially – if it’s hostile.”

Yet the fact of being able to play will itself be something soothing, Bresciano added, for those players fearful of how the coronavirus will play out and its effect on our lives.

“You can’t be naive, players are humans too and this is something on everyone’s minds,” he said. “But as an athlete, if they get in the zone, it could be the best 90 minutes of their lives. They won’t worry about the virus, or the economy, they can focus on one beautiful thing.”