

# Distance Learning for Middle School

## Social Studies Lesson

**Instructions:** Read the following article. As you read underline words and phrases that help you understand the main ideas. After reading, complete the attached worksheet to work on developing complex sentences.

### 1 **Jack Johnson and the ‘Fight of the Century’**

2 By Alicia Barber, February 27, 2019 (Listen [here](#))

3 Perhaps the most famous event in the history of Reno, Nevada took place on July 4, 1910. ...

4 They promoted it in advance as the “Fight of the Century,” which was a pretty bold claim, since it was only  
5 1910. Still, the battle for the heavyweight prizefighting title seemed likely to live up to the hype. The  
6 defending champion was Jack Johnson, who had become the first black heavyweight champion of the world  
7 in 1908. And in a time of rampant racial prejudice, a lot of people were very impatient to see him defeated.

8 They eagerly sought out what they called a “Great White Hope,” a fighter who could, as they thought,  
9 reclaim the heavyweight title for white America. They found their man in retired champion Jim Jeffries.  
10 Boxing promoter “Tex” Rickard had originally intended to hold the fight in San Francisco, but a last-minute  
11 cancellation by California’s governor brought the bout to Reno, where workers quickly built a huge wooden  
12 arena out on East 4th Street.

13 John Cahlan was eight years old at the time, and in 1986, he shared his memories of what it was like to be  
14 in downtown Reno that day, as special trains full of excited spectators were arriving from the east and west.

15 “My father came down here from Carson City to help the police department in Reno control the crowds that  
16 were expected. And they came!” Cahlan said. “I can remember on Center Street, where the headquarters for  
17 the fight were, there were people from curb to curb. You couldn’t hardly get through the crowd.”

18 Attendance at the arena was estimated at more than 20,000, at a time when Reno’s population was half that.  
19 Across the country, crowds gathered to hear the results conveyed live by telegraph. Johnson was relaxed  
20 and confident as he entered the ring, and after a few tentative punches, he quickly began to dominate.

21 Seventeen-year old Andrew Ginocchio had snuck into the stadium with four of his friends, and in 1985, he  
22 recalled how the spectators reacted as Jeffries got pummeled.

23 “The fight was supposed to last in the neighborhood of 42 rounds, but they only got as far as the fifteenth  
24 round, and they saw that the white man was going to lose the fight,” Ginocchio said.

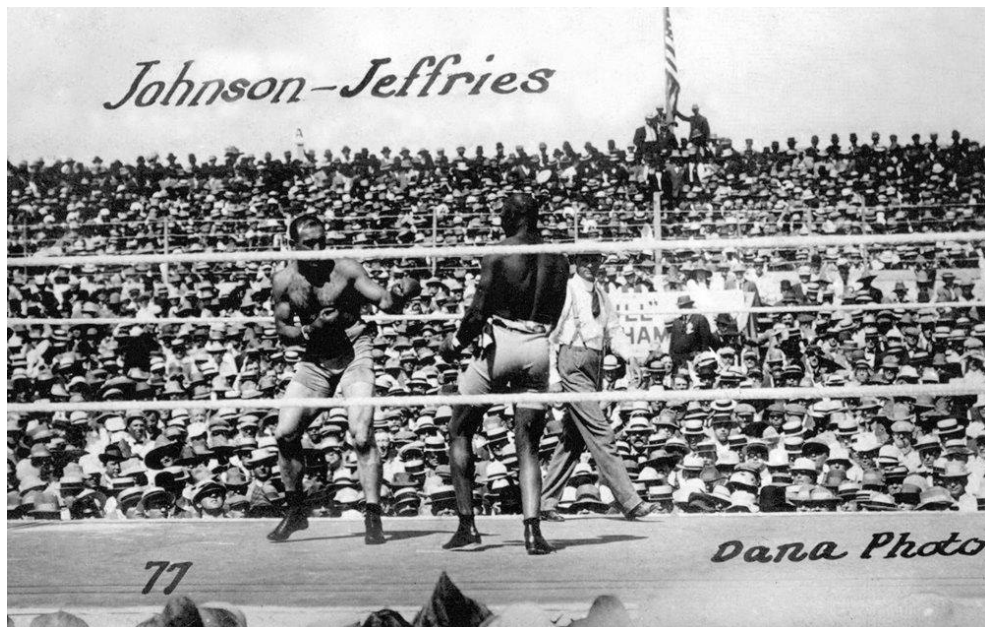
25 In the fifteenth round, Johnson knocked Jeffries to the ground repeatedly, and anxious officials halted the  
26 fight before he could land a humiliating knockout punch. In an instant, it was over, and Johnson was  
27 declared the winner. Ginocchio recalled the mood of disbelief in the arena as the crowd shuffled out.

28 “The thing that impressed me the most at the time, when you walked out of there, it was like going home  
29 from a funeral,” Ginocchio said. “There wasn’t very much said from anyone, regardless of nationality. They  
30 were all anxious to see that the white man would win.”

31 Still downtown, Cahlan watched as the shocked crowd departed:

32 “Johnson had won. He was the champion. It was quite a sensation. Everybody got on the train and left.”

33 The scene might have been somber in Reno, but as news of Johnson’s victory spread across the country,  
34 riots broke out. At least twenty people, black and white, were killed, and hundreds injured. Johnson held  
35 onto the heavyweight title for the next five years, and Reno had a place in the history books forever.



*The “Fight of the Century” took place on East 4th Street in Reno.*  
PHOTO COURTESY OF NEAL COBB.

# Expanding Sentences with But, Because & So

**Directions:** The conjunctions but, because, and so are used to help link words and phrases together in order to expand sentences and make more complex sentences. Each of these conjunctions has a different purpose. You are going to practice using these conjunctions to expand the original sentence three different ways.

***But:*** is used as a CHANGE of direction, to show DIFFERENT viewpoints and to contrast.

***Because:*** is used to explain WHY, meaning explain the CAUSE of something.

***So:*** is used to make CONNECTIONS and add the EFFECT of something.

1. Go back to the article. Review the text looking for evidence that would ...
  - a. show a different viewpoint or contrast with the original sentence (BUT).
  - b. help explain why the original sentence is accurate (BECAUSE).
  - c. be used to help make connections or demonstrate why the Johnson-Jefferies fight was so important (SO).
2. Use the evidence from the text to help make three expanded sentences in the spaces below. Each of your sentences starts with *The Johnson-Jefferies fight was a triumphant event in Reno's history*...Your job is to create three new ways to add on to it using but, because, and so.
3. Afterwards, share your best sentence with someone in your home? Discuss with this person what makes it a great complex sentence?

**Original Sentence:** *The Johnson-Jefferies fight was a triumphant event in Reno's history.*

**BUT:**

**BECAUSE:**

**SO:**