



[Keeping Score](#) is a co-production of WNYC Studios and The Bell.

## Notes on teaching Keeping Score

Hello teachers! We're excited for your students to listen to and discuss the Keeping Score podcast series.

Because the podcast dives into issues of race and equity in public schools (and may elicit strong, differing opinions from your students), we recommend creating or revisiting classroom community agreements before engaging in discussions about the series. Facing History offers a thorough guide for "[Creating a Classroom Contract](#)."

For each episode of the series, we have put together a student listening guide that includes a mix of questions designed to prompt thoughtful reflection, analysis and inquiry.

For additional tools and activities that might pair well with this series, we recommend checking out the [Community Inquiry Teaching Strategies](#) from Learning for Justice.

As you and your students dig into the series, we would love to hear how it goes! Please get in touch with us at [info@bellvoices.org](mailto:info@bellvoices.org).

## Listener Guide: [Part 1](#)

### Pre-Listening Question:

With close to 1 million students, the New York City public school system is the nation's largest. It's also one of the most racially segregated school systems in the country. Does that surprise you? Why or why not?

Time	Section	Questions
0:00 – 4:11	Introduction	The host, Alana, describes the sports merger as an “effort to reverse segregation.” What does that phrase make you think about, or wonder?
4:12 – 7:53	Overview of the four John Jay schools: CASA, Law, Millennium, PSC	Which of these four schools most closely resembles your school's demographics?  Are there other characteristics that remind you of your school?
7:54 – 13:22	Lauren describes her commute	We learn that the neighborhood around John Jay is predominantly white, but three of the schools have students who are mostly Black or brown. How do the demographics of your school match the surrounding neighborhood?
13:23 – 16:55	Mariah describes school security	What do you learn about the disparity in where school metal detectors are used in NYC?  What is Mariah's opinion on the use of metal detectors at her school? What are your thoughts on the topic?
18:30 – 21:02	Renika describes CASA	Renika's expectation of what high school would be like differed from what it was really like. How has / did your high school experience compare to what you thought it would be?
21:03 – 26:42	Noor and other students describe Millennium	Millennium has far more white students than the other three schools in the building. Do you have any predictions about how that came to be?  What do students say are the pros and cons of going to school at Millennium?
26:43 – 30:00	The sports merger is announced	Based on Renika's description of Jaguar Day and the students' reaction to the new slogan, “We Are One,” what obstacles do you think the newly combined sports teams will have to overcome this season?

**Post-Listening Question:**

If you were in charge of the Jaguars athletics program, what actions would you take to ensure that student-athletes from all four schools have positive experiences this year?

## Listener Guide: [Part 2](#)

### Pre-Listening Question:

What do you know about the history of your school and school system? Does segregation exist in your school or school system?

Time	Section	Questions
0:00 – 3:55	Introduction	When Mariah says that the sports merger has the potential to be anti-racist, what does she mean?
3:56 – 9:00	John Jay building history: 1970s – 2000s	<p>How did the John Jay school community change from the 1970s to 2000s?</p> <p>What was the official reason presented for the small schools movement?</p> <p>How did former Park Slope Collegiate principal Jill Bloomberg describe the physical condition of the John Jay building when she began working there in the early 2000s?</p>
9:01 – 15:16	John Jay building history: Millennium's entrance	<p>Why did Jill Bloomberg think that the proposal to add Millennium to the campus was racist?</p> <p>How are admissions determined at your school?</p> <p>How do you imagine that having two sports programs impacted the campus environment?</p>
16:02 – 21:09	Two sports programs on the John Jay campus	<p>What is club volleyball's impact on school volleyball? What's another area where experiences outside of school create disparities in school?</p> <p>Why did Veronica Vega think that Millennium's sports program should have joined the Jayhawks sports program? What do you think?</p> <p>How many sports are available at your school?</p>
21:10 – 24:20	Michael Williams describes	What argument did the flier make, and why

	the creation of the campus council	did it create such a stir?
24:21 – 28:13	Jill Bloomberg, Brian Friedman, and Michael Boitano on merging the sports programs	<p>Why do you think that the sports programs became a topic of focus on the John Jay campus?</p> <p>What were the reasons that merging the sports programs would be complicated, according to athletic directors Brian Friedman and Michael Boitano? What do you think of these reasons?</p> <p>What do you think could be done to solve some of the issues raised by the athletic directors?</p>
28:14 – 29:09	The John Jay Jaguars	Alana asks “Now that the two teams were combined, would that guarantee a true merger?” What conditions do you think would need to be met in order to guarantee a “true merger”?
29:10 – 32:16	Mariah’s first practice	<p>What was the consequence of the coaches’ decision to split players by skill level? How do you predict this issue will play out as the season progresses?</p> <p>What would you do if you were in Mariah’s shoes?</p>

**Post-Listening Question:**

In this episode, we hear the statement “Separate will never be equal,” which was the argument made in the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court case that outlawed segregation in public schools. What evidence have we heard so far in the series that supports this statement? Do you see examples of this concept in your school or school system?

## Listener Guide: [Part 3](#)

### Pre-Listening Question:

What are the characteristics of successful teams? When have you felt most satisfied with your participation on a team?

Time	Section	Questions
0:00 – 4:51	Introduction	<p>At the beginning of the episode, Kalli talks about how her former team, the Jayhawks, <i>“felt like they were fighting against racism just by winning.”</i> What does she mean by this?</p> <p>Were you surprised by the Jayhawks’ decision to invite the security guards to participate in a “circle” with them? Why do you think they chose to deal with the situation that way?</p>
4:52 – 7:01	Interview with Angelina Sharifi	<p>Here, Angelina, the co-captain of the Jaguars, talks about the satisfying feeling of “meshing.” According to Alana, how does the concept of “meshing” represent what is unique about volleyball?</p>
7:02 – 10:16	Discussion about equity with Coach Salak	<p>How did the vaccine mandate impact the team roster?</p> <p>What is the relationship between socioeconomic status and experience level as described in this section? Where do you see similar patterns in your own life?</p>
10:17 – 14:46	Discussion surrounding the separation of players by skill set	<p>What was the coaching strategy coming into the season? What do you think of this strategy?</p> <p>What do you think is the best way to approach situations where people have varying skill levels and abilities? Support your answer by reflecting both on the Jaguars volleyball team as well as your own life experiences.</p>
14:47 – 20:25	Changes to the coaching strategy	<p>Coach Salak says: <i>“You know, the other part of it is you put a girl in and then to fight racism and to be equitable. And then, you know what if she makes mistakes and then</i></p>

		<p><i>she feels like she's the reason we're losing and she feels bad, you know, like, it's like, is that something we want to put on a young person like that? You know, they have to be willing to do that, right?"</i> What is your opinion on this?</p> <p>Coach Vega and Coach Salak explain that they have to consider the question of "What does winning mean to the team?" Wh</p>
21:12 – 23:45	Team birthday party and practice	Why do you think it was a priority of the coaches to have the teammates spend more time together outside of practice?
23:46 – 27:03	Brooklyn Tech game	How do Malika and Mariah's comments relate to the question of what it means to be a winning team?
27:04 – 29:17	Team incident with security	Mariah describes an experience with a security guard where she felt singled out because of her race. Have you or someone you know ever experienced something similar? If you feel comfortable, describe this experience.
29:18 – 31:50	Conversation with the JV Girls	<p>How did you feel when listening to the JV girls talk about the varsity team and their experience playing volleyball so far?</p> <p>Why do you think that these players don't seem to be as concerned about the racial dynamics of the team?</p>

**Post-Listening Question:**

In this episode, Mariah and Coach Salak talk about how volleyball is a reflection of how the world works. What do they mean by this? What are some specific examples from the episode?

## Listener Guide: [Part 4](#)

### Pre-Listening Question:

At the end of Part 3, we learn that the Jaguars are about to face a big test on the court. If you were the coach, what would you say to the team before the game starts?

Time	Section	Questions
0:00 – 5:02	Introduction	It's clear that Mariah and Angelina view the merger differently. As Alana puts it, "23 players... 23 different ways of seeing the merger." How do you see it so far?
5:28 – 7:00	Interview with Kali Moore	What's the "compromise" that Kalli supports? How do you predict it will play out at the championship game?
7:01 – 17:30	Championship game scene	What do you think about the coach's decision to play the most experienced players?  Have you ever been in a high-pressure situation like the Jaguars are in? How did the pressure affect you?
18:54 – 29:36	Post-season celebration and reflection	Why do you think, as Mariah puts it, players had such "different retellings" of how the season went? Are there players whose perspective you can relate to?  Coach Salak admits he's learned hard lessons this year. How do you think this season will change his approach to coaching in future years?
29:37 – 36:10	Assessing the Jaguars sports program as a whole	How do you feel when Alana shares the roster breakdown by school for all the Jaguar sports? Do the stats impact the way you think about the success of the merger?  What do you think of Brian Friedman's response to Alana when she asks if the goal of after-school sports is winning or equity?
36:11 – 40:45	Looking ahead	What does Coach Salak mean when he says "our team doesn't exist in a vacuum"?



		At the end, Lauren says, <i>“I can change at least this one thing that is going to maybe cause a ripple effect and sprout change in other places.”</i> Have you seen examples of that in your own life?
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**Final Reflection Questions:**

1. How would you evaluate the success of the John Jay sports merger?
2. If you were in charge of the Jaguars athletics program, what changes would you implement before next year?
3. Many of the students want the sports merger to be the “first step” to creating a more integrated campus. What else do you think needs to happen in order for the building to live up to its motto, “We Are One”?
4. In this series, we hear lots of interviews conducted by student reporters. What issue would you explore if you were doing a podcast series about your school? What questions would you seek to answer?