

Year 5 Writing Sample

Topic: Peter Norman



Black and white comes together

Peter Norman. Have you ever heard that name before? If you lived in 1968 you would have heard of him once and never heard of him again. Dark days of Apartheid always loomed over everyone, casting a shadow on the world. But Peter Norman would not let it ruin the great 1968 Mexico Olympics.

200m of Olympic track stretched on, but Peter tried to imagine it as the school carnival back when he was in primary school. But this was no children's challenge. This was the Olympic Games. 'Peter Norman, Tommy Smith, John Carlos, Greg Lewis, Dick Steare, Mani Jegathesan...' Boomed the loudspeaker. The foghorn blew and the athletes sped off, finally fulfilling their goals. Building up speed, all Peter Norman could see was that one last jersey flapping in the wind. Smith, America! It screamed. Without realising he'd crossed the line, Peter Norman took out silver for Australia.

He slipped off into the change rooms and much to his surprise was greeted by Smith and Carlos, and Carlos took out Bronze. They needed black gloves, because they would conduct a silent protest when they stood on the dias. Peter happily handed them his own gloves and asked if there was anything he could do. He was given a silver badge that stood up to all 'Black' men and women suffering an apartheid. They stood on the dias, and looking down, Smith didn't see fear in Peters eyes, but love. The states looked on, awestruck by the scene unfolding.

When the athletes arrived back in Australia, all were swept off in a welcome parade. All except Peter Norman. His parents and wife were shamed, and he was not allowed to compete again, despite qualifying thirteen times. The Government finally gave in, on the condition he would tell the country he was wrong. But Peter refused profusely.

Years later Peter Norman had died. And it was none other than Smith and Carlos that carried his coffin. He was Posthumously awarded an order of merit and they apologised to his family. He had a statue built of the historical moment that changed the world.

The Salute.

(Charli, Year 5, Bunbury Primary School)