

# *Take Me Out to the Ballgame*

## **Internet Lesson Plan**

**Grade level: 3-6**

## **Teacher Activities**

### **GOAL:**

To use Internet resources to explore interesting topics related to baseball, America's game!

### **OBJECTIVE:**

At the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:

- Write a story describing how baseball originated using who, when, where and why.
- Compose a creative story about how he/she thinks baseball started.
- Create a biography for Jackie Robinson.
- Make a table listing important facts about five stadiums.
- Locate and label baseball stadiums on a map of the North America.
- Make a bar graph showing the seating capacity of each stadium.
- Create a flow chart outlining the historical events of the formation of a baseball team.
- Make a family tree showing family members that have played professional baseball.
- Create a list of 10 unusual nicknames of baseball players.
- Make an alphabetical classification of baseball player's nicknames.
- Write a new ending to a familiar poem.
- Find historical information behind the poem "Casey at Bat."
- Create a travel brochure for the National Baseball Hall of Fame.
- Research the qualifications necessary to enter the National Baseball Hall of Fame.
- Write a persuasive letter nominating a player for the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

**DURATION:**

Two to three weeks, 1/2 hour to 1 hour on-line each day.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY:**

Students should work in pairs or small cooperative groups and use Internet stations to research topics. Print the pages when necessary to complete the activities off-line. Products that are a result of student research can be stored in their folders for evaluation at the end of the activities. Encourage students to do additional research both off-line and on-line.

These activities are designed to be interdisciplinary so students see connections between different subject areas. Activities deal with each the subject area; however, students will complete tasks that are cross-curricular within each activity.

**PREREQUISITE:**

A short introduction to the Internet with information on using addresses or completing searches using a Web browser is necessary. Students should also be familiar with the concept of "hypertext" so they can do research at several levels. If students do not have an extended period of time to complete their research, bookmarks can and should be used.

**ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION:**

The activities in this unit will be evaluated on the basis of student participation and performance. Team folders will include information gathered in the process of completing the activities. Encourage cooperative learning, group process, problem-solving, competition, and the use of the Internet as these activities are completed. Serve as facilitator and guide throughout the activities.

**OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES:**

Activity 1:

- Discuss the question about the origin of baseball. What supporting evidence is there that one person or another really created the game? Make a chart to separate facts from opinions.

Activity 2:

- Look in an encyclopedia or history book to find out what the world was like when Jackie Robinson actually broke into the game. How is life different today?

- Explore Web sites on Civil Rights; several are available in the "Black History" Internet lesson plan. What rights and privileges do we take for granted that people have not always enjoyed? Is prejudice still experienced today? How? Think about people who are handicapped. Do they also experience unfairness? Can you think of other examples?
- In the news, the athlete Tiger Woods is also experiencing prejudice. Research this phenomenon and compare his life to Jackie Robinson's.

Activity 3:

- Create an address book of the stadium addresses and phone numbers. Be sure to put them in alphabetical order, just like you would find in a phone book.
- Create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting 2 different stadiums.
- Make a trivia game using the interesting facts you found in each stadium's trivia section.
- Compare the size of stadiums of the past with presently used stadiums at the Web page "Ballparks" at <http://www.ballparks.com/>.

Activity 4:

- Create a chart that outlines baseball opportunities that children and adults have. Start with school opportunities, then city or community opportunities, regional opportunities, semi-professional teams, and professional teams. You are looking for opportunities for kids, adults, and mature people.

Activity 5:

- Think about and list other sports that relatives play or have played together. Continue your research off-line or go back on-line to search for family members that have played soccer, football, basketball or other sports together.
- Discuss why family members often choose the same career. Why does that happen? Do a class poll to see if any members of the class have parents and grandparents in the same profession.

Activity 6:

- After creating the list of the most unusual nicknames in baseball, create a word find using those names.
- Do a survey of nicknames in your class. How did students get those nicknames? What is the most unusual nickname in your class?

Activity 7:

- After reading the two poems about Casey, split into groups and create a story map that includes the characters, setting, events, and conclusion. Make a list of adjectives that show how Casey felt in each poem.

Activity 8:

- As a culminating class activity, select your favorite player. With your classmates, create a class book that includes everyone's selections.

### Other activities:

- Explore the Internet and search for your favorite player. Pictures of the players can often be found and printed from the Web. Make an original baseball card using pictures and statistics that you find.
- Create a crossword puzzle or word find by brainstorming words associated with baseball and then using them in your puzzle.
- Check the Internet on a daily basis to find the games played that day and the current box scores.
- Teachers: Use a baseball format to play a baseball game with math facts. As students get correct answers, they move around the bases and earn runs. Incorrect responses result in a strike!

### Software connections:

- Measurement, Time and Money, Level II, Measure Up: Use the graphmaker tool to create your own bar graphs.
- Math and More 3, Food for Thought, Explore: Use graphing tools to create both bar graphs and pie charts.
- Write Along: Create a brochure or list.
- The Children's Writing and Publishing Center: Create stories, letters, lists or mini-posters.
- The Student Writing Center: Create stories, letters, lists and posters.
- Reading for Information, Level III: Batter Up: Read a story on baseball.
- World Book Encyclopedia: Research baseball history, players and teams.
- Writing and More, Reporting an Event: Write about an event using the questions what, where, when, and who.

### MATERIALS NEEDED BY TEACHER:

- Paper
- Pencils, pens
- Large chart paper
- Markers
- Maps of the US and Canada or North America - 1 for each group
- Large roll paper for making a timeline or flowchart
- Folders

### TEACHER NOTES:

Baseball is a high interest topic with many opportunities to focus on specific math and language arts skills as well as explore history. These activities were designed to encourage students to explore many topics connected to baseball using the Internet resources outlined. Included are other activities you might incorporate into this unit that are not Internet dependant. Don't forget to include your own activities as well. Have fun and enjoy exploring America's favorite pastime, baseball!

# Take Me Out to the Ballgame

## Student Activities

### ACTIVITY #1: WHERE DID BASEBALL REALLY ORIGINATE?

Have you ever wondered who really invented baseball? Abner Doubleday was the first to be officially recognized as the creator of baseball, but controversy still rages over baseball's true originator.

- Start your search to see who started baseball by visiting the Web page "The National Baseball Hall of Fame Page" at [http://enews.com/bas\\_hall\\_fame/overview.html](http://enews.com/bas_hall_fame/overview.html). How and when does it say that baseball was invented?
- To read about another point of view, go to the Web page "Was Abner Doubleday Really the Inventor?" at <http://www.historybuff.com/library/refearlybase.html>. Read this interesting article. It seems there have been many references to baseball prior to the officially recognized 1839 date. Look for the following information:
  - ✓ In 1991, the Baseball Hall of Fame heard about a printed reference to organized baseball in America. What was the name of the paper and the date of publication?
  - ✓ When did the rules as we know them come into being?
  - ✓ Who is Alexander Cartwright?
  - ✓ Where was baseball played in the 1820's?
  - ✓ What did you learn about the Prince of Wales and baseball in 1748?
- Pretend that you are about to enter the Baseball Time Machine. You will travel back in time to pre-1845. Your story should take place before the beginning of baseball as we know it. Compose a creative story about how you think baseball might have actually been invented. Be sure to include who, when, where and why.

### ACTIVITY #2: BREAKING THE BARRIERS

On April 15th, 1997, we celebrated Jackie Robinson's entry into professional baseball and even more importantly into the history books. Jackie Robinson was the first black baseball player, and he changed the game of baseball in more than one way. We honor his accomplishments and celebrate his contribution to

America's pastime. In this activity you will explore many aspects of Robinson's career. To begin, let's look at the man and the world back in 1947 when he entered the game. Visit the "Jackie Robinson Home Page" at <http://www.usatoday.com/sports/baseball/sbjackie.htm>.

- Compose a brief biography about Jackie Robinson, making sure to include:
  - ✓ Full name
  - ✓ Family background
  - ✓ Team and number
  - ✓ Significance of his role in baseball
- Be sure to scroll down the page and select some additional topics to fill in more information about his life. (You may want to print the information and work on his biography off-line.)  
Places to explore are:
  - ✓ Family information: "Wife Rachel saw substance of character long before rest of country"
  - ✓ His courage: "Breaking color barrier tested Robinson's courage"
  - ✓ Facts: "Fifty tidbits about the man who integrated baseball"
  - ✓ His influence on Civil Rights movement: "Robinson helped Civil Rights movement"
  - ✓ His salary: "Robinson didn't strike it rich from baseball"

### **ACTIVITY #3: STADIUM STATS**

The first ballpark opened in Brooklyn, New York, in 1862. Admission was only 10 cents. Things have certainly changed since 1862. Today, baseball stadiums around the country offer luxury skyboxes, gourmet food, and many other perks to keep fans comfortable while watching their favorite team. In this activity you will explore ballparks finding their seating capacities, location, and interesting trivia about each ballpark. Have fun as you travel around the US and Canada exploring ballparks!

To begin your search go to the Web page "Ballparks" at <http://www.ballparks.com/baseball.html>. On the left frame of the screen, choose a division. At the bottom of the screen, select a specific ballpark to explore. Click on your choice. Explore 5 different ballparks and find the following information about each of them.

<i>Name of Stadium</i>	<i>Address, Phone Number</i>	<i>Home Team</i>	<i>Seating Capacity</i>	<i>Trivia</i>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

Complete the following activities.

- Locate and label each stadium on a map of North America.
- Make a bar graph comparing the seating capacity of each stadium.

#### **ACTIVITY #4: TEAM HISTORIES**

Each baseball team has a unique story about how it got started. Did you know there have been 80 baseball teams representing their cities that have come and gone? In this activity, you will investigate the history of a team of your choice.

- To begin go to the Web site, "Team Histories - Introduction" at [http://www.totalbaseball.com/nav/History/Tmhi\\_def.htm](http://www.totalbaseball.com/nav/History/Tmhi_def.htm). On the left side of the screen you will see a list of teams, both National and American League. Click on one that you want to explore. As you read the information about the team you selected, find:
  - ✓ Important dates and highlights
  - ✓ When the franchise was started
  - ✓ When it moved from one city to another
- After gathering at least 10 important dates or happenings, create a flow chart of the events. Be sure to put them in chronological order so they are easy to follow.
- When you are finished you can explore other leagues too.

#### **ACTIVITY #5: IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR**

Baseball is an American tradition and also a family affair. Families often attend baseball games together, but you would be amazed to find out how many families actually play baseball together. In the major leagues over the years many fathers and sons have played the game, as well as grandfathers and grandsons. In this activity you will explore pairs of players from the same family.

- To begin your search go to the Web page "Baseball Families" at <http://www.totalbaseball.com/nav/player/introfam.htm>.
- Explore the different players and their family relationships.

- Create a family tree for each pair. It should be a visual representation of the different relationships and the specific players who have those relationships. On the family tree, put the name of the team for which they played.
- Did any family pairs play in the same division, play on the same team, and/or wear the same uniform? If so, who were they?

### **ACTIVITY #6: A PLAYER BY ANY OTHER NAME**

Nicknames in baseball are not unusual. In fact, most players have nicknames. Some nicknames were given because of things done that related to baseball, while others have little or nothing to do with baseball. In this activity you will explore the origins of many players' nicknames.

- To begin your search for nicknames, go to the Web page "Baseball Nicknames" at <http://www.totalbaseball.com/story/person/player/nickname.htm>.
- Create a list of the 10 most unusual nicknames. Why are these so unusual? Provide reasons to support your choices. Are most of these nicknames related to baseball or not?
- Create an alphabetical list of the nicknames you found. Is there one for each letter? For those letters that do not have a nickname, create one!

### **ACTIVITY #7: CASEY AT BAT AND CASEY AFTER THAT!**

The poem "Casey at Bat" has been a favorite baseball poem for years. In the original poem, Casey strikes out and there is no joy in Mudville.

- Go to the Web page "Casey at Bat" at <http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us/USR/PHS/M-Possible/baseball/caseyatthebat.htm> to read the poem. Write a new ending. Make the outcome different than in the original poem.
- When you have finished with your ending, go to the Web page "Casey After That" at <http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us/USR/PHS/M-Possible/baseball/caseyafterthat.htm>. How was that outcome different? Was that ending more like the one you wrote?
- To read about the background of the poem, including information about the Mudville 9, go to the Web page "Cosmic Baseball Association - Casey at Bat" at <http://www.clark.net/pub/cosmic/catb1.html>.
  - ✓ List the members of the Mudville 9.
  - ✓ Prepare a brief biography of Casey.
  - ✓ Describe the author of the poem.
  - ✓ In what year was the poem written?

## **ACTIVITY #8: THE NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME**

The National Baseball Museum and Hall of Fame honors baseball's All Time Greats. The Hall of Fame opened in 1936, and since that time over 200 players have been elected. In this activity you will find out more about the Hall of Fame and select players whom you think deserve this great honor.

To start your research go to "The National Baseball Museum and Hall of Fame" at [http://enews.com/bas\\_hall\\_fame/overview.html](http://enews.com/bas_hall_fame/overview.html).

- Where is the Baseball Hall of Fame located? Mark this on your map.
- When was it dedicated?
- What was its purpose?
- What can visitors expect to see there?
- When is it open?
- How much is its entry fee?
- Estimate how far away you live from the National Baseball Hall of Fame. How long would it take you to get there?
- Take the information you have gathered and create a brochure for travellers about the Hall of Fame.

After reading about the Hall of Fame, find out how players are selected. Visit the Web page "Members of the National Baseball Hall of Fame" at [http://www.enews.com/bas\\_hall\\_fame/members/members.html](http://www.enews.com/bas_hall_fame/members/members.html).

- How are players selected?
- Who votes?
- What players are candidates for future induction?
- Why are Shoeless Joe Jackson and Pete Rose not members of the Hall of Fame?
- What players would you vote to add to the Hall of Fame? Why? Write a letter to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Committee nominating a player of your choice. Give reasons why he or she should be inducted.