

Teacher's Guide for COBBLESTONE *LET'S PLAY BALL*

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By Linda M. Andersen, School Counselor at Eastover-Central Elementary School in Fayetteville, North Carolina

Goal: to present an overview of America's love of baseball and the positive influence the sport has had on our country's tolerance of color and gender differences.

*Always have a parent or adult you trust help you research websites.

"Play Ball" by Robert S. Fay and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 2-4)

Pre-reading: Look at the pictures, the captions, and the title. What is the same about baseball then and now?

Vocabulary Check: intensely, dramatic, awesome, disastrous, etched, identity, cherish, ancestors, wickets, amateur, influenced, formation, potential, standardize, designated, proposed, specified, decreed, permitted, historically, official, popularity, expansion teams, enthusiastic, regiments, association, agreement, denied, professional, and prophetic.

Comprehension Check:

1. Tell how baseball is shared across generations.
2. What are baseball's two closest ancestors?
3. What way did the Knickerbockers standardize baseball.
4. What way of getting out a player was no longer used?
5. What was considered the first official game of baseball?
6. When Cartwright moved west, what influence did he have on the country?
7. Name two other settings where baseball was played.
8. Name the first professional baseball club.
9. What did African American players do when they were not allowed to join major leagues?

Art:

- Draw a poster that shows how baseball started as a club sport and grew to a huge business.

Writing Activity:

- Walt Whitman said, "I see great things in baseball. It's our game—the American game." What response would you have for him?

Research:

- Knickerbocker Rules
- Alexander Joy Cartwright

"Making the Team" by Tom Pfannkoch (Page 4)

Vocabulary Check: economic, occupied, prejudice, racial, diverse, and status.

Comprehension Check:

1. What is meant by social prejudice? What about economic prejudice?
2. During breaks from battle, Civil War soldiers sometimes played baseball. How did this break down some barriers? Explain which barriers.
3. What barrier was slower to break down? When did it occur?

4. Why were soldiers allowed to play baseball?

"The Doubleday Myth" by Andrew Matthews (Page 5)

Pre-reading: Look at the uniform and equipment pictured. What changes have been made? Read the title. What is the Doubleday myth?

Vocabulary Check: origins, enthusiastic, support, shrine, credited, exchange, distinction, and inventor

Comprehension Check:

1. When baseball was celebrating its 100th anniversary, a shrine to baseball was planned. Where was it to be placed and why?
2. Abner Doubleday was said to be the "inventor" of baseball. What was his reaction?
3. Why was Cooperstown, New York chosen as the site for the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum?
4. What did Abner Doubleday do at Fort Sumter, South Carolina?
5. What other Civil War battle did Doubleday survive?
6. How do you feel about "The Doubleday Myth?"

Writing Activity:

- Pretend that you are Abner Doubleday and you have been invited to speak at the opening of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. Write a response declining the invitation.

Research:

- Abner Doubleday (myth and Civil War battles)
- National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum

"Gearing Up" by Duane Damon and Peter Roop (Pages 6-9)

Pre-reading: Look at the photographs, captions, and the title. What kind of gear is featured?

Vocabulary Check: decades, varied, specifics, intended, responded, progressed, cork-centered core, retrieved, tapered, specifications, adapted, particularly, suits, demands, adopted, composite, permitted, urged, mandatory, equipped, realized, required, identical, emerged, debuted, permanently, consistently, artificial turf, inspired, computerized rosters, flashier, and traditions.

Comprehension Check:

1. Name three products that have been used to make home plate.
2. What were some of the disadvantages in balls made of horsehide?
3. Name three pieces of special equipment used in baseball.
4. What caused batting averages to soar?
5. About how many more balls are used in a game today than in earlier games?
6. Why did Arthur Irwin first wear a glove for baseball?
7. What changed players from considering gloves as "unmanly?"
8. Why do you think Fred Thayer made a mask for his team's catcher?
9. Why do you think players were slow to add protective equipment?

Writing Activity:

- Survey friends to determine if they have a metal, composite, or wooden bat. See which is the most common in the group.
- Survey friends to see what position they play in baseball. Also ask which position they would like to play.

Math Skills:

- Price your baseball equipment. Figure the total cost. Offer to help with the purchases. Perhaps extra chores can be assigned or a percentage of your allowance could go toward the costs.

“Batter Up!” by Duane Damon (Page 8)

Vocabulary Check: opposing, defense, array, positioned, rely, retrieve, alternate, and innings.

Comprehension Check:

1. Explain “make the play at first.”
2. What is a strikeout?
3. What would you add to the description of the game of baseball?

“Baseball’s Best” by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 10-11)

Vocabulary Check: inducted, dementia, relieved, deceptively, reputation, potential, innovative, percentage, ancestry, rivals, expensive, and exist.

Comprehension Check:

1. Why were these five players chosen to lead the list of baseball’s best?
2. Name two of Ty Cobb’s personality traits.
3. What is dementia? Why do you think Ty Cobb was “daring to the point of dementia?”
4. How fast was Johnson’s fastball?
5. What nickname honored Babe Ruth at Yankee Stadium?
6. Name another of Christy Mathewson’s careers.
7. How did Honus Wagner earn the nickname “The Flying Dutchman?”
8. Which of these five players is featured on the most expensive collectible baseball card? Why?

Writing/Art Activity:

- Choose favorite traits from any or all of the five featured players. Draw a comic strip or illustration and substitute yourself as the one with all these skills.

“They Just Wanted to Play” by Craig E. Blohm (Pages 13-15)

Pre-reading: Look at the photographs, captions, and the title. What was it like for black players at this time? Why?

Vocabulary Check: segregated, barnstorming, flocked, represent, generations, sectors, bondage, oppressed, racial prejudice, banned, era, attempts, reputation, molded, eventually, defeating, triumphing, depths, operate, basis, promoters, pioneered, artificial, inferior, prospered, exhibitions, counterparts, estimated, stigma, racial discrimination, virtually, ignored, struggled, and integrated.

Comprehension Check:

1. Tell how racial prejudice changed baseball in 1867.
2. What influence did Andrew “Rube” Foster have on baseball?
3. What caused the Negro leagues to stop operating?
4. Explain “barnstorming.”
5. How long was the ball season in the Negro Leagues?
6. Tell how Negro teams eventually moved to major-league ballparks.
7. What did the exhibition games show?
8. Tell about racial discrimination in the Negro Leagues.
9. Tell about Branch Rickey’s offer for Jackie Robinson.
10. What made this a “historical offer?”

11. What happened for baseball after Jackie Robinson became the first black player in the modern major leagues?
12. The picture caption with Ryan Howard, says, "Today, fans appreciate a player such as Ryan Howard for his great talent." What does the author mean?

Research:

- Jim Crow Laws
- Barnstorming
- Jackie Robinson
- Branch Rickey

Art:

- Illustrate Jackie Robinson breaking baseball's color line in 1947.

Writing Activity:

- Pretend to be Jackie Robinson. Write a letter home saying that you have been selected to train for the major leagues.

"Cy Young" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Page 14)

Comprehension Check:

1. Read about Cy Young. What award honors him every year?
2. Tell about Cy Young's record with the Cleveland Spiders.

"An Overdue Honor" by Clay Stites (Pages 16-17)

Pre-reading: Look at the photographs, captions, and the title. Who is finally getting recognized?

Vocabulary Check: denied, inductees, eligible, candidates, compromise, proposed, blazing, laser-beam control, baffling, hesitation, exhibition, barrier, publicity stunt, segregation, public pressure, determined, and belatedly.

Comprehension Check:

1. What does it mean when something is overdue? What other honors are sometimes overdue when they are given?
2. What conflict was Bowie Kuhn facing?
3. Tell about the compromise Kuhn offered.
4. What honor did Leroy "Satchel" Paige receive in 1971?
5. Did Leroy "Satchel" Paige's honor make a difference for other Negro League players? If so, how?
6. Explain how Paige was a "master showman."
7. In the past, the media had often ignored Negro players and leagues. This time, they didn't. How did the media and public pressure influence Bowie Kuhn's decision concerning Leroy "Satchel" Paige?

Writing Activity:

- The author says, "To many people, it seemed as though a "special section" was just another instance of segregation." Write a response to the author.

Research:

- Bowie Kuhn
- Leroy "Satchel" Paige

"Lou Gehrig and Jo DiMaggio" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 16-17)

Vocabulary Check: endurance, consecutive, diagnosed, ultimately, pennant, and experts.

Comprehension Check:

1. Lou Gehrig "took himself out of the game due to increasingly poor health." What is your reaction to that?
2. Tell about the famous speech Lou Gehrig gave.
3. Tell about Joe DiMaggio selection to the All-Star Games.
4. What do some baseball experts say about DiMaggio?

Research:

- ALS (known as Lou Gehrig's disease)

"Classy Athletes" by Sue Macy (Pages 18-19)

Pre-reading: Look at the photographs, captions, and title. What do you know about the first women's professional baseball?

Vocabulary Check: furnish, severe pressure, recreation, permanently, substitute, competitive, impression, separated, expanded, folded, economic, invention, offered, and amateur.

Comprehension Check:

1. Why do you think the author chose to call these women classy athletes?
2. What was hurting Major League Baseball?
3. What were two of Wrigley's fears?
4. Tell about the popularity of women's softball.
5. What did women attend who were selected for baseball? Why?
6. Tell how the rules of women's games changed over time.
7. What eventually caused attendance to fall off at women's games?
8. Baseball is not offered on a professional level for women today. Do you think that may change one day? Why or why not?
9. What other baseball or softball options are available today?
10. How long did the league exist?

Research:

- Philip K. Wrigley (started the nation's first women's professional baseball league)
- Dorothy Maguire
- Jenny Finch

Writing Activity:

- Send a postcard message home to a friend after tryouts to say that you had been selected for the women's baseball league.

"For the Kids" by Andrew Matthews (Page 20)

Pre-reading: Look at the photograph and the caption. What are other benefits of playing Little League?

Vocabulary Check: contact, prone, discrimination, legislation, officially, established, and sportsmanship.

Comprehension Check:

1. How big has Little League become?

2. How did Little League change in 1972?
3. What happened when the Little League National Headquarters put an end to Maria Pepe's baseball career?
4. What was the legal outcome for girls?
5. What president once played Little League?

Research:

- Babe Ruth League
- Little League Baseball (international level)
- Maria Pepe
- Little League Softball

Art:

- Draw yourself at a Little League game. Where are you? In the dugout, on the field, in the bleachers? Why did you choose that location?

Writing Activity:

- Make a chart about The Benefits of Little League. Make two categories: Baseball Skills and Friendship Skills. Complete the chart.
- Write a thank you note to a coach, even if you have never played for Little League.

"Just for Fun" (Page 21)

Vocabulary Check: tradition, installed, permanent, aired, doubleheader, indignantly, variations, clockwise, counterclockwise, and situation.

Comprehension Check:

1. Why do we have All-Star Games today?
2. What change allowed ball games to be played more hours?
3. What direction did players run the bases in early years?

Math Skills:

1. How old is the World Series?
2. How much more money did Babe Ruth make than Herbert Hoover in 1930?
3. How much older is the World Series than the first All-Star Game?
4. How long has Major League Baseball been on television?

Writing Activity:

- Pretend to be President Hoover. Write a response to Babe Ruth's comment.
- Pretend to be Whitey Ford. Respond to Manager Casey Stengel about "what kind of stuff" you had that day.

"Jimmie Foxx, Rogers Hornsby, and Ted Williams" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 20-22)

Vocabulary Check: disqualified, consecutive, captured, and despite.

Comprehension Check:

1. Tell about Jimmie Foxx's 1932 season. Whose record did he nearly break?
2. What was Rogers Hornsby's strength? How good was he?
3. What interrupted Ted Williams' baseball career? What was his strength?

"Baseball Across America" illustrated by Judith Karst (Pages 22-23)

Vocabulary Check: franchise, expansion, and divisions.

Comprehension Check:

1. What do you think about the spread of baseball?
2. What do you predict the future map of baseball teams will look like? Why?
3. Is there a flag in your state? More than one?
4. Have you ever been to a Major League Baseball game? Tell about it.
5. Choose a state that has a flag. Find the name of the team's league.

"Did You Know?" illustrated by Chris Ware (Pages 24-25)

Vocabulary Check: opposing, energize, overcome, shyness, replaced, introduced, instant, tribute, and debut.

Comprehension Check:

1. What are team mascots known to do?
2. Who sometimes selects mascots' names?
3. Seattle Mariner fans played a big part in selecting their mascot. Tell about it.
4. What mischief does the San Francisco Giant's mascot perform?
5. Raymond Ray is the mascot for the Tampa Bay Rays. What kind of animal is he?

Writing Activity:

- Choose two of the mascots listed here. Pretend they spend time together after a baseball game. What do you think they would enjoy doing together? Write about it.
- If two of the mascots featured here ran into each other so hard that they saw stars, what might they say or do in response?
- Raymond Ray is a cross between a walrus and a manatee. What would you get if you crossed two of these mascots? Tell about it.

"Cool Cards" by Andrew Matthews (Pages 26-27)

Pre-reading: Look at the pictures, captions, and title. Early cards and cards today--what has not changed about baseball cards?

Vocabulary Check: popularity, marketing, inserts, issuing, tradition, inclusion, standard, portraits, departed, valuable, advertisement, expensive, and contained.

Comprehension Check:

1. What type of business is thought to have produced the first baseball cards?
2. What other products were sold along with baseball cards?
3. What age people are most interested in collecting baseball cards? How did that change what was packaged with cards?
4. Is it possible to buy baseball cards with candy and gum today?
5. Card collection is now a business of its own. What is meant by this?
6. What did a 1909 Honus Wagner baseball card recently sell for at an auction? Why so much?

Math Skills:

- What is the difference in the cost of a pack of baseball cards today and when they first were sold?

Writing Activity:

- Write a fan letter to your favorite major league player.
- Write a fan letter to another major league player you want to cheer for.

"Calling All Collectors" by Phillips Runyon III (Page 27)

Vocabulary Check: suspenseful, expensive, duplicates, specific, mint, consult, experts, protective sleeve, and enthusiasts.

Comprehension Check:

1. What do collectors call duplicate cards?
2. How do you follow the value of baseball cards?
3. What do experts and new collectors have in common?
4. Do you prefer buying complete sets or smaller, individual packs?

Writing Activity:

- Write about a time you traded a baseball card or some other collectible with someone.
- Write about a time you gave someone baseball cards as a gift.

"Stan Musial" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Page 26)

Vocabulary Check: amazingly, selected, and conversations.

Comprehension Check:

1. What did Jason Stark, ESPN sportswriter, say about Stan Musial?
2. How do you think Stan Musial probably got his nickname, "the Man?"

Math Skills:

- How many hits has Stan Musial gotten at home games? At away games?

"Traditions of the Game" by Peg Lopata (Pages 28-31)

Pre-reading: Look at the pictures, the subtopics, and the title. How many of these traditions can you recognize without reading the article? Name them.

Vocabulary Check: traditions, vaudeville, lyrics, privacy, supposedly, spectators, documented, explanation, afforded, relaxation, root, bellow, disapproving, disapproval, witnessed, expressing, concoction, exposition, popularity, linked, invaluable, marketing boost, munchies, mentioned, mysterious, argue, immigrant, claims, combo, refused, literary, generations, memorized, description, connected, and intensity.

Comprehension Check:

1. When is "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" sung at major league games?
2. Tell the creation details for the lyrics and music to "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."
3. What does it mean to "take five in the seventh?"
4. Who may have started the seventh-inning stretch?
5. What does it mean to "root" for your team?
6. What does it mean to "boo" someone?
7. What is another name for a "raspberry" or "razz?" What does it mean?
8. What helped make Cracker Jack popcorn popular?
9. When hot dogs were first sold on the street, they did not come in a bun. Why did the tradition change?
10. Why didn't Ernest L. Thayer want to claim ownership of his poem "Casey at the Bat?"
11. Why did some Americans memorize the poem "Casey at the Bat?"

Writing Activity:

- Choose a tradition listed that you didn't know and write notes about it. Tell it to someone.

"Warren Spahn, Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 28-31)

Vocabulary Check: enlisted, talented, championships, rookie, abilities, excelled, and tallied.

Comprehension Check:

1. Tell which position Warren Spahn played when he was growing up. What did he play when he joined the baseball leagues?
2. What does it mean to be "a naturally talented athlete?" Who was described that way?
3. Willie Mays was more than a superstar according to his manager. What else was he?

"And the Winner Is..." by Tom Pfannkoch, illustrated by Jeremy Ruiz (Pages 32-34)

Pre-reading: Look at the pictures, the subtopics, and the title. What do you think the article is about?

Vocabulary Check: incredible, aspects, regardless, coveted, expanded, slugger, statistics, fantastic, commemorated, analysts, deemed, recipients, and initially.

Comprehension Check:

1. Who is considered for the Rawlings Gold Glove Award?
2. Where did Louisville Silver Slugger Award get its name?
3. What is another name for the Rookie of the Year Award?
4. Who selects the winner of the Hank Aaron Award?
5. Why would an award be coveted?
6. What is the most well-known and coveted award?
7. What skill does the Cy Young Award recognize?
8. Why is the Triple Crown so difficult to earn?

Writing Activity:

- Pretend you could see one of these awards. Which one would it be? Write about seeing it.
- Pretend you could meet one of the award winners. Who would it be? Make a list of three questions you would ask him.

"Bob Gibson" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Page 34)

Vocabulary Check: astonishing and consecutive

Comprehension Check:

1. What fact about Bob Gibson impressed you the most?
2. Tell about Bob Gibson's 1968 season.

"Do You Speak Baseball?" by Andrew Matthews (Page 35)

Vocabulary Check: salami, barnstorm, origin, bullpen, relief pitchers, and established.

Comprehension Check:

1. How did the "bullpen" get its name?
2. Which of these funny sayings or phrases is your favorite? Why?
3. Which funny or phrase is one you did not know before?
4. Pick two or more sayings you think a friend may not know. Ask him the meaning of each.

"The Call of Cooperstown" by Meg Chorlian (Pages 36-38)

Pre-reading: Look at the photographs, captions, and the title. Why do baseball fans go to Cooperstown, New York?

Vocabulary Check: interactive, devoted, plaque, eligible, induction, integrity, and selection.

Comprehension Check:

1. What does the author mean by the "call of Cooperstown?"
2. What makes the theater's short film about baseball feel real?
3. Who would you rather hit like— Ted Williams or Babe Ruth? Why?
4. Where can league standings be found?
5. How are names posted in the Hall of Fame?

Writing Activity:

- Write about your favorite part of the tour of the National Baseball Hall of Fame.
- If you had one extra ticket to tour the Hall of Fame, who would you invite? Write the words you would say to invite your guest.

"Hank Aaron, Roberto Clemente, and Johnny Bench" by Marcia Amidon Lusted and Tom Pfannkoch (Pages 37-39)

Vocabulary Check: exploits, recipient, compassion, distribution, exception, exemplifies, compiled, excelled, and resume.

Comprehension Check:

1. Who broke Babe Ruth's home run record and kept the record for thirty years?
2. Who was known for his powerful throwing arm and compassion "greater than his talent?"
3. What impresses you the most about Johnny Bench?
4. What position did Johnny Bench play?

Writing Activity:

- If you could spend your summer traveling to baseball events and sites, where would you go? Make a list.
- Pretend you went to the National Baseball hall of Fame. Write a postcard you'd send a friend. Tell about what you especially liked.

Research:

- www.baseballhall.org (The National Baseball Hall of Fame)

"Just for Fun, Part 2 (Page 39)

Vocabulary Check: grand slam, consecutive, no-hitter, unique, and unassisted.

Comprehension Check:

1. Tell how Fernando Tatis made history.
2. What is an inside-the-park grand slam? Who hit this?
3. Who was the last player to win the Triple Crown?
4. What record did Nolan Ryan set?
5. What record did Bill Wambsganss set?

Research:

- What is one of your favorite baseball facts? Find proof. Look in a book about baseball, on a baseball card, on the National Baseball Hall of Fame’s website, etc.

“International Appeal” by Marcia Amidon Lusted, illustrated by Bryan Langdo (Pages 40-41)

Pre-reading: Look at the pictures, subtopics, and title. What can you say about interest in baseball?

Vocabulary Check: international, Venezuela, entrepreneur, Maracaibo, popularity, immigrants, recruited, remains, cultural, Caribbean, Dominican Republic, adopted, unpopular, ammunition, rivals, sumo wrestling, and unofficial.

Comprehension Check:

1. What does the author mean by “a true World Series?”
2. In what country has baseball been popular for over 100 years?
3. In what country were players from the American Negro Leagues recruited to play?
4. Where have hundreds of players been recruited from to play on major-league teams in the United States?
5. In 1895, what kind of game did Venezuela report baseball as being?
6. Why did it take a while for baseball to be played by people in Venezuela?
7. What changed the popularity of baseball in Venezuela?
8. Describe the way baseball players dressed in the 1870s in Japan.
9. Tell about baseball in Japan today. What is the reaction of the fans?

Writing Activity:

- Pretend to be in Japan and asked to play a game of baseball with Japanese players in wooden sandals and traditional clothing. Tell about it.

Research:

- Baseball in Japan
- Baseball in Venezuela
- Baseball in the Dominican Republic
- An American major league baseball player who came from Japan.
- An American major league baseball player who came from Venezuela
- An American major league baseball player who came from the Dominican Republic. (none were named here)

“Changing Baseball” by Dennis Denenberg (Page 47)

Vocabulary Check: innovative, influences, instilled, achievements, stern conscience, stemmed, significant, decades, convinced, racial discrimination, and facilities.

Comprehension Check:

1. How did the mystery hero’s parents influence him?
2. How did the mystery hero stand up for a black player who was not allowed to stay in the team’s motel?
3. Why did this mystery hero develop minor-league farm clubs?
4. How did the mystery hero change major-league baseball?
5. What do you think Dr. Dennis Denenberg means when he says that this is “a hero worth knowing?”

Research:

- Major-league managers (mystery hero)
- Jackie Robinson (first black athlete to play in the major leagues)

"Bleacher Seats" by Montanna Rogers (Page 48)

Vocabulary Check: spectators, exposed, constantly, intense, and sources.

Comprehension Check:

1. Name two causes of bleaching?
2. Define bleachers, using early sources.
3. Name two things bleached by the light and heat of the sun.

Writing Activity:

- Pretend to have a baseball cap autographed by your favorite ball player. Would you wear it to practices and games and take a chance of it fading or would you keep it in a box out of the light and save it? Write what you would do and why.

"A Mascot With Moves" (Back Cover)

Pre-reading: Look at the photograph and the title. Can you tell from the shirt what kind of mascot he is?

Vocabulary Check: mascots, criteria, phanatic, absolutely, devoted, exhibits, incredible, complement, amuse, enormous, clumsy, energetic, roly-poly, and antics.

Comprehension Check:

1. What exactly does the Phillie Phanatic (mascot) love to do?
2. What should prevent Phanatic from being a good dancer? Does it?
3. What kinds of mischief has he done?
4. The author says, "It's hard to say what exactly the Phanatic is." Why?

Writing Activity:

- Write a fan letter to a major league mascot. Tell why you are a fan.