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Unit 1 Overview

Baseball

Theme Summary

It's one, two, three strikes you're out at the old ball game! Students will read and respond to one of the most well-known poems about baseball and read a nonfiction text about the history of America's favorite pastime. This pair of texts is sure to be a home run!

Answer Key

"Baseball's Beginnings" Response (page 13)

1. D. the Knickerbocker Baseball Club
2. The first team to score 21 runs, won the game.
3. The rules of baseball are still changing to keep the players safe and the game fair.

"Casey at the Bat" Response (page 16)

1. D. a baseball
2. The poet uses figurative language in stanza four when he writes, *tore the cover off the ball* and *Flynn a-hugging third*.
3. The poet uses words and phrases such as *a sneer curled Casey's lip* and *haughty grandeur* to describe Casey's confident nature.

Let's Compare! Changing Rules (page 17)

Students' answers should include the following text from the poem:

1. *the Mudville nine*
2. *"Strike one," the umpire said. . . . and the umpire said, "Strike two." . . . the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow . . . mighty Casey has struck out.*
3. *Cooney died at first (1), and Barrows did the same (2), mighty Casey has struck out (3)*
4. *"Strike one," the umpire said.*

Standards

- Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
- Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Materials


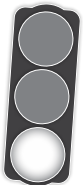



- Baseball's Beginnings* (pages 12–13)
- "Baseball's Beginnings" Response* (page 13)
- Casey at the Bat* (pages 15–16)
- "Casey at the Bat" Response* (page 16)
- Let's Compare! Changing Rules* (page 17)
- Thinking About Baseball!* (page 18)
- pencils
- highlighters

Comparing the Texts

After students complete the lessons for each text, have them work in pairs or in groups to reread both texts and complete the *Let's Compare! Changing Rules* activity page (page 17). Finally, students can complete the *Thinking About Baseball!* matrix (page 18). The activities allow students to work on the important literacy skills of reading, writing, vocabulary, and fluency.

Nonfiction Text Teacher Notes

Baseball's Beginnings

| | Lesson Steps | Teacher Think Alouds |
|---|---|---|
|  <p>Ready, Set, Predict!</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the title of the text with students. Ask them to use prior knowledge to quickly list what they already know about baseball. • Instruct students to turn to partners and share their lists. | <p>"Before I begin to read a text, I stop and think of all the things I already know about the topic of the text. This helps me to better understand what I am about to read."</p> |
|  <p>Go!</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the text to students and display a larger version. Have them silently read the text to begin to understand the content and to box words they want to know more about. • Read the text aloud as students follow along. • Review how punctuation affects how the text is read. Then, reread the first two paragraphs aloud to students, emphasizing the punctuation. | <p>"Do you notice how I pause for commas? Do you hear how my voice goes higher at the end of the sentence with a question mark? Do you sense the excitement in my voice when I reach an exclamation point?"</p> |
|  <p>Reread to Clarify</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to reread the text in small groups to clarify. Instruct them to circle at least five words or sentences they find challenging. • Have groups discuss the tricky or confusing words and any strategies they used to clarify the words using the following: <i>The word/sentence _____ is tricky, so I _____</i> (e.g., <i>reread, read on</i>). | <p>"The word <i>cadet</i> is tricky, so I look it up in the dictionary. It says, 'a student at a military school.' This helps me understand another tricky word, <i>academy</i>. West Point Military Academy must be a type of school."</p> |
|  <p>Reread to Question</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students to reread to question. Explain that good writers use evidence to support the points they make in a text. Provide students with paper. Have them draw simple baseball diamonds with four plates (home, first, second, and third). At home plate, have students write questions about the text such as <i>Why does the author think that Doubleday did not invent baseball?</i> Ask students to write three pieces of evidence from the text, one at each base, to answer the questions. • Have students respond to the question and prompts on page 13. | |
|  <p>Reread to Summarize and Respond</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to reread the text to summarize. Invite them to share anything new they learned about baseball from reading the text. • Have students add these items to the lists they made at the beginning of the lesson. | |

***Note:** For more tips, engagement strategies, and fluency options to include in this lesson, see pages 122–128.

Baseball's Beginnings

Take a bat, a ball, a glove, and a warm summer day. Put them all together, and you've got the great game of baseball!

But baseball hasn't always existed. Who invented the game? Who wrote the rules? As far as we know, games with sticks, balls, and bases have been played for centuries. Baseball seems to have grown naturally from these games. It wasn't invented by just one person. Many people think that it came from the two British games called rounders and cricket. As early as the 1700s, people were playing some form of these games.

People today usually think that Abner Doubleday invented baseball. It's no wonder. After Doubleday died, a man named Abner Graves claimed he saw Doubleday invent the game in 1839. He said that Doubleday made the first baseball diamond in a field in Cooperstown, New York. The trouble is that Doubleday was a cadet at West Point military academy in 1839. He was not in Cooperstown, and he didn't have time for baseball. Also, Doubleday left many journals when he died. He doesn't mention baseball in any of them. A 1911 encyclopedia article about Doubleday doesn't mention baseball, either. A man named Alexander Cartwright is the one who probably did all the things Doubleday was given credit for.

Of course, to be a real game that everyone can play in the same way wherever they go, there must be standard rules. In 1845, an amateur team in New York decided to write the rules of baseball. And that's where the rest of baseball's history begins.

In 1842, a group called the New York Knickerbockers started getting together to play baseball. They were young professionals who liked to play the game. In 1845, they formed the Knickerbocker Baseball Club and decided to write the rules for baseball. Led by Daniel L. "Doc" Adams, they wrote down the rules. This allowed everyone who played baseball to play the game in the same way.



Baseball's Beginnings *(cont.)*

The earliest rules for baseball included two teams of nine players each. They played on a baseball square with a base at each corner. The batter's base was called home. Bats could be any size or shape. The batter was out with three strikes or if the hit ball was caught with one or no bounces. There were three outs for each side in an inning. Runners could be tagged or forced out. Each team got an equal number of turns at bat. The winning team was the first to score 21 runs, the original name for runs. Later, an umpire was named as the judge during play.

Over time, the rules for baseball have changed a bit. Safety is very important, so officials study new bats, balls, and helmets to make sure they are safe. They also work hard to make the game fair to all players. The rules of baseball are still changing today!



"Baseball's Beginnings" Response

Directions: Reread the text on pages 12–13 to answer each question.

1. Who wrote the rules of baseball in 1845?
- (A) Abner Doubleday
 - (B) Alexander Cartwright
 - (C) Abner Graves
 - (D) the Knickerbocker Baseball Club

2. In the earliest rules of baseball, how did a team win a game?

3. According to the text, why are the rules of baseball still changing today?

Let's Compare!

Changing Rules

Directions: Read the list of early baseball rules mentioned in “Baseball’s Beginnings.” Compare the rules to the actions in the poem “Casey at the Bat.” Does each rule apply to the poem? Use evidence from the text to support your answers.

| Early Rules | Text Evidence |
|---|---------------|
| <p>1. Each team had nine players.</p> | |
| <p>2. The batter was out with three strikes.</p> | |
| <p>3. There were three outs in an inning.</p> | |
| <p>4. The umpire was the judge during play.</p> | |

