



Negro Leagues Baseball Museum

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They Were All Stars: An Introduction and Overview of Negro Leagues Baseball

Key Features of Powerful Teaching and Learning:

(National Council for the Social Studies: "A vision of Powerful Teaching and Learning in the Social Studies: Building Social Understanding and Civic Efficacy.")

<http://www.socialstudies.org/positions/powerful/>)

Meaningful: This lesson focuses on American history from 1880-1960, with special emphasis on 1920-1950.

Integrated: Students will engage the material using traditional means and technology.

Value-based: Students will learn and discuss the value of diversity.

Challenging: Students will come to understand the social conditions and race relations of American history in the first half of the 20th Century.

Active: Students will engage their listening skills for accuracy in gathering information.

Purpose/Rational/Introduction: This lesson will offer a general introduction and overview of African American baseball history, with the focus on Negro Leagues baseball, its major events, and important historical figures. The lesson can supplement materials while studying United States history from the Civil War to World War II.

Objectives:

1. Students will gain a basic knowledge of Negro Leagues baseball.
2. Students will identify the important individuals and events associated with Negro Leagues baseball history.
3. Students will be able to identify key vocabulary related to this period of American segregation.

Materials/Primary Resources:

- *They Were All Stars* (16 Minutes), Negro Leagues Baseball Museum and First Generation video, 1997.

Grade Level: 9-12

Subject: Social Studies

Standards

NCSS Standards: I, II, III, V

ISTE Standards: 2, 3, 5

Missouri Standards: 2, 5, 6

Time Allotment: 1-2. fifty minutes sessions

- Handout review worksheet (attached)
- *The Biographical Encyclopedia of the Negro Baseball Leagues*, by James Riley
- www.nlbm.com, www.baseballlibrary.com, www.baseballhalloffame.org, www.mlb.com.

Procedures & Activities:

Opening Activity [5-10 minutes]

- Ask students to write a list of some of their favorite or well know athletic personalities.
- Students can be motivated by “sports related” music playing in the background. (optional—*Jock Jams vol. 1*, *Jock Rocks*, or *Baseball’s Greatest Hits*)
- Review the lists with the class and ask each why they chose that person. Create a list on the chalkboard or a pad for everyone to see. You may list them in general order or, if you have enough familiarity with the athletes, separate the list based on the person’s ethnicity.
- Make a point after the list is complete to note which players are minorities.
- Critical thinking—Ask students to imagine how they could enjoy these sports without the presence of the minority individuals? Ask them to try to imagine the minority players not being able to compete with and against the majority players listed in particular sports? Gather their feedback.
- Transition into the next activity by explaining that there was a time when separate opportunities existed for athletes to compete. Baseball was one of the most significant sports that, because of laws and social mores, was segregated.
- Show the film and review the handout (20-25 minutes). ***Note to students that they need to pay close attention to the film in order to complete the worksheet. Much of the information appears rather quickly.***
- After discussion, use the *Biographical Encyclopedia* and the web sites listed in the primary resources section to find additional information about the names featured on the worksheet. (10 minutes)

Use the following for lesson and discussion:

Show the film *They Were All Stars* (16:00 minutes) to the class. The film will give students a general overview of Negro Leagues baseball history, major events and major individuals involved. During the viewing, students will complete a worksheet featuring names of important people featured in the film. Students will match the names to the descriptions of the people in the film.

As the class reviews the worksheet, the teacher should promote further dialogue and discussion of the history. Students will then be assigned to retrieve additional information on the individuals using the websites listed in the primary resources section.

Using the web sites, the students should focus in on these key points:

- What was the person’s full name?
- When and where was the person born?
- When and where did the person die?
- List of 3-5 points of interesting information about this person and why they are significant.

Conclusion:

Review the names and terms most noted with Negro Leagues baseball history.

Extension and Enrichment:

Students could be given additional resources to write a short biographical paper on one of the individuals discussed in the lesson.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed on class discussion and class participation.

Alternate Assessment:

Students could work in groups to complete the web and book assignment. Grade them on abilities to team and divide responsibilities for research.

Resources for Diverse Learners:

On the web assignment, limit select students to three specific individual names, one web site to research, or just limit students to the use of the *Biographical Encyclopedia*. They could also be limited to two information points about each person researched.

They Were All Stars

Negro Leagues Baseball Film Review Worksheet

“Cool Pap” Bell
“Rube” Foster
“Satchel” Paige
Gus Greenlee
J.L. Wilkinson

Branch Rickey
Jackie Robinson
Josh Gibson
Larry Doby
Moses “Fleetwood” Walker

Match the names below with their description from the film

1. The first black to play in the “Major Leagues” in 1887 was _____ . Baseball would soon become segregated again for 60 years.

2. The man behind the creation of the first Negro Leagues in 1920 was _____ .

3. _____ was the white owner of the Kansas City Monarchs.

4. In 1933 _____ revived the Negro Leagues after they folded during the Great Depression.

5. The best pitcher in Negro Leagues baseball was _____ , _____ was the best hitter in Negro Leagues baseball.

6. The best base stealer and runner in the Negro Leagues was _____ .

7. _____ was the general manager for the Brooklyn Dodgers, the team that would sign the first Black player in modern times.

8. The player who signed with the National League Brooklyn Dodgers, breaking the segregation of Major League baseball was _____.

9. _____ was the second player to integrate baseball in the American League.

ANSWER KEY

They Were All Stars Negro Leagues Baseball Film Review Worksheet

Match the names below with their description from the film

“Cool Pap” Bell
“Rube” Foster
“Satchel” Paige
Gus Greenlee
J.L. Wilkinson

Branch Rickey
Jackie Robinson
Josh Gibson
Larry Doby
Moses “Fleetwood” Walker

1. The first black to play in the “Major Leagues” in 1887 was **MOSES “FLEETWOOD” WALKER**. Baseball would soon become segregated again for 60 years.
2. The man behind the creation of the first Negro Leagues in 1920 was **“RUBE” FOSTER**.
3. **J.L. WILKINSON** was the white owner of the Kansas City Monarchs.
4. In 1933, **GUS GREENLEE** revived the Negro Leagues after they folded during the Great Depression.
5. The best pitcher in Negro Leagues baseball was **“SATCHEL” PAIGE**.
6. **JOSH GIBSON** was the best hitter in Negro Leagues baseball.
6. The best base stealer and runner in the Negro Leagues was **“COOL PAPA” BELL**.
7. **BRANCH RICKEY** was the general manager for the Brooklyn Dodgers, the team that would sign the first Black player in modern times.

8. The player who signed with the National League Brooklyn Dodgers, breaking the segregation of Major League baseball was **JACKIE ROBINSON**.

9. **LARRY DOBY** was the second player to integrate baseball in the American League.