



**Negro Leagues Baseball Museum**

**eMuseum**

**Electronic Resources for Teachers**

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## **The National Pastime, 1940-1950 (PBS Home Video)**

### **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:** Emphasizes how baseball affected social and political issues of the time.

**Value-based:** Students will understand the importance of integrating baseball and its impact upon society's norms.

**Challenging:** Student groups will discuss the national and international impact baseball had upon the war and the culture of America during WWII.

**Active:** Students will work cooperatively in groups and identify historically significant events and baseball players' contributions to write and produce song lyrics reflecting the significance/contributions of this historical period.

**Purpose/Rationale/Introduction:** Students will understand the impact baseball had politically and culturally upon the nation and the world from 1940-1950. Students will learn about, discuss, and take notes about historically significant events and baseball players' contributions during this time.

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will understand what was happening historically in baseball and the world from 1940-1950.
2. Students will be able to identify and discuss significant historical events and the contributions of baseball players politically and culturally from 1940-1950.
3. Students will critically think about history and baseball's impact to write and produce a song reflecting a historical event or baseball's contribution during this time.

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Subject:** Social Studies

### **Standards:**

NCSS Standards: I, II, III, IV, V, IX, X

ISTE Standards: 2, 3, 4

Missouri Standards: 2, 5, 6

**Time allotment:** 3, sixty minute time periods

**Materials/Primary Resources:**

VHS video player and television set

*National Pastime 1940-1950*: PBS Home Video

Student Handout

Joltin' Joe Dimaggio lyrics:

<http://www.baseball-almanac.com/poetry/joltinjoedimaggio.shtml>

**Procedures & Activities:**

Show students the video *National Pastime 1940-1950*. Students will take notes on the provided handout throughout the video. The teacher should stop the video at the following times and lead the class in a discussion and/or completion of the required question(s). The title of the video section is listed first, followed by the section discussion prompt(s) and/or question(s).

Introduction:

Q: There is a war occurring, what war? Who was fighting in this war and why?

Baseball:

Q: What was happening in the U.S. and around the world at this time?

Discuss: There are signs in the ballpark stating, "In case of air raid follow arrow" and "Buy war bonds" What do these signs mean? Why are these signs posted in the ballpark?

A Summer of Heroes:

Discuss the political climate in the summer of 1941- i.e. Hitler controlled all of France, FDR's speech in May promising to go to war if need be.

Q: Why was Joe DiMaggio voted the greatest American of all time over Washington and Lincoln by a history class?

The Joy Zone:

Q: What is "The Joy Zone"?

Q: What contributions did Ted Williams bring to baseball?

Q: What were the Dodgers like during this time?

Q: Did Dodger fans fit the team image? Why or why not?

War:

Q: What significant historical event occurred on Dec. 7, 1971?

Discuss: The bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Discuss: Which was more important, playing baseball or fighting for your country? Why?

Q: Why were the women baseball players called the "Queens of SWAT"?

Q: Why were women banned in 1952 from ever playing in the M.L.? How does this compare with blacks being banned from playing in the M.L.?

The Answer is No:

Discuss: Judge Landis said there were no written rules or laws prohibiting blacks from playing in the M.L., but how did he ensure the “old gentleman’s agreement” stayed in effect?

Q: It was stated, “If we can stop bullets, why not balls?” What does this statement mean?

Q: Why was Jackie Robinson court marshaled?

Name the two wars Jackie Robinson said he was fighting. 1) Foreign enemy 2) Prejudice at home

Bottom of the Sixth:

In August of 1945 the war ended and the Japanese baseball stadium was cleared of unexploded ammunition and the Japanese were urged to play baseball again to foster democracy. How would baseball foster democracy?

This I Know:

Discuss: Why did a black player say, “If I could just tear off my skin, I’d be like everyone else?” Is this true?

Q: What is bigotry? Give examples during this time.

Q: How did “Happy” Chandler feel about blacks playing in the M.L.?

Discuss: Branch Rickey wanted to integrate baseball for two reasons 1) he believed in fair play 2) He wanted big profits. How would integrating baseball accomplish both of these reasons?

The Race Man:

Q: What types of negative situations did Branch Rickey try on Jackie Robinson?

Q: What did Jackie Robinson have to promise Branch Rickey for three years?

Heartbroken:

Discuss: The Red Sox lost the World Series for the first time in 1918 and didn’t win again until 2004. Why is this period often called “The Curse of the Babe?”

Big League Material:

Q: Baseball had its ups and downs, name two or more things that helped baseball survive through the years.

Discuss: Montreal Royals manager asked, “Do you really think a nigger is a human being?” Why did he say this? Was this how most white people thought during this time? Why or why not?

Q: What negative situations did Jackie Robinson face when he played for the Montreal Royals?

#### He’s Coming:

Discuss: How was the signing of Jackie Robinson to the Dodgers M.L. team the “death nell” for N.L. baseball?

Q: What defining moment in baseball occurred on April 15, 1947?

Discuss: Mario Cuomo asks a number of questions at the end of this section. Stop the film and lead students in a discussion of the questions he asks.

#### Up in the Race:

List some of the negative treatment Jackie Robinson had to deal with.

Discuss: Discuss the meaning of racial slur and what they meant

Q: Who openly spiked Jackie Robinson’s thigh? Why?

Q: Why were N.L. owners concerned about blacks playing in the M.L.s?

#### The Family of Baseball:

Q: Why did Satchel Paige pitch for the Cleveland Indians?

#### So Would the Babe:

Q: Babe Ruth died from what?

**Conclusion:** Lead the class in a recap/discussion of the significant historical events and individual baseball players’ contributions.

**Extension and Enrichment:** Students create their own bat according to the specifications in The Joy Zone. Students can use any materials they wish, but the bat should be created to scale and weight of Ted Williams’s original bat. The bat was 35” long, weighed 34 ounces, had a 7” boned area in the barrel called the Joy zone and a groomed handle. Students could use Styrofoam, floral foam, tin foil and newspaper, cardboard etc. to create replica bats. For further information, students can go to the Louisville Slugger website at <http://www.slugger.com/>, click on create your own personalized bat and see the length and appearance of baseball bats.

**Online Resources:** None

**Secondary Resources:** None

**Assessment:** In A Summer of Heroes there is a song about Joe DiMaggio and in Up in the Race there is a song about Jackie Robinson. Throughout the film music/songs were sung to narrate a story about the different aspects of baseball and history. Now, in groups, you will write a song narrating a historical event, the impact baseball, or a baseball player's contributions had on the nation and/or the world from 1940-1950. Your song will be read or sung to the class.

**Alternate Assessment:** Students create a PSA poster in groups advocating the integration of blacks into M.L. baseball.

## Writing a Musical : National Pastime Song Rubric

Teacher Name: **Social Studies/History**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1	Score
<b>Historical content (pts. x2)</b>	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is supported by accurate detailed information.	Main idea is clear but the supporting information is general or not completely accurate.	Main idea is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information. Most information is inaccurate.	The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random and/or inaccurate collection of information.	
<b>Lyric/Song Fluency</b>	All lyrics sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud. Each line of the song is clear and has an obvious emphasis.	Almost all lyrics sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but 1 or 2 lines are stiff and awkward or difficult to understand.	Most lyrics sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but several lines are stiff and awkward or are difficult to understand.	The lyrics are difficult to read/sing aloud because they sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or difficult to understand.	
<b>Grammar &amp; Spelling (Conventions)</b>	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	
<b>Penmanship (Conventions)</b>	Paper is neatly written or typed with no distracting corrections.	Paper is neatly written or typed with 1 or 2 distracting corrections (e.g., dark cross-outs; bumpy white-out, words written over).	The writing is generally readable, but the reader has to exert quite a bit of effort to figure out some of the words.	Many words are unreadable OR there are several distracting corrections.	
<b>Song lyrics</b>	Writer uses vivid lyrics that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, and the lyrics seems accurate, natural and not forced.	Writer uses vivid lyrics that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, but occasionally the words to the song are used inaccurately or seem overdone.	Writer uses lyrics that communicate clearly, but the song lacks variety, punch or flair.	Writer uses lyrics that do not communicate strongly or capture the reader's interest.	

## ***National Pastime Student Handout***

### Introduction:

1. There is a war occurring, what war? Who was fighting in this war and why?

### Baseball:

2. What was happening in the U.S. and around the world at this time?

### A Summer of Heroes:

3. Why was Joe DiMaggio voted the greatest American of all time over Washington and Lincoln by a history class?

### The Joy Zone:

4. What is “The Joy Zone”?
5. What contributions did Ted Williams bring to baseball?
6. What were the Dodgers like during this time?
7. Did Dodger fans fit the team image? Why or why not?

### War:

8. What significant historical event occurred on 12/7/41?
9. Why were the women baseball players called the “Queens of SWAT”?
10. Why were women banned in 1952 from ever playing in the M.L.? How does this compare with blacks being banned from playing in the M.L.?

The Answer is No:

11. It was stated, "If we can stop bullets, why not balls?" What does this statement mean?
  
12. Why was Jackie Robinson court martialed?
  
13. Name the two wars Jackie Robinson said he was fighting.

This I Know:

14. What is bigotry? Give examples during this time.
  
15. How did "Happy" Chandler feel about blacks playing in the M.L.?

The Race Man:

16. What types of negative situations did Branch Rickey try on Jackie Robinson?
  
17. What did Jackie Robinson have to promise Branch Rickey for three years?

Big League Material:

18. Baseball had its ups and downs, name two or more things that helped baseball survive through the years.
  
19. What negative situations did Jackie Robinson face when he played for the Montreal Royals?

He's Coming:

20. How was the signing of Jackie Robinson to the Dodgers the "death nelly" for N.L. baseball?
  
21. What defining moment in baseball occurred on April 15, 1947?



Up in the Race:

22. List some of the negative treatment by others Jackie Robinson had to deal with.

23. Who openly “spiked” Jackie Robinson’s thigh? Why?

24. Why were N.L. owners concerned about blacks playing in the M.L.s?

The Family of Baseball:

25. Why did Satchel Paige pitch for the Cleveland Indians?

So Would the Babe:

26. Babe Ruth died from what?

## ***National Pastime Resources for Diverse Learners Student Handout***

### Baseball:

1. What was happening in the U.S. and around the world at this time?

### A Summer of Heroes:

2. Why was Joe DiMaggio voted the greatest American of all time over Washington and Lincoln by a history class?

### The Joy Zone:

3. What is “The Joy Zone”?
  
4. What were the Dodgers like during this time?

### War:

5. What significant historical event occurred on 12/7/41?
  
6. Why were the women baseball players called the “Queens of SWAT”?
  
7. Women were banned in 1952 from ever playing in the major leagues.

### The Answer is No:

8. It was stated, “If we can stop bullets, why not balls?” What does this statement mean?
  
9. Name the two wars Jackie Robinson said he was fighting.

### This I Know:

10. What is bigotry? .
  
11. How did “Happy” Chandler feel about blacks playing in the major leagues?

The Race Man:

12. What did Jackie Robinson have to promise Branch Rickey for three years?

Big League Material:

13. Name two things that helped baseball survive through the years.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

14. What negative situations did Jackie Robinson face when he played for the Montreal Royals?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

He's Coming:

15. How was the signing of Jackie Robinson to the Dodgers the "death nell" for N.L. baseball?

16. What defining moment in baseball occurred on April 15, 1947?

Up in the Race:

17. Why were N.L. owners concerned about blacks playing in the M.L.s?

The Family of Baseball:

18. Why did Satchel Paige pitch for the Cleveland Indians?

So Would the Babe:

19. Babe Ruth died from what?