



**Negro Leagues Baseball Museum**

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**Electronic Resources for Teachers**

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## **Shadow Ball, 1930-1940 (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 and in turn affected the treatment of Blacks in society and in baseball.

**Value-based:** Student groups will compare and contrast Negro Leagues baseball and its players to Major League baseball and its players.

**Challenging:** Student groups will discuss if baseball really should be considered the national past time in light of the historical, social, and cultural climate of baseball and in the United States from 1930-1940.

**Active:** Students will work individually and cooperatively in groups and identify, discuss, and write specific reasons and examples of the variance in treatment between Negro Leagues players and Major League players.

**Purpose/Rationale/Introduction:** Students will understand what was occurring historically, not only in baseball, but also in the world from 1930-1940. Students will learn about, discuss, compare and contrast, and graphically represent Negro Leagues and Major League baseball conditions and contributions.

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will compare and contrast Major League baseball and its players with the Negro Leagues and its players.
2. Students will understand what was happening historically in baseball and in the world from 1930-1940.
3. Students will be able to list and discuss reasons for the variance of treatment between Major League players and Negro Leagues players.

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Subject:** Social Studies

**Standards:**

NCSS Standards: I, II, III, V

ISTE Standards: 1, 3, 6

Missouri Standards: 2, 4, 5, 6

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

**Materials/Primary Resources:**

VHS video player and television set

*Shadow Ball 1930-1940*: PBS Home Video

Student Handout and assessment rubric (attached)

Access to Inspiration (free trials available for 30 days), Microsoft Powerpoint, or other graphic organizer program

**Procedures & Activities:**

Show students the video *Shadow Ball 1930-1940*. 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: How does baseball build community?

Baseball:

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

Fifth Inning:

For Discussion: How did the Great Depression affect baseball and the U.S. economy?

Define: Shadowball

Students should note how Negro Leagues players were just as good as or better than the Major League/white players.

Like We Invented the Game:

1. Compare and contrast the Negro Leagues and the Major Leagues.
2. Compare and contrast baseball and society.
3. What was the social climate at the time? Civil Rights, anti-lynching campaigns, ties to entertainment, Duke Ellington, Bo Jangles, etc.

National Tonic:

Q: Upon John McGraw's death, he had a list of Black players he had wanted to sign. Why couldn't he do so during his lifetime?

Midnight Rider:

- Q: List two reasons why Negro Leagues statistics were estimated? Why were there virtually no records of Negro Leagues accomplishments in baseball?
1. Compare and contrast Satchel Paige and Babe Ruth, the two most famous baseball players from their individual leagues. Look at their salaries, treatment, their contribution to the league they played for, what type of facilities they played in, etc.

### You Lucky Bum:

Q: How did baseball compare with other jobs available during the Great Depression?

Discuss: Once again Josh Gibson's accomplishments are estimates.

Revisit why records were not kept or were rare in Negro Leagues baseball.

### The Daffiness Boys:

1. Compare and contrast clowning in the Negro Leagues and Major Leagues baseball.

### Carrying the News:

Q: Negro Leagues players sometimes played four baseball games in one day. In what other ways were the playing conditions of Negro Leagues and Major Leagues players different?

1. List other ways society treated Negro Leagues players different than Major Leagues players.

Discuss: Does baseball level the racial playing field? Why or why not?

Q: What innovations/promotional things did baseball teams do to survive during these lean times?

2. Compare and contrast Negro Leagues and Major Leagues baseball.

### The Gashouse Gang:

Q: Why was Jo Medwick banned at the end of the World Series game?

Q: What would happen to a player today in sports if this occurred?

List at least three nick names for players and how they got their nickname.  
i.e. Dizzy Dean, Daffy Dean, Pepper Martin, Leo the Lip, Flash, Ducky, etc.

### Plain Prejudice:

Discuss: Were Negro Leagues players as good as Major Leagues players? Why or why not? How do you know?

Q: What was the "old gentlemen's agreement"? How did this affect baseball and society's attitudes?

Define and discuss: Fascism

### Bottom of the Fifth:

Q: How did Babe Ruth's performance and the All-star team game in Japan help international relations?

Q: What were the nations squabbling over? Why?

Goodbye Baseball:

- Q: Why did the Yankees let Babe Ruth go?
- Q: Why did Babe Ruth turn down managing the Yankee farm team?
- Q: Why did the Boston Braves really hire Babe Ruth?

Heroes:

- Q: How were the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Leagues like the Yankees of the Major Leagues?
- Q: Why did the Negro Leagues use portable lighting systems several years before the Major Leagues?

I Ain't Sorry:

- Q: Why did Negro Leagues players travel to other countries during the off-season?

Define and discuss: Anti-Semitism, Hitler, and prejudice toward Jews

- Q: How was the treatment of Jewish people/baseball players similar to the treatment of Black and Negro Leagues players? How was the treatment different?

For the Good of the Team: No questions, could fast forward this section.

The Best:

- Q: The Baseball Hall of Fame opened in 1939, why were no Negro Leagues players inducted at this time?
- Q: If 4/5 of people surveyed in 1938 had no objections to playing with Black players, then why weren't Black players allowed into the Major Leagues at this time?

**Conclusion:** Discuss: Should baseball be considered our true national pastime? Why or why not? Discuss: How would baseball have been different if Black players had not been kept out of Major League baseball for sixty years? How would society have been different?

**Extension and Enrichment:** Students choose a historical occurrence outside the United States from 1930-1940 to research and create a story pyramid or graphic organizer representing the information.

**Online Resources:**

[www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)

**Secondary Resources:** None

**Assessment:** Students will get into groups of 2-4, and use their notes to complete a worksheet and graphic organizer in Inspiration or Powerpoint comparing and contrasting aspects of Negro Leagues baseball and Major League baseball. If a graphic organizer program is not available, students could create a paper version of a graphic organizer.

**Alternate Assessment:** Have students get into groups and create story pyramids retelling the information from a different point of view i.e. Major League player, ball club owner, white or Black citizen, Jewish or Latino ball player, etc.

## ***Shadow Ball Student Handout***

### Introduction:

1. How does baseball build community?

### Baseball:

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

### The Fifth Inning:

3. Define: Shadowball-

### Like We Invented the Game:

4. What was the social climate at this time?

### National Tonic:

5. Why couldn't John McGraw sign the Black players he wanted to in his lifetime? What support do you find for why he couldn't sign the Black players he wanted to?

### Midnight Rider:

6. Why were Negro Leagues statistics estimated?

7. Why were there virtually no records of Negro Leagues accomplishments in baseball?

### You Lucky Bum:

8. How did baseball compare with other jobs available during the Great Depression?

Carrying the News:

9. Negro Leagues players sometimes played four baseball games in one day. In what other ways were the playing conditions of Negro Leagues and Major Leagues players different?
- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| a. _____ | d. _____ |
| b. _____ | e. _____ |
| c. _____ | f. _____ |

Plain Prejudice:

14. How did society treat Negro Leagues players differently than Major Leagues players?
15. What innovations/promotional things did baseball teams do to survive during these lean times?
17. What was the “old gentlemen’s agreement”? How did this affect baseball and society’s attitudes?
18. Define: Fascism and give an example.

Heroes:

19. How were the Kansas City Monarchs and the Yankees alike?
20. Why did the Negro Leagues use portable lighting systems several years before the major leagues?

I Ain’t Sorry:

21. Why did Negro Leagues players travel to other countries during the off-season?
22. Define: Anti-Semitism and give an example.

23. How was the treatment of Jewish people/baseball players similar to the treatment of Black and Negro Leagues players? How was the treatment different?

The Best:

24. The Baseball Hall of Fame opened in 1939, were any Negro Leagues players inducted at this time? Why or why not?

25. If 4/5 of people surveyed in 1938 had no objections to playing with Black players, then why weren't Black players allowed into the Major Leagues at this time?

## Compare and Contrast

In groups, choose one of the topics below to compare and contrast in greater detail. Identify, discuss, and record the group's ideas and observations from the film and history. Use Inspiration or Powerpoint to represent the group information in a graphic organizer.

NEGRO LEAGUES and the MAJOR LEAGUES conditions

NEGRO LEAGUES and MAJOR LEAGUES players

NEGRO LEAGUES and MAJOR LEAGUES treatment of players

Clowning in NEGRO LEAGUES and MAJOR LEAGUES baseball

Baseball and society

Satchel Paige and Babe Ruth-salaries, treatment, what was their contribution to the league they played for, what type of facilities they played in, etc.

Topic of Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPARE	CONTRAST

## ***Shadow Ball Student Handout***

### Introduction:

2. How does baseball build community?

Baseball builds community by helping one another. In baseball the players need help to win games. Players make sacrifice flies and bunt to help the team win.

### Baseball:

3. List two other historical happenings during 1930-1940.

1. Adolph Hitler came to power in Germany.

2. The Great Depression.

### The Fifth Inning:

4. Define: Shadowball-

Shadowball is when baseball players pantomime or pretend they are playing baseball with real equipment.

4. What was the Civil Rights movement? Discuss your thoughts with your neighbor.

### Midnight Rider:

8. Negro Leagues statistics were not recorded because

### You Lucky Bum:

9. Baseball was a good job to have during the Great Depression because it was a steady job and it paid well.

### Carrying the News:

7. Negro Leagues players sometimes played four baseball games in one day.

8. Negro Leagues players played a longer season than Major Leagues players.

9. Negro Leagues players got paid less than Major Leagues players.

10. Negro Leagues players were on the road and traveled more than Major Leagues players.

### Plain Prejudice:

11. Society treated Negro Leagues players different than Major Leagues players.  
Negro Leagues players could not go into the same places as the Major Leagues or white players such as restaurants, gas stations, and hotels.
12. The “old gentleman’s agreement” was an agreement between Major Leagues owners not to sign Black baseball players to their team. This agreement helped keep Black baseball players out of the Major Leagues and helped continue segregation not only in baseball but in life.

### Heroes:

13. How were the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Leagues like the Yankees of the Major Leagues?  
Both teams were the best in their league. Both teams were treated to the best hotels and restaurants they could go to based upon their race. Both teams had players that were heroes in their communities.

### I Ain’t Sorry:

14. How was the treatment of Jewish people/baseball players similar to the treatment of Black and Negro Leagues players?  
Jewish players were discriminated against like Negro Leagues players, but they did play in the Major Leagues before Black baseball players. Jewish players had to prove they belonged in the Major Leagues.

### The Best:

15. Discuss why no Negro Leagues players inducted to the Baseball Hall of Fame when it opened.  
There was a lack of statistics to support Negro Leagues players accomplishments  
Society did not support the induction of Negro Leagues players at this time.
16. Discuss why Black players weren’t allowed into the Major Leagues at this time?

## Compare (Same) and Contrast (Different)

In groups, compare and contrast the topic below in greater detail. Use your notes from the film to list how the Negro Leagues and Major Leagues were the same or different. Discuss and record the group's ideas. Use Powerpoint to present your information to the class.

COMPARE (same)	CONTRAST (different)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li></ol>