

## TEACHERS ACTIVITIES



### Theme:

All across America, spring means the return of something we all love - baseball.

### Topics For Discussion:

The more players practice the skills of baseball, such as batting, catching and throwing the ball, fielding, etc., the better they become at playing the game. Discuss other activities in which practice improves performance. \_\_\_\_\_



When Dinosaur Bob first came home with the Lazardos, everyone was pleased with such a wonderful pet. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having a pet like Dinosaur Bob in one's home. \_\_\_\_\_



Invite students to imagine Dinosaur Bob playing other sports or games besides baseball. What would be the advantages of having him as a member of the team? \_\_\_\_\_



Dinosaur Bob was named after Scotty's great uncle Bob. Ask students if they have ever named a pet after a real person and why they chose that name. Have students find out why their parents chose their names. Were any of them named after family members?

### Curriculum Extension Activities:

Invite a baseball player (high school or college) into the classroom to demonstrate aspects of the game and offer tips for improving performance. Move the demonstration to the gym or outside so that students can try out the expert's tips. \_\_\_\_\_



Revisit segments of the video program and allow students to practice some of the tips that players from the Oakland A's give LeVar.

Have students conduct a survey of favorite ballpark snacks (within the classroom or involving other classrooms for a larger survey). Make a graph of the data collected.



Have students write a newspaper story of the baseball game in the story. Look at examples of sports articles and discuss the types of information that appear first and the details that are included. While some students are writing the sports article, others might plan and perform a radio play-by-play of the game. Still others might be TV sports reporters who cover the game and interview the Lazardos, other team members, the mayor of Pimlico Hills, and other townspeople.



Brainstorm a list of the baseball words that are used in the program. Add other baseball vocabulary familiar to students to the list. (This list might even include names of professional baseball teams and players.) Have students make a baseball dictionary, in which they define and illustrate the terms.



Invite students to write and illustrate additional adventures for Dinosaur Bob and the Lazardo family. Bind these stories into individual books or make a chapter book of their adventures.



When Dinosaur Bob arrived home with the Lazardos, the newspaper headline read "Lengthy Lizard Lands With Lazardos." Have students create other alliterative phrases. Begin with phrases that fit the story, such as "Bob Bats Best" or "Family Finds Friend," and then move to longer phrases ("Pimlico Pirates' Prehistoric Pal") and other stories or situations as students become familiar with alliteration.



A baseball playing field is called a "diamond." Have students look at the shape of the field and describe it. What shape name would they call it? Discuss how a diamond shape is different from a square or a rectangle. Brainstorm a list of things that have a diamond shape.



Use a baseball bat as an alternative unit of measurement and pose some estimation problems for students. For example, have them estimate the length of the classroom or hallway in baseball bats, or have them find items at school that are about the same length as a bat. After they have estimated, have them take actual measurements to verify their estimates.

One of the review books for this program is the classic story poem, "Casey at the Bat." Several artists have illustrated picture book versions of this poem. Obtain some of these books and discuss the different interpretations of the poem based on the illustrations. Students will likely notice that some are humorous while others are serious; and some are historical, while others are more contemporary.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

MY DAD'S BASEBALL

by Ron Cohen (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

FRANK AND ERNEST PLAY BALL

by Alexandra Day (Scholastic)

TEAMMATES

by Peter Golenbock, illus. by Paul Bacon (Harcourt Brace)

THE WORLD OF WILLIAM JOYCE: SCRAPBOOK

by William Joyce, photos by Philip Gould (HarperCollins)

BATS ABOUT BASEBALL

by Jean Little & Claire McKay, illus. by Kim LaFave (Viking)

AT THE CRACK OF THE BAT

by Lillian Morrison, illus. by Steve Cieslawski (Hyperion)

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

by Jack Norworth, illus. by Alec Gillman (Four Winds)

HOW GEORGIE RADBOURN SAVED BASEBALL

by David Shannon (Scholastic/Blue Sky)

THE FIELD BEYOND THE OUTFIELD

by Mark Teague (Scholastic)

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BAT AND BALL FACTORY  
by Peggy Thomson, illus. by Gloria Kamen (Albert Whitman)

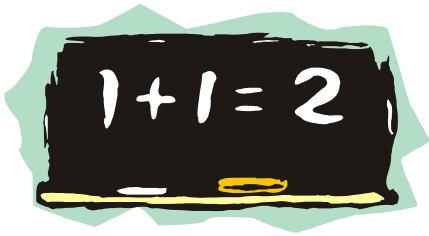
PLAYING RIGHT FIELD  
by Willy Welch, illus. by Marc Simont (Scholastic)

A GAME OF CATCH  
by Richard Wilbur, illus. by Barry Moser (Harcourt Brace)

Distributed by:



P.O. Box 80669  
Lincoln, NE 68501-0669  
Phone: 800-228-4630  
Fax: 800-306-2330  
Email: [gpn@unl.edu](mailto:gpn@unl.edu)  
Web site: [gpn.unl.edu](http://gpn.unl.edu)



• **Number sense.** Elicit students' prior knowledge of baseball while examining the use of number associated with the game. Work with the numbers from 1 to 10 and brainstorm examples of ways the numbers are used in baseball.

For example:

- 1 pitcher, 1 catcher, 1 ball in play, 1 batter at a time, 1 home plate, 1 designated hitter
- 2 teams play each other
- 3 bases, 3 outs, 3 strikes; a player has a "Triple Crown" if he/she has the best batting average, most home runs, and most runs batted in; 3 outfielders; 3 types of mitts (catcher, fielder, first baseman)
- 4 balls for a walk, 4 sides to the diamond, 4 umpires (1 at each base and at home plate)
- 5 home plate is a pentagon shape; full count (3 balls plus 2 strikes)
- 6 players in the infield
- 7 "7th inning stretch," best of 7 games to win World Series
- 8 the number on a player's uniform; famous players who wore number include Yogi Berra and Carl Yastrzemski; 8 White Sox players were banned from baseball after being accused of throwing the 1919 World Series
- 9 players per team, 9 innings per game
- 10 the inning played if the game is tied at the end of regulation play●

**Ordinal numbers.** While students are viewing the program, have them listen for ordinal numbers associated with baseball. Include other instances they can think of and make a list of the examples, e.g., first, second, and third base; "top of the ninth;" etc.

• **Estimation and measurement.** Use a baseball bat as an alternative unit of measurement and pose some problems for the students. Have them estimate first and then measure. For example: "Find 3 things the same length as a bat." "How many bats tall are you?" "How many bats long is our classroom?"

• **Comparing and contrasting four-sided shapes.** A baseball playing field is called a "diamond." Have students look at the shape of the field and describe it. What shape name would they use? How is a diamond shape different from a square and a rectangle? Have students brainstorm a list of things that have a diamond shape. Students might also create a tessellation using a diamond shape.

• **Estimation and measurement.** Take students out to the playground with a ball and bat and pose the question: "How far can you hit a ball?" Begin by having students estimate how many feet they think they can hit a ball, and record their estimates on a sheet

of paper. Then hit the ball and measure. (They might want to record their best hit of three tries.) Compare estimates with actual distances. If you have the opportunity to do this activity on a ball diamond, students will be able to see how far they can hit a ball in relation to the distances on the field.

- **Examining statistics.** Have students look at the types of statistics for baseball teams printed in the newspaper and the stats for individual players on baseball cards. Discuss what this information means, how it was compiled, and why it is important to the game. Students will have differing backgrounds of experience with baseball, and some will be able to provide much information. Some students may be interested in how the stats are figured. You might introduce how to calculate an "average."

## Do-At-Home Activity

- **Attending a baseball game.** Encourage parents to attend a baseball game (with players of *any* age group) or watch a baseball game on TV with their children. Stress the math concepts that are present in the above activities and suggest that they discuss the mathematics they see during the game.
- **Home-school collaboration.** Organize a parent-child baseball game. Form teams comprised of both adults and children by drawing names out of a baseball cap. Videotape the game so it can be used for a family math night activity (in which both parents and children attend) and families can work with the math concepts together.

Distributed by:



P.O. Box 80669  
Lincoln, NE 68501-0669  
Phone: 800-228-4630  
Fax: 800-306-2330  
Email: [gpn@unl.edu](mailto:gpn@unl.edu)  
Web site: [gpn.unl.edu](http://gpn.unl.edu)