



American Baseball Foundation BASIC Lesson Overview Reading Grades 3 and 4

The lessons were sponsored by the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Red Mountain Writing Project and written by Dr. Jennifer Summerlin (main author), Tiona Fowler, and Dr. Tonya Perry

Lesson #	Featured Player	Text Used	Character Trait	Quote	Reading Response/Discussion Question:
1 Week 1 Lesson 1	You've Never Heard of Willie Mays? By: Jonah Winter	What did you learn about what life was like growing up in Birmingham, Alabama during the 1940's? -What does the story of Willie Mays remind you of? Explain your thinking.	Talented	"In order to excel, you must be completely dedicated to your chosen sport. You must also be prepared to work hard and be willing to accept constructive criticism. Without one-hundred percent dedication, you won't be able to do this."	Talented: Having talent or special ability; gifted. Read: "A Baseball" by D. Florian
2 Week 1 Lesson 2	Ty Cobb	<i>Baseball's Greatest Hitters</i> By: Sydelle Kramer	Tenacity	"He didn't outwit the opposition and he didn't outrun them. He outthought them!"	What 5 things did you learn about Ty Cobb from the text? What did you learn about Ty Cobb from your own research?
3 Week 1 Lesson 3	Babe Ruth	<i>Baseball's Greatest Hitters</i> By: Sydelle Kramer	Self-Confident	"Sometimes I pitched. Sometimes I caught, and frequently I played the outfield and infield. It was all the same to me. All I wanted was to play. I didn't care where."	What was one thing that confused you from the text? How can talking to someone else clarify your thinking and help you understand what actually happened in the text?
4 Week 1 Lesson 4	Ted Williams	<i>Baseball's Greatest Hitters</i> By: Sydelle Kramer	Ambitious	"A man has to have goals—for a day, for a lifetime—and that was mine, to have people say, 'There goes Ted Williams, the greatest hitter who ever lived.'"	Explain how Ted Williams was patient and also impatient as a baseball player. Use specific evidence from the text to support your thinking.
5 Week 1 Lesson 5	Hank Aaron	<i>Baseball's Greatest Hitters</i> By: Sydelle Kramer	Persistence	"My motto was always to keep swinging. Whether I was in a slump or feeling	Explain what this sentence from the text means to you. (page 40—quote from text)

				bad or having trouble off the field, the only thing to do was keep swinging.	Explain a time when you were determined to succeed.
6 Week 2 Lesson 1	Satchel Paige	<i>Satchel Paige</i> By: Lisa Cline-Ransom	Confidence	"My pitching philosophy is simple—keep the ball away from the bat."	What surprised you about Satchel Paige? Why do you think this information was surprising? Specific Research Questions Provided Also
7 Week 2 Lesson 2	Effa Manley	<i>She Loved Baseball: The Effa Manley Story</i> By: Audrey Vernick	Cooperative	"As teammates, we are always there for one another...everyone has everyone's back." ~Whitney Barrett, infield, Univ. of Nebraska	What do you already know about women's rights in history? What do you already know about Civil Rights? What do you predict BEFORE reading? What actually happened in the text?
8 Week 2 Lesson 3	Jackie Mitchell	<i>The Baseball Adventure of Jackie Mitchell, Girl Pitcher vs. Babe Ruth</i> By: Emma Calson Berne	Attentive	"Always want the ball." ~Brittany B., pitcher, Colorado	Before researching I think this is about...because... After researching I learned...because...
9 Week 2 Lesson 4	Jackie Robinson	<i>Teammates</i> By: Peter Golenbock	Learner	"It's unbelievable how much you don't know about the game you've been playing all your life."	Why do you think the author made a point of stating on the last page that both players wore the same uniform? What could this be a symbol for? Explain your thinking.
10 Week 2 Lesson 5	Jackie Robinson	<i>A Picture Book of Jackie Robinson</i> By: David A. Adler	Courageous	"There's not an American in this country free until every one of us is free."	Webbing Events in the Life of Jackie Robinson Narrowing it Down to One Single, Significant Event in Robinson's Life
11 Week 3 Lesson 1	Jackie Robinson	<i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i> By: Denise Lewis Patrick	Respectful	"I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me...All I ask is that you respect me as a human being."	What I already know about Jackie Robinson... What I Predict will Happen in Chapters 1-3... What actually happens in chapters 1-3./..
12 Week 3 Lesson 2	Jackie Robinson	<i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i> By: Denise Lewis Patrick	Leader	"A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."	What I already know about Jackie Robinson... What I Predict will Happen in Chapters 1-3... What actually happens in chapters 1-3./..
13 Week 3 Lesson 3	Jackie Robinson	<i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i>	Advocate	"The right of every American to first-class citizenship is the most	Complete an Anticipation Guide to set the purpose for reading.

		By: Denise Lewis Patrick		important issue of our time."	
14 Week 3 Lesson 4	Jackie Robinson	<i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i> By: Denise Lewis Patrick	Citizenship	"Do good works to help others improve their lives."	Do you think Jackie Robinson truly understood the difficulties he would soon face? Explain your thinking.
15 Week 3 Lesson 5	Jackie Robinson	<i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i> By: Denise Lewis Patrick	Commitment	"If you make a promise to do something, be sure to keep your promise."	Explain what "Jim Crow" laws were and provide 3 specific examples of this law throughout the South.
16 Week 4 Lesson 1	Jackie Robinson	<i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i> By: Denise Lewis Patrick	Integrity	"Do what you believe is the right thing---no matter how hard it may be."	Further exploration of a specific quote from the text and sharing our own text-to-self connections.
17 Week 4 Lesson 2	Pele	Young Pele Soccer's First Star By: Lesa Cline-Ransome	Determination	"Enthusiasm is Everything"	How did Pele become the world's greatest soccer star? What would it take to be like Pele?
18 Week 4 Lesson 3	The Bat Boy & His Violin By Gavin Curtis	How has Jackie Robinson's entrance into the Major Leagues affected the Negro Leagues? What can a team do to make up talent lost to the Majors?	Teamwork	"There are only three things that America will be remembered for 2000 years from now when they study this civilization: The Constitution, Jazz music, and Baseball. These are the 3 most beautiful things this culture's ever created." — Gerald Early	Teamwork—Together Everyone Achieves More
Week 4 Lesson 4	Henry Aaron's Dream By: Matt Tavares	How was life, growing up in Mobile, Alabama in 1940, similar to and different from Willie Mays? -What do you think would be a characteristic these two players would have in common? Explain your thinking.	Perseverance	Perseverance: Steady persistence in a course of action despite obstacles. Read Poem: "Play Ball!" L.M.F	
	Wk 4 Lesson 5 Wilma Unlimited by Kathleen Krull	What would it be like to have a sickness that could keep you from playing? How hard would it be to always be watching?	Determination/ Courage	"I ran and ran and ran every day, and I acquired this sense of determination, this sense of spirit that I would never, never give up, no matter what else happened."	
21 Week 5	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson	<i>A Strong Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut"</i>	Hard-Working (cont)	"Go hard every play. You don't want to leave	Explain what Mamie meant when she said..."tearing down walls to

Lesson 1		<i>Johnson</i> By: Michelle Y. Green		anything behind and regret it years down the road that you didn't give it all when you could have." ~Ashley DeBuhr, pitcher, Univ. of Nebraska	build something better." What could this be a symbol for? Explain your thinking. What made Mamie different from most girls her age? Use specific examples from the text to support your thinking.
22 Week 5 Lesson 2	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson	<i>A Strong Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson</i> By: Michelle Y. Green	Competitive	"I was looking around the infield today and was excited to see what could be."	Why do you think Mamie could not go live with her mother? Explain. Explain 3 differences between softball and baseball. What effect did Jackie Robinson have on the major leagues and all Americans?
23 Week 5 Lesson 3	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson	<i>A Strong Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson</i> By: Michelle Y. Green	Consistency	"As long as I can compete, I won't quit. Reaching three-thousand is not the finish line as long as I can contribute.	Explain when and why the women's league was started. Explain what happened after Mamie struck out Savoy and why this might have been a turning point in Mamie Johnson's life.
24 Week 5 Lesson 4	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson	<i>A Strong Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson</i> By: Michelle Y. Green	Talented	"Josh Gibson was the greatest hitter who ever lived." ~Satchel Paige	Explain what happened in this chapter. (Ch. 8) What do you notice about Mamie Johnson so far? Explain your thinking. What does Mamie mean when she says she has "two strikes against her?"
25 Week 5 Lesson 5	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson	<i>A Strong Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson</i> By: Michelle Y. Green	Encouraging	"There may be people who have more talent than you, but there's no excuse for anyone to work harder than you—and I believe that."	Explain how playing in the Negro Leagues became harder and why you think Mamie Johnson kept playing even though it was so difficult. What can we learn from Mamie "Peanut" Johnson that can help us in our own lives? Explain your thinking.
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