



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. Updated by ABF 2017. Teacher may wish to utilize Maimi Peanut Johnson (Week 5) and a lesson plan written for Maimi for BASIC Grades 5 & 6

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	<i>Brothers At Bat</i> By: Audrey Vernick	-If you could pick a team name for the Acerra family that reflected who they were as a family, what would you choose? -Use evidence from the text to support and defend your team name.	Cooperation	"The team succeeded for so long simply because "they stuck together." Their camaraderie, tenacity and good spirits made them favorites all over the Northeast and New England, and in 1939 they were honored at the World's Fair as the biggest family in New Jersey." David King	Cooperative: Working or acting together with others, or done by people working or acting together. Read "Life Lines" by J. Patrick Lewis
3 Week 1 Lesson 3	Babe Ruth <i>Baseball's Greatest Hitters</i> By: Sydelle Kramer	What would it be like to have your parents send you to a boarding school when you were very young? How would you react to new circumstances?	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	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? Would it be harder with a lot of brothers and sisters?	Achievement	"Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: The potential for greatness lives within each of us." Wilma Rudolph	Courageous: Being brave in a difficult situation.
5 Week 1 Lesson 5	Hank Aaron <i>Baseball's Greatest Hitters</i> By: Sydelle Kramer	"Their prejudice made Hank determined to succeed." Can you think of a time in your life where you were determined to succeed?	Persistence	"My motto was always to keep swinging. Whether I was in a slump or feeling bad or having trouble off the field, the only thing to do was keep swinging.	Explain what this sentence from the text means to you. (page 40—quote from text) Explain a time when you were determined to succeed.
6 Week 2 Lesson 1	Satchel Paige <i>Satchel Paige</i> By: Lisa Cline-Ransom	Could you make money by throwing baseballs over a handkerchief? How would you react to being sent to a reform school?	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	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?	Advocate	"As teammates, we are always there for one another...everyone has everyone's back." ~Whitney Barrett, infield, Univ. of Nebraska	During Effa's life she "wore many hats" from civil rights worker to Negro League baseball team owner. What type of character traits would a person need to be able to excel in several areas of life? Are you trying to develop them?
8 Week 2 Lesson 3	Jackie Mitchell <i>The Baseball Adventure of Jackie Mitchell, Girl Pitcher vs. Babe Ruth</i> By: Emma Calson Berne	"I see nothing strange about my striking them out, at least stranger things have happened." Jackie Mitchell	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	Who among his teammates would befriend Jackie Robinson in his first year playing in the Major Leagues? What would it take to be Jackie's friend?	Cooperation	"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	How difficult would it be to take the family and move across the entire country? What would conditions be like in the new home?	Courageous	"There's not an American in this country free until every one of us is free." Jackie Robinson	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	What did segregation mean for athletes in the 1940's? How were things different for all Negroes in those years?	Respectful	"A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." Jackie Robinson	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	How did Jackie's experiences in school, professional sports and the military shape him and shape the course of events in the United States?	Leader	"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.
13 Week 3 Lesson 3	Jackie Robinson <i>Time for Kids: Jackie Robinson—Strong Inside & Out</i> By: Denise Lewis Patrick	"At first I was very nervous. But gradually I began to relax and play my game. . . I was called names by fans and other players—and even by some of my teammates."	Ethical Conduct	"Do what you believe is the right thing---no matter how hard it may be."	Explain what "Jim Crow" laws were and provide 3 specific examples of this law throughout the South.
14 Week 3 Lesson 4	<i>Catching the Moon: The Story of One Little Girl's Baseball Dream</i> By: Crystal Hubbard	-Before reading the text, ask students to predict what they think would be issues facing the first female member of an all-male professional team. -While reading students confirm their predictions.	Perseverance	"So many of them thought it was a disgrace to play with a girl. But my heart was set. And I kept at it. You gotta keep trying." Marcenia Lyle	Goal Setter: Establishing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-targeted goals to make progress. Read Poem: "Goal Tending" by J. Patrick Lewis
15 Week 3 Lesson 5	Roberto Clemente By Jonah Winter	What is a hero? How can you know that another person is a hero? What things are inside of a hero that are not in other people?	Hero	"If you have a chance to accomplish something that will make things better for people coming behind you, and you don't do that, you are wasting your time on this earth." Roberto Clemente	

16 Week 4 Lesson 1	Emmanuel's Dream By: Laurie Ann Thompson & Sean Qualls	How would it feel to be different from everyone else? How did Emmanuel have the other children play with him? How would it feel to go to a big city to live by yourself?			Spiritual Strength: Relying on God to provide for all your needs
17 Week 4 Lesson 2	Young Pele Soccer's First Star By: Lesa Cline-Ransome	Growing up poor in rural Brazil, Pele played in his bare feet against adults.	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
19 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	
20 Week 4 Lesson 5	The Quickest Kid in Clarksville by Pat Zietlow Miller	Cooperation leads to success in this story of two girls growing up in Clarksville, Tennessee, home of Wilma Rudolph	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." Wilma Rudolph	Teamwork—Together Everyone Achieves More

21 Week 5 Lesson 1	Mamie "Peanut" Johnson <i>A Strong Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson</i> By: Michelle Y. Green	What would it be like to grow up on a farm? How would farm life be different from city life? How hard is it to adjust from one lifestyle to another?	Hard-Working	"Go hard every play. You don't want to leave 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	Explain what Mamie meant when she said..."tearing down walls to 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	What makes moving to a new city so hard? What might be the best way to fit into a new environment? How would you try to do it?	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	What is a dream? How can a person pursue the dream? What steps are necessary to be able to reach the dream?	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	How can a person overcome an obstacle that is blocking the steps to the dream? What does it mean to have "three strikes against you"?	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	Does everyone have to put aside a sports career at one point? What does it take to pursue a second career?	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.