



The Jackie Robinson Story

by Robyn O'Sullivan

Overview

This book describes the life of Jackie Robinson and his contributions to civil rights in the United States.

Literacy Focus

High Frequency Words

change, example, famous, practice, season, something, special

Content Words

professional, segregated, self-respect, officer, World Series, civil rights, legacy

Word Attack and Vocabulary Skills

- Using context clues to understand word meaning
- Decoding compound words
- Using *-ed* or *-d* with past-tense verbs
- Identifying action words

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- Following a sequence of events
- Making judgments about segregation and civil rights
- Making connections to other American heroes

Book Parts and Text Features

- Contents page, glossary, and index
- Chapter titles
- Historical photographs
- Captions
- Key words in bold-faced type

Writing/Speaking and Listening

- Writing interview questions
- Sharing prior knowledge about the Civil Rights Movement and its leaders
- Discussing Jackie Robinson's character and the decisions he made

Observe/Assess

See *Graphic Organizers* on page 141 and *Multiple-Choice Test* on page 211.

Social Studies Focus

Content and Thinking Skills

- Understanding how people overcome challenges
- Recognizing Jackie Robinson's contributions in challenging segregation
- Identifying the historical importance of Jackie Robinson's achievements

Background Information

Jackie Robinson is remembered as the man who changed the face of American baseball. Robinson faced opposition from many people, but he stood his ground, demonstrating that talent, intelligence, and leadership cross all racial lines.

Correlation to National Standards Social Studies

- Culture
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

See *Standards Chart* on pages 228-229.

Set the Scene

Ask children to name some professional athletes they admire. Call attention to players who are African American, Hispanic, or Asian. Explain that, only a few decades ago, people from these groups could not play professional sports in the United States.

Read and Discuss

Cover, Title Page, and Contents Page

Have children look at the cover and contents page. Ask:

What sport did Jackie Robinson play? When did he play?

Pages 3–7

Have children look at the photographs, then read the text. Ask:

What character traits did Jackie Robinson show as a young man?

Pages 8–16

Have children continue reading. Remind them to look at the photographs, too. Ask:

What were some good and bad experiences that Robinson had during his baseball career?

In what ways did Robinson fight segregation during his baseball career?

Pages 17–22

Have children finish reading the text. Ask:

How did Robinson work for civil rights after his professional athletic career?

Respond

- Ask children to name some other people who contributed to the fight for civil rights. Discuss Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. Then ask: *How was Jackie Robinson's leadership similar to that of Martin Luther King, Jr.? How was it different?*
- Have children turn to page 8. Ask them to read the action words they find on the page. Help them recognize the verbs *loved, worked, like, thought, decided, looked, and knew*. Write these words on the board. Ask children how they recognized each as an action word. Discuss the fact that each word describes something a person can do. Have children identify the subject of each verb, or the person who is performing the action.

- Write *basketball, football, baseball, teammates, shortstop, airplanes, and easygoing* on the board and ask children how the words are similar. Help them recognize that they are compound words that can be decoded by reading each of the smaller words. Call on children to say the words that make up each compound and explain how this helps them read and understand the entire word.



Using -ed or -d

Activity Master, page 108

Have students add *-ed* or *-d* to the words listed to make past-tense verbs. Then ask them to use the words in a paragraph to complete the Activity Master, page 108.



English Language Learners

Students may have difficulty with the abstract terms *self-respect, civil rights, and legacy*. Have volunteers read aloud each definition in the glossary. Then give an example of each concept and invite children to give their own examples.

Social Studies Focus

Social Studies Concept

Individuals in many walks of life contributed to the end of segregation and helped institute civil rights.

Activities

Writing Interview Questions

Have children write a list of 5–10 questions they would like to have asked Jackie Robinson about his career and his role in

ending segregation. Have pairs of students take turns asking one another their questions and answering them as they think Jackie Robinson might have.

Researching Civil Rights

Have children research the important events in the Civil Rights Movement, such as the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and the Montgomery bus boycott. Have them create a

time line that briefly describes these events.



The Life of a Leader

Activity Master, page 109

Explain that in a biography, a writer describes a sequence of events in a person's life. Have children complete the chart by writing the important events of Jackie Robinson's life in order.

Name _____

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Add *-ed* or *-d* to each word to make a past-tense verb.

1. **encourage** _____

2. **play** _____

3. **yell** _____

4. **join** _____

5. **receive** _____

6. **admire** _____

7. **retire** _____

Use as many of the past-tense verbs as you can to write about Jackie Robinson or the Civil Rights Movement.

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Complete the chart to show the order of important events in Jackie Robinson's life, beginning with his college years.

