Lesson 1 – Pre-Visit
19th Century Baseball

Objective: Students will be able to:
- Understand the historical impact of segregation upon the development of African American baseball.
- Identify a variety of laws and historical events that had an effect on the treatment of African Americans.
- Create a time line of significant events in the history of baseball.

Time Required: One class period

Materials Needed:
- 4x6 or 5x8 index cards.
- A copy of the "Black Baseball 1860-1910" article for each student (included).

Vocabulary:
Barnstorming - To tour an area playing exhibition games
Civil Rights - The rights to full legal, social, and economic equality extended to African Americans
Consecutive - Following one another in uninterrupted succession or order
Discrimination - Making a distinction in favor of, or against, a person based on a category to which that person belongs rather than on individual merit
Doctrine - A particular principle, position, or policy
Integration - To give members of all races, religions, and ethnic groups an equal opportunity to belong to an organization, place of business, etc.
Jim Crow Laws - Any state law discriminating against black persons
Segregation - The separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group by the use of separate facilities, restricted areas, or by other discriminatory means
Applicable Common Core State Standards:

**RI.6.1.** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RI.6.3.** Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

**RI.7.1.** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RI.7.3.** Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

**RI.8.1.** Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RI.8.3.** Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

**RH.6-8.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

**RH.6-8.5.** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

**SL.6.1., SL.7.1., SL.8.1.** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-appropriate topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
1. As a class, discuss Civil Rights in the United States. Have African Americans always had equal rights? What were attitudes towards African Americans in the past? Write any ideas and facts students bring to the discussion on the board.

2. Review students' prior knowledge about the history of the United States during the late 1800s. Following the Civil War, the nation faced problems of rebuilding the South, reuniting the states, and ensuring the rights of newly freed African Americans. During this time, African Americans looked for ways to enjoy their newfound freedom, assert their independence, and exercise their rights as American citizens.

3. Discuss that the federal government granted many rights to former slaves. The 13th amendment to the Constitution formally ended slavery. The 14th and 15th gave former slaves citizenship and gave them the right to vote.

4. Many white Americans were uncomfortable with the idea that African Americans would become their social equals. Many states began passing segregation laws, called "Jim Crow" laws.

5. Engage students in a discussion about segregation. What does the word mean? What sort of actions result from segregation?

6. "Jim Crow" laws would reduce and eventually eliminate many of the freedoms African Americans gained following the Civil War. With the Supreme Court case of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, it became legal to create separate public facilities for African Americans, ranging from transportation to schools.

7. Hand out copies of the "Black Baseball: 1860-1910" article (included). Give students 5 to 10 minutes to read the article.

8. Discuss the article as a class. Use the following questions to help guide discussion:
   - Summarize the historical events in this article. What happened? Why?
   - Why do you think that so many white baseball players were opposed to playing alongside African Americans?
   - What was the cause of African Americans’ exclusion from major league baseball?
1. Explain that students will be working together to build a time line of events related to Civil Rights in the 19th century, and the involvement of African Americans in baseball.

2. Draw a time line from 1860 to 1920 on the board, or create one on a bulletin board.

3. Divide students into pairs. Give each pair an index card.

4. Explain that each pair will be assigned an event. Students should use any reference materials available to them, including the "Black Baseball 1860-1910" article to find out about their assigned event:
   - Bud Fowler joined the Lynn Live Oaks
   - Moses Fleetwood "Fleet" Walker joined the Newark Little Giants
   - President Lincoln issued The Emancipation Proclamation
   - Southern governments began passing "Jim Crow" laws
   - The 13th Amendment was ratified
   - The 14th Amendment was ratified
   - The 15th Amendment was ratified
   - The Civil War ended
   - The Cuban Giants were organized
   - The "Gentleman's Agreement" began
   - The *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision
   - The Toledo Blue Stockings joined the International League

5. On their index cards, each pair should identify their event, the date the event took place, and write a sentence or two on why that event was significant.

6. Circulate around the room to check students' progress and provide assistance when necessary.

7. When students have finished, ask them to share their cards with the class.

8. As each group shares, have students build the time line by taping each information card to its appropriate place on the time line. When students finish presenting, your time line will be complete.
9. *Optional* In Lessons 2 and 3 of this unit, you will discuss additional eras in American History. As you work through each lesson, you may have students add important dates and events to the time line.

Conclusion:

To conclude this lesson, review that following the Civil War African Americans gained civil and political liberties, but then lost them as states passed their own segregation laws at the end of the 19th century and well into the 20th century. To check for understanding, ask students to write a one page reflection about today's lesson. If necessary, have students use the following sentence starters: Today I read about . . . I learned that . . . I would like to know more about . . .
**Time Line Answer Key:**

1863 - In the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln freed slaves in all states "in rebellion" (in other words, Confederate states).

1865 - The Civil War ended.

1865 - The 13th Amendment was approved, making all slavery illegal.

1868 - The 14th Amendment, which protected civil rights and extended citizenship to African Americans, was ratified.

1870 - The 15th Amendment was ratified, giving black male citizens the right to vote.

1877 - Many states began passing "Jim Crow" laws, which allowed for the public separation of African Americans and whites.

1878 - Bud Fowler joined the Lynn Live Oaks, becoming the first professional African American baseball player.

1884 - The Toledo Blue Stockings joined the International League. Their catcher, Moses Fleetwood Walker, became the first African American to play Major League baseball.

1885 - The Cuban Giants were organized. They became the first professional black baseball team.

1887 - Moses Fleetwood "Fleet" Walker joined the Little Giants.

1887 - A "gentlemen's agreement" prevents Major League owners from hiring African American players.

1896 - In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court ruled that blacks and whites could be segregated as long as the facilities were equal.
Black Baseball: 1860-1910

During the 1870s and 1880s, over fifty African Americans played professional baseball alongside white players. In 1878, Bud Fowler became the first African American to play baseball professionally. Fowler pitched for the Lynn Live Oaks, a minor league team based in Massachusetts. Though he was most comfortable at second base, Fowler played almost every position on the field during his baseball career.

In 1887, Fowler joined the Binghamton Crickets. Although he was hitting .350, the Crickets let him go because some white teammates did not want to play with him. Refusing to give up his career, Fowler joined a team in Vermont and hit .452. Fowler continued to play professionally until the age of 47, finally retiring in the mid-1890s.

While Fowler was the first African American to earn a salary for playing baseball, Moses Fleetwood “Fleet” Walker was the first African American to play major league baseball. In 1883, Walker signed a contract with the Toledo Blue Stockings, a minor league team. When Toledo became a major league team by joining the American
Association in 1884, Walker became the first black major leaguer in history. He quickly developed a reputation as one of the finest catchers in the game.

Moses Fleetwood "Fleet" Walker

In 1887, Walker signed with the Newark Little Giants of the International League. Later that season, the International League voted to ban any new black players from joining the league. Players like Walker, who were already under contract, were allowed to remain, but the league directors had clearly sent a message that an all-white league was preferred. Soon after, the National League and the American Association also banned black players. With this “Gentlemen’s Agreement” in place, African-American players no longer had the opportunity to play organized professional baseball.

The Cuban Giants

In order for black players to play professionally, they were left with no choice but to form their own teams. In 1885, employees of the Argyle Hotel in Babylon, New York,
organized the first all-black professional team. They called themselves the Cuban Giants, even though none of the players were from Cuba. Other all-black teams were formed around the country. Since these teams were not part of an official league, they barnstormed, travelling around the country to play exhibition games against town teams.

One of the most successful of the all-black teams was the Page Fence Giants. At one point, the Giants won 82 consecutive games. Like most of the barnstorming teams, the Giants played all of their games on the road. Yet, they traveled in style, equipped with a custom made railroad car that had sleeping quarters, a full time cook, and a porter to handle their luggage.

By 1910, more than 60 professional black teams toured the country. Unfortunately, all of them had to deal with “Jim Crow” laws. Based on a doctrine of “separate but equal,” the laws segregated blacks from whites in many public places, including schools, buses, movie theaters, restaurants, and hotels. Yet, there was little equality. White restaurants, hotels, and theaters were generally cleaner and more attractive than facilities for African Americans.

Jim Crow laws affected almost every part of society, including baseball. Many ballparks and stadiums had separate seating sections for black and white customers. As black ballplayers barnstormed around the country, they faced constant reminders of not being wanted, particularly in restaurants and hotels. Black players would continue to face such discrimination well into the 20th century.
**Word Bank:**

- **Barnstorming** - to tour an area playing exhibition games.
- **Consecutive** - following one another in uninterrupted succession or order.
- **Discrimination** - making a distinction in favor of or against a person based on a category to which that person belongs rather than on individual merit.
- **Doctrine** - a particular principle, position, or policy.
- **Jim Crow Laws** - any state law discriminating against black persons.
- **Segregation** - the separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group by the use of separate facilities, restricted areas, or by other discriminatory means.