Objective: Students will be able to:
• Understand social conditions and race relations affecting African Americans during the first half of the 20th century.
• Identify important individuals associated with the formation and success of the Negro leagues.
• Understand the importance of Negro leagues teams to the African American community.

Time Required: 1-2 class periods

Materials Needed:
- A variety of baseball cards - 1 for each student in the class
- Negro Leagues Players photo page (included)
- Copies of the Negro Leagues Baseball Card graphic organizers for each student (included)
- Card stock
- Glue or glue sticks
- Internet access for student research
- Ken Burns' Baseball: Inning 5 (PBS) and television/DVD player

Vocabulary:
Barnstorming - To tour an area playing exhibition games
Civil Rights - The rights to full legal, social, and economic equality extended to blacks
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
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
Racism - Hatred or intolerance of another race or other races
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
Civil Rights History: Before You Could Say "Jackie Robinson" – Level 2

Applicable Common Core State Standards:

W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.7.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

W.7.8., W.8.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.7.9., W.8.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
1. Begin by writing the word *discrimination* on the board. Engage students in a discussion about discrimination. What does it mean to be discriminated against?

2. Explain that in the 1870s and 1880s, black ballplayers played alongside white ballplayers on professional baseball teams. In 1887, however, team owners adopted a “gentleman’s agreement” that no new contracts would be given to black ballplayers. The gentleman’s agreement effectively forced black ballplayers from all professional leagues by 1900. This coincided with the rise of “Black Codes” and “Jim Crow” laws that legalized discrimination and limited basic rights for African Americans.

3. Discuss that in order for black players to play professionally, they formed their own teams. In 1885 the first all-black professional team was organized. Occasionally, some teams tried to get together and form organized leagues, but the leagues were all short-lived. That changed in 1920, when Andrew "Rube" Foster founded the Negro National League (NNL). The NNL signaled the start of the Negro leagues, which would continue to operate in various forms through the early 1960s.

4. Screen the following chapters from Ken Burns' *Baseball: Inning 5* to illustrate the importance of the Negro leagues to African American society and culture.
   - 2. "Shadow Ball"
   - 3. "Like We Invented the Game"
   - 5. "Midnight Rider"
   - 7. "Josh"
   - 9. "Carrying the News"
   - 11. "Plain Prejudice"
   - 16. "I Ain't Sorry"

5. Review the film segments as a class. Use the following questions to help guide discussion:
   - Why was it necessary for black players to form their own baseball leagues?
   - Compare and contrast the playing conditions experienced by Negro leagues players and white major league players in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s.
   - For Negro leagues players, how did life both on and off the playing field demonstrate that the idea of "separate but equal" was not possible?
   - How did the style of baseball differ in the Negro leagues?
6. Ensure that students understand that Negro leagues ballplayers had to play under much harsher conditions than professional white players. Travel was hard, and most players faced discrimination and segregation in the towns and cities where they played.

7. Introduce the activity.
1. Distribute the modern baseball cards. Ask students what kind of information they see on the cards.

2. Explain that students will be designing baseball cards for Negro leagues baseball players. Model an example on the board for students to see:

   **Player:** Jose Mendez  
   **Position(s):** Pitcher  
   **Team(s):** Cuban Stars  
   **Dates of Career:** 1908-1926  
   **Batting Average:** .312  
   **Honors:** Inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006  
   **Significance:** He once pitched a perfect game.

3. Assign a baseball player to each student (or pair of students):
   - "Cool Papa" Bell  
   - Buck Leonard  
   - John Henry "Pop" Lloyd  
   - Josh Gibson  
   - Judy Johnson  
   - Leon Day  
   - Martín Dihigo  
   - Monte Irvin  
   - Oscar Charleston  
   - Ray Dandridge  
   - Rube Foster  
   - Satchel Paige  
   - Smokey Joe Williams  
   - Turkey Stearnes  
   - Wilber Rogan

4. Distribute the Negro Leagues Baseball Card graphic organizers (included). Direct students to look up information about their players using the websites listed below:
   - [http://baseballhall.org/hall-famers](http://baseballhall.org/hall-famers)
   - [http://www.negroleaguebaseball.com/players(players_index.html)](http://www.negroleaguebaseball.com/players(players_index.html)
5. As students find the information about their players, they should fill in the appropriate boxes on the graphic organizers. The time required for this activity will vary based on the number of students who have access to the Internet at any given time.

6. When all students have finished their graphic organizers, hand out the pieces of card stock, and the photographs of the different players.

7. Instruct students to paste their graphic organizers on one side of their piece of card stock, and the players' photographs on the other side.

8. Display the finished baseball cards around the room.

Conclusion:

To conclude this lesson, have students share their baseball cards with the class by reading aloud the name of their player and sharing a fact they found interesting. To check for understanding, give students a homework assignment to write a letter from the perspective of the player whose card they created. The letter should inform the player's family about what life is like as a player in the Negro leagues, and might discuss interesting events that happened to this player while barnstorming.

Optional:

Contact the Education Department at the Baseball Hall of Fame via e-mail (education@baseballhalloffame.org) to request plaque postcards for each of the Hall of Fame players referenced in this lesson.
### Negro Leagues Baseball Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Player Name:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Player Nickname:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Position(s):</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Team(s):</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Dates of Career:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Honors:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Significance:</strong></td>
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Time Line Events II

*If you have completed the time line activity from Lesson 1, you can create an extension of the time line for the period of 1900-1945. Have students add important dates in African American baseball history.

1916-19 - Great Migration: Mass migration of African Americans from the rural South to industrial cities in the North began.

1920 - Rube Foster organized the first black professional baseball league (Negro National League).

1923 - The Eastern Colored League was formed.

1924 - The first Negro World Series was played between the Eastern Colored League and the Negro National League champions.

1920s - Harlem Renaissance: African-American music, art, and literature flourished in New York City.

1925 - Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters: A. Philip Randolph organized this influential African-American labor union, the first of its kind.


1939 - Marian Anderson at Lincoln Memorial: Denied permission by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to sing in Constitution Hall, Marian Anderson was invited by Eleanor Roosevelt to perform at the Lincoln Memorial.

1939-45 World War II: Over one million black soldiers fought in segregated units.
Negro Leagues Photos

James "Cool Papa" Bell

Oscar Charleston
Martín Dihigo

Andrew "Rube" Foster
Josh Gibson

Monte Irvin
Smokey Joe Williams