Lesson 5 – Post-Visit
Baseball After Jackie:
Ongoing Issues of Equality

Objective: Students will be able to:
• Reflect on the information gained from their learning experience with the Baseball Hall of Fame.
• Identify events and individuals of note in the history of African American baseball following Jackie Robinson.
• Consider ongoing issues of racial equality in Major League Baseball.

Time Required: 1-2 class periods

Advance Preparation:
- Schedule a session for your class in your school library.
- Request a variety of books and other print sources that have information about Major League Baseball since 1950.

Materials Needed:
- Writing materials
- Internet access for student research

Vocabulary:
Integration - To give members of all races, religions, and ethnic groups an equal opportunity to belong to an organization, place of business, etc.
Applicable Common Core State Standards:

RI.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

W.9-10.1., W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.9-10.2., W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.9-10.7., W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W.9-10.8., W.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

W.9-10.9., W.11-12.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
1. To begin this lesson, discuss that after Jackie Robinson joined the Dodgers in 1947, some teams were quick to integrate, while others held off as long as possible. By 1959, every Major League team’s roster was integrated, but in baseball, as in all parts of American life, questions concerning true equality of opportunity remained unresolved. Despite progress on many fronts in baseball, issues of race continue to be discussed today.

2. Explain that students will be charting the progress of African Americans in baseball following the breaking of the color barrier in 1947.

3. Have students create a time line on the board or on a bulletin board. The time line should start in 1947 and finish at the present day. Allow students to calculate an appropriate scale for the time line. For example, 1” = 1 year.

4. Go to the school library during your scheduled time slot. Explain that students will be researching various “firsts” and notable accomplishments by black players, coaches, managers and executives to add to the timeline created in step 3.

5. Divide students into pairs. Allow each pair to choose (or assign) one of the following events or individuals:
   - First African Americans to appear in the All-Star Game
   - First African American pitcher to win a World Series game
   - First African American to throw a no-hitter
   - Baseball’s first black coach
   - First major league team to field an all-black lineup
   - First black player to become a team captain
   - First African American umpire
   - Frank Robinson
   - Bob Gibson
   - Hank Aaron
   - Rickey Henderson
   - Bill White
6. Allow students time to research and take notes on their event or individual using the Internet and any print resources available. Students may also print/copy relevant photographs.

7. Have each pair of students turn in a 1-page overview of their event or individual.

8. Back in the classroom, have students complete their time line by writing down events and people in the appropriate order, and adding photos.

9. Ask students for their observations about the events and individuals on the time line. Earlier, you noted that it took over a decade for every Major League team to have at least one black player on its roster. How long did it take for African Americans to reach management positions in baseball? How long did it take for African Americans to work in MLB’s front office?

10. Have students compare the events on their timeline with other events in civil rights history. In what ways did baseball lead the nation in civil rights? In what ways did it lag behind? Students may use their textbooks to reference specific dates.

11. Point out that Jackie Robinson spent his post-baseball career working for civil rights. In 1972, just a few days before he died, Robinson attended a World Series game that included a commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of baseball’s integration. He had been vocal in his protest of baseball’s poor record in hiring minorities for managerial and front-office positions. In his speech, Robinson pushed baseball to employ blacks in more capacities: "As proud as I am to be here today, I will be even more proud when the day comes that I look down the third base line and see a black face as manager of a major league team."

12. Explain that each year, The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport publishes a Racial and Gender Report Card for Major League Baseball. This yearly study provides an interesting look at the legacy of Jackie Robinson by tracking MLB hiring practices.

13. Read the following quote to students:

   “In celebrating this 65th anniversary of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier, it is vital that we focus on the dream he set forth for baseball. Jackie wanted to see a diverse mixture of people participating in the sport through all levels: on the field as coaches and players, as well as those in the front office. Although the total percentage of players of color has steadily risen over the years, there has been a concern about the percentage of African-American players in Major League Baseball. (Continued on next page)
“For the 2012 season, there was a small increase to 8.8 percent from 8.5 percent in 2011. This has been a concern of Major League Baseball and leaders in the African American community.”
~ Richard E. Lapchick – 2012 Racial and Gender Report Card

14. To provide some context, tell students that in 1975, 27% of MLB players were African American, and in 1995, the percentage was 19%.

15. Discuss the 2012 results of the Racial and Gender Report Card as a class. Were students surprised by the results? Why or why not? What struggles still exist for African Americans in baseball today? Is it important to have all people represented in professional sports? Why or why not?

Conclusion:

To complete this lesson, for homework, have students use the Internet to look up news articles related to the decline of African American players involved with Major League Baseball. Students should answer the following questions in a 3-5 page essay, properly citing all sources referenced:

- What are some possible reasons that the percentages of African American players in Major League Baseball have declined in recent decades?
- What are some specific ways that Major League Baseball could increase the number of African American players involved in the game?