



## Lesson 3 – Pre-Visit As If You Were There: Part 2 Sports Writing

Objective: Students will be able to:

- Understand the purpose and form of a post-game report.
- Read a post-game report and deconstruct its form and structure.
- Write a post-game report.

Time Required: 1 class period

Materials Needed:

- A copy of a recent baseball box score found online or in a newspaper
- A copy of the “Post-Game Report” article for each student (included)
- Highlighters or colored pencils
- A copy of the “Writing about Game Day” worksheet for each student (included)

Vocabulary:

**Jargon** - The language, especially the vocabulary, unique to a sport, profession, or group



Applicable Common Core State Standards:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4, L.4.4, L.5.4** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-appropriate reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.5, L.4.5, L.5.5** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.4, RI.4.4, RI.5.4** Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade-appropriate topic or subject area*.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3, W.4.3, W.5.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.4., W.4.4** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.5, W.4.5** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.5** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.



## Lesson

1. To begin this lesson, ask students how a fan might find out about a game that he or she was not able to watch or listen to live.
2. Show students an example of a baseball box score. Explain that Henry Chadwick created the box score in the 1840s. It told the story of the game – the players, their hits and the score. Baseball has changed since then and so has the box score, but the basics are the same. Today’s box score tells a lot more about the game – many more statistics, and even lists the umpires and the weather.
3. Ask students, “What is missing from the box score that would help a fan understand what happened during the game?”
4. Discuss that a fan who only read a box score would miss the colorful description of the game’s action that a fan would get from a radio or television reporter. For that reason, fans rely on post-game reports.
5. Remind students that post-game reports can be found in sports sections of newspapers, and also on websites. They are written to tell the events of the game, and to help the reader feel some of the excitement of the game. To do this, post-game reports often use the following features:
  - **Sports Jargon:** This is another word for technical language that is specific to a sport. Some examples might be the names of player positions or specific plays.
  - **Names:** Post-game reports will use the names of players, teams, and special competitions. For example, the “New York Yankees”, or the “World Series”.
  - **Colorful Language:** These are words and phrases that help the reader get the feeling of the game. For example, the phrase a “hard fought game” would help the reader understand that the team tried very hard.
  - **Opinions:** Sports writers often share their thoughts about the players, the teams and the game.



6. Once you have covered the various elements of a post-game report, provide each student with a copy of the “Post-Game Report ~ Cardinals v. Rangers World Series 2011” included with this lesson. Read the report aloud, explaining any confusing vocabulary words. Ask students to listen carefully, read along, and be prepared to point out examples of some of the features just discussed.
7. After you finish reading, have students point out a few examples of each:
  - **Sports Jargon**
  - **Names**
  - **Colorful Language**
  - **Opinions**
8. Organize students into four groups. Provide each group with a highlighter or colored pencil. Explain that each group will carefully analyze the report, look for and highlight examples of one of the features covered: Sports Jargon, Names, Colorful Language, and Opinions.
9. Give students several minutes to re-read the report and work together to highlight examples of their assigned feature. Circulate among groups and provide assistance as necessary.
10. Come back together as a class. Have each group report on examples they found of their assigned feature.
11. Introduce the activity.



## Activity

1. Ask students to think about a sporting event that they remember watching. It could be an event that they saw in person, or one that they watched on television or listened to on the radio.
2. Have all students take out blank sheets of paper. Have each student write down the four features of a post-game report as discussed earlier in this lesson.
  - **Sports Jargon**
  - **Names**
  - **Colorful Language**
  - **Opinions**
3. Tell students to take a few minutes to think about their sporting events, and write down applicable words or phrases under each heading.
4. You may have students share some of their word or phrase ideas with the class before moving on.
5. Now, pass out a “Writing about Game Day” worksheet to each student. Explain that students are to write their own post-game reports about their sporting events of choice using the words and phrases they came up with earlier.
6. Encourage students to follow the writing process. Have scrap paper available.

### **Conclusion:**

To complete this lesson and check for understanding, have students share their stories with the class or a classmate. You may choose to edit students’ work and allow students to turn in final drafts for full credit.





## Post-Game Report ~ Cardinals v. Rangers World Series 2011, Game 6<sup>1</sup>

By Gene Wojciechowski / ESPN.com

ST. LOUIS -- This is what baseball history sounds like:

"This is the best game I've ever been a part of, ever seen," St. Louis Cardinals outfielder Skip Schumaker said as Thursday night turned to the wee hours of Friday morning. "I've got to think it's gotta be the best game in World Series history, in my opinion. I know I'm only 30 years old ... but this has got to go down in history."

David Freese drove in the Cardinals' final three runs with his walk-off homer and a two-run triple in the ninth.

And this: "I've never seen a baseball game like that before," shortstop Daniel Descalso said. "That's got to be the greatest game I've been a part of, seen, and heard about. That's got to be one for the record books."

And this: "We won!" Cardinals reliever Octavio Dotel yelled as he happily stomped toward his locker. "We won! It's over! It doesn't matter!"

This is what baseball history looks like:

A Busch Stadium scoreboard that read -- and I still can't quite believe it -- Cardinals 10, Texas Rangers 9.

11 wonderfully bizarre, deliciously dramatic innings, over a span of 4 hours, 33 minutes. With five ties and six lead changes, the final one coming on St. Louis native David Freese's no-out, 3-2-count bomb that flew over the center-field wall and plopped, exhausted, onto the batter's eye grass.

A Cardinals fan waved a sign in the stands.

### *Deep In The Heartbreak of Texas*

On the bottom floor of the stadium, Rangers team president Nolan Ryan walked down the corridor and past the closed doors of the Cardinals' clubhouse, where you could hear the faint thumping of music and the occasional scream of happiness. Ryan, whose dark scowl matched the color of his black overcoat, didn't break stride.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/columns/story?columnist=wojciechowski\\_gene&page=wojciechowski-111027&sportCat=mlb](http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/columns/story?columnist=wojciechowski_gene&page=wojciechowski-111027&sportCat=mlb)

What began as a disjointed, error-filled game, ended as something historic. You knew this by the look on the Cardinals' -- and the Rangers' -- faces.

Baseball players are trained, almost conditioned to always look ahead. The next pitch. The next at-bat. The next inning. The next game.

And it's true. All the Cardinals did was extend this World Series to a seventh and final game. They didn't win a championship Thursday night. Instead, they lived to play again Friday.

But the Cardinals couldn't help themselves. As hard as they tried to look forward, they kept going back to the bottom of the ninth, when they scored two runs to tie the game. And two more runs to tie it in the bottom of the 10th. And one, brilliant run in the bottom of the 11th to win it.

"That was amazing," said reliever Jason Motte, one of the combined 15 pitchers used in the game. "We were down, come back. Down, come back. Back and forth. We haven't given up all year. This is what we do."

They did it late in the season, overcoming a 10½-game deficit to squeeze and squirm their way into the playoffs on the final day. And they did it in the late-October chill, squeezing and squirming their way into a seventh and deciding World Series game.

"Pretty neat, isn't it?" said Chris Carpenter, presumably the Game 7 starter for the Cardinals. "It all comes down to one game. It's amazing it all comes down to one game."

It's also amazing that I saw Cardinals fans bolting up the stairs and out of the stadium when the Rangers took a 7-4 lead into the top of the eighth inning. Hadn't they learned anything from the regular season?

"The way that we fight, I think that will show you how special this club is," said Albert Pujols, who remains a Cardinal for at least one more day.

It was Pujols whose one-out double in the bottom of the ninth began the first of three late St. Louis rallies. And it was Pujols who pointed two hands at Freese after the young third baseman tripled to right to tie the game, 7-7, three batters later.

In the 10th, with Texas leading, 9-8, and first base open, Texas manager Ron Washington intentionally walked Pujols -- for the fifth time during this Series. Pujols dropped his bat and as he jogged toward first, he looked at the next batter, Lance Berkman, and clapped his hands.

Berkman singled to center to drive in Jon Jay to tie the game.

And in the 11th, Pujols was part of the welcoming committee that greeted Freese after the game-winning dinger.

Asked if the victory had any extra meaning, Pujols shrugged.

"Not really," he said. "Because we've been in this situation when we were down. A game is a game."

Pujols is nuts. This wasn't just a game. It was more than that. It was something you'll tell your kids about. It was something Pujols will tell *his* kids about.

The Cardinals were down to their final strike twice. Twice.

They won despite committing three errors. Despite leaving 11 men on base. Despite going 3-of-12 with runners in scoring position.

But somehow they regrouped when it mattered most. It helped, a lot, that the Rangers made two errors of their own, left 12 men on base and went 4-of-15 with runners in scoring position. But Washington said it best:

"You have to tip your hat to the Cardinals, the way they fought tonight and took the game from us."

They did, didn't they? The Cardinals pried Game 6 out of the Rangers' hands.

So for the first time since 2002 and only the fifth time since 1988, a World Series will reach a Game 7. No matter how it shakes out, this Series has lived up to its name.

A fall classic.