Lesson 1 - Pre-Visit
A Community of Baseball Fans

Objective: Students will be able to:

- Design and conduct a survey to learn more about the diverse group of people known as baseball fans.
- Create a method for analyzing survey results.
- Display survey responses in graphic form.

Time Required: 1 class period for lesson; longer for survey project

Materials Needed:
- Pencils and paper
- Graph paper

Vocabulary:
Camaraderie - A good feeling existing between friends
Closed-ended question - A question that results in a fixed, often single word, response such as "yes" or "no."
Diversity - The condition of having or being composed of differing elements, especially the inclusion of different types of people in a group or organization
Open-ended question - A question that cannot be answered with a fixed response such as "yes", "no", or "don't know."
Respondent - A person who responds to a poll
Survey - A data collection tool used to gather information about individuals.
Applicable Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4, W.7.4, W.8.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.Math.Content.6.SP.A.1 Recognize a statistical question as one that anticipates variability in the data related to the question and accounts for it in the answers.

CCSS.Math.Content.7.SP.A.1 Understand that statistics can be used to gain information about a population by examining a sample of the population; generalizations about a population from a sample are valid only if the sample is representative of that population. Understand that random sampling tends to produce representative samples and support valid inferences.

Additional Relevant National Learning Standards:
(Based on Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning)

Civics. Standard 11. Level III [Grade: 6-8]. Understands the role of diversity in American life and the importance of shared values, political beliefs, and civic beliefs in an increasingly diverse American society

Geography. Standard 10. Level III [Grade: 6-8]. Understands the nature and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics
1. As a class, discuss community. The word "community" actually has many meanings. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, community could refer to:
   - "the people with common interests living in a particular area"
   - "an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location"
   - "a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society"

2. Discuss that the place in which you live is a community made up of many different people. Everyone has a different background, different skills, and different interests. When people of similar backgrounds, skills, or interests get together, they also form communities - even though they may not live in the same place.

3. To help clarify this idea, conduct a class exercise in which students determine what communities they belong to. Give students different prompts such as:
   - What sports do you like?
   - What school do you attend?
   - What is your favorite subject in school?
   - What's your favorite food?
   - What's your favorite thing to do after school?

4. Discuss that some communities to which students belong are the same. All of the students in your class attend the same school and live in the same geographic area. However, students also belong to many different communities based on their interests. Perhaps your class includes students who belong to the soccer-fan community, or the cheese pizza-lovers community.

5. Discuss that despite all of the students' varying interests and their different communities, they all remain part of the one community of your school and your home town.

6. To demonstrate, ask one of the interest-based communities (i.e. the math-is-my-favorite-subject community) to stand up and come to the front of the room.
7. Ask students, "Would our school community be the same if all of these students suddenly left?" The empty seats should help students realize that your school community would be very different without this group of people.

8. Ask students, "If this group of students left, what would we lose?" Discuss how the loss of the group would impact your school community.

9. Discuss that the diversity of your community is what makes it strong. Everyone brings something different to the larger group.

10. Conclude with the example of a baseball team. A major league team brings together 25 players from all over the world. Each player has a different background. Some players come from the United States, and some come from other countries. Often, they speak many languages. Each player also has a different set of skills. Some are great hitters, some are great pitchers, some are great fielders, and some are base stealers. The players form a community - a team. A team can't win with 25 pitchers. In order to win, the team needs everyone's skills.

11. All of the players bring something unique to the game, and everyone contributes to helping the team win. In the same way, your community is stronger because of its diversity.

12. Introduce the activity.
1. Begin the activity by asking if there are any students who belong to the baseball fan community.

2. Discuss that baseball is a game that brings people together. The ballpark is a meeting ground for people of all backgrounds and the game unites fans. Explain that you would like to find out more about the baseball fan community. For example:
   - How often do they watch baseball?
   - Why is baseball important to them?
   - Do they give anything back to the game?

3. Ask students, "How could I find this information?"

4. As a class, brainstorm a list of ways that more information could be gathered about fans. Some suggested responses may include:
   - Read a fan's blog or visit a fan's website.
   - Do a survey.
   - Interview someone who watches baseball.

5. Explain that one of the best ways to find out this sort of information is to do a survey. Discuss that surveys are used to find out all sorts of information including what TV shows are popular, who people plan to vote for in an election, and what brand of breakfast cereal they like best.

6. As a class, brainstorm a list of questions that might be useful for a survey of baseball fans. Record student ideas on the board or on a sheet of chart paper. Possible questions include:
   - How long have you been a fan?
   - Do you watch games on TV?
   - Do you attend live games?
   - Do you fill out a score card at a live game?
   - Do you own a baseball jersey or cap?
• Does anyone in your family play baseball?
• Do you participate in fantasy baseball?

7. Explain that there are two different kinds of questions, each has a different purpose. **Open-ended questions** are meant to invite the other person to offer more information, or tell stories. Open-ended questions are commonly used in interviews.

8. Work with the class to develop a list of open-ended questions. Record student ideas. Some examples include:
   - How did you become a baseball fan?
   - Which team is your favorite and why?
   - What do you think of today's game compared to the way the game was when you were a child?
   - Can you describe your favorite experience as a baseball fan?

9. Explain that even though the questions may seem suitable, open questions may not be very useful in a survey, because they take a long time to record and they may be harder to analyze.

10. Discuss that sometimes, offering multiple choice answers to an open-ended question is more useful. For example,
    - What is the best aspect of being a baseball fan?
      - The feeling of pride in your team
      - Being in the stadium with other fans
      - Following the team throughout the season

11. Explain that **closed-ended questions** are questions resulting in a 'yes' or 'no' or other simple answer. Using closed-ended questions can often result in short, quick answers that are useful in a survey.

12. Work with the class to develop a list of closed-ended questions for the survey. Record student ideas. Some examples include:
    - How often do you attend a baseball game?
    - Have you ever played baseball?
    - What team(s) do you support?
    - How many years have you been a fan?

13. Review all student ideas for survey questions recorded on the board. Then have students vote to select 10-15 questions to use for their survey.
14. Have students practice taking the survey prior to interviewing others to familiarize themselves with the questions, and to make sure they understand each question.

15. Discuss who students will survey, how students plan to access their respondents, and any additional options such as conducting the surveys by phone, e-mail, or snail mail.

16. Give students one week to survey five people. Offer students five points for each completed survey they turn in.

17. When all surveys have been returned, tally the results. As a class, determine the most effective way of showing the survey results in graph form. Graph the survey results accordingly.

Conclusion:

To conclude this lesson, have students write a journal entry in response to the following questions: Who makes up the wide range of people that are baseball fans? What are some things that fans have in common with one another? What are some of their differences? How does diversity among fans benefit everyone? Discuss the importance of camaraderie among baseball fans.