Lesson 5 - Post-Visit
The Dodger Debate

Objective: Students will be able to:
- Explain the main issues surrounding the Brooklyn Dodgers move to Los Angeles in 1957.
- Work in groups to research and develop an argument from the perspective of a specific interest group affected by the debate question.
- Present their group's viewpoint, clearly identifying and describing its principal argument and providing examples that support the argument.
- Reflect on the information gained from their learning experience with the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Time Required: 3 class periods

Advance Preparation:
- Select a variety of books and other print sources that have information about the Brooklyn Dodgers, the L.A. Dodgers, and Walter O'Malley (or request such sources from a school librarian).
- Schedule at least one session for your class in your school library.

Potential Sources:
Books:
- *Brooklyn's Dodgers: The Bums, the Borough, and the Best of Baseball, 1947 - 1957* by Carl E. Prince
- *Bums: An Oral History of the Brooklyn Dodgers* by Peter Golenbock and Paul Dickson
- *The Greatest Ballpark Ever: Ebbets Field and the Story of the Brooklyn Dodgers* by Bob McGee
- *Forever Blue: The True Story of Walter O'Malley, Baseball's Most Controversial Owner, and the Dodgers of Brooklyn and Los Angeles* by Michael D'Antonio

Newspaper Articles (all may be found at http://news.google.com/archivesearch):
Materials Needed:
- Internet access for student research
- A variety of books and other sources (see above)
- Index cards

Vocabulary:
Asset - A useful or valuable quality, person, or thing
Stakeholder - Any party that has an interest (a "stake") in a project

Applicable Common Core State Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.7 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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.9, W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1, SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate 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 and persuasively.
Applicable Common Core State Standards (Continued):

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.6, SL.11-12.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

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

**Geography. Standard 6.** Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

**Historical Understanding. Standard 2.** Understands the historical perspective
1. Start this lesson by asking students to reflect on their experience with the Baseball Hall of Fame and brainstorm reasons why a professional sports team might choose to re-locate. As students offer their suggestions, record them on the board or on a piece of chart paper.

2. Discuss that one of the most controversial issues in professional sports is the mobility of franchises. Teams in all four major sports leagues (the NBA, NHL, NFL, and MLB) have been able to move their franchises from one city to another, with the approval of the other teams in the league.

3. These moves are controversial because many people perceive professional sports teams as an asset to the local economy and essential to an area's identity. The presence of a professional sports franchise from one of the four major sports is often regarded as way for a city or state to gain "big league" status.

4. Ask students who the stakeholders are in a debate about a team's potential re-location. Record student ideas on the board. Ideas include:
   - Fans (from the city the team is leaving, and the city the team is moving to)
   - Team owners
   - Community officials (mayor, council members, etc.)
   - Community business owners

5. Review students' ideas. Ask students which people might be opposed to a team re-location? Which people would support it? Why?

6. Explain that students will be debating the issue of team location using one of the most controversial team re-locations in baseball history: The Brooklyn Dodgers' move to Los Angeles in 1957.

7. Take some index cards — one for each student in the class — and write down the name of one of the following groups of stakeholders on each card: 1) Brooklyn Fans, 2) Walter O'Malley (Dodgers Owner), 3) L.A. Community Officials, 4) Brooklyn Business Owners. Create at least three index cards for each interest group. Then, let students randomly draw an index card and form a small group with others who drew the same interest group cards.
Day 1

1. Provide students with the following scenario:

   It's 1955. New York City is the "capital of baseball." The Yankees, Giants, and Brooklyn Dodgers are fierce rivals of one another. Thanks to television broadcasts, fans all over the country follow the New York teams. Nicknamed the "Bums" the Dodgers had been underdogs for decades, but now they are a great team (they have just won the World Series!) and their fans are among the most loyal in all of Major League Baseball. The Dodgers have come to represent the heart and soul of Brooklyn.

2. Explain that each group will research and develop arguments from the perspective of their assigned stakeholder group for a classroom debate on the re-location of the Brooklyn Dodgers.

3. Go to the school library during your scheduled time slot. During this visit, each group should do research into the "Dodger Debate" using both primary and secondary sources. Each group should use the available sources to take notes on the causes of the re-location debate. Whenever possible, students ought to note any details that will help them better understand the perspective of their stakeholder group.

4. Students should spend the class period conducting research and taking notes. If they need more time, they may continue research outside of class.

5. Each student must create a page of sources consulted for this project, properly cited.

Day 2

6. On this day, the stakeholder groups should work together to review their notes, identify the position of their stakeholder group, and identify, at minimum, four quality arguments to support their position.

7. Groups must prepare to present their arguments in a three-minute presentation.
Day 3

8. Prepare your classroom for a debate. The classroom should be configured to allow enough space for students in each stakeholder group to present their arguments. Feel free to have fun with the set-up and place images around your classroom to make it Brooklyn City Hall in 1955.

9. When it is time to debate, each group should give a three-minute presentation that presents the group’s viewpoint, clearly identifies and describes its principal arguments, and provides examples that support those arguments.

10. Once the debate is complete, students may abandon their assigned positions and discuss the issue.

Conclusion:

To conclude this lesson, read students the following paragraph:

Team owners are split on the issue of team relocation. Most owners understand that much of the value of their team depends on fan loyalty and that loyalty decreases when teams move. However, from a purely business perspective, if another city is more willing to provide financial support for a team, there is little reason for the owner to stay put.

To check for understanding, have students write a 1-page journal entry in the voice of a baseball team owner. The journal entry should address what they would choose to do if faced with the decision of moving their team.