Lesson 1 – Pre-Visit
Right Off the Bat:
Getting to Know Baseball

Objective: Students will be able to:
- Review field positions in baseball.
- Discover the types of equipment used by players in each field position.
- Discuss the purpose of different pieces of equipment and identify how a player benefits from using each.

Time Required: 1 class period

Materials Needed:
- A television & a DVD player or cable access  
  OR
- Access to a live baseball game (high school, college, or minor league games work well)
- A copy of the "Baseball Equipment" worksheet for each student (included)
- Classroom internet access (optional)

Vocabulary:
Benefit - A useful aid
Observe - To watch carefully, and pay close attention to detail
Applicable Common Core State Standards:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.8** Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.8** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.8** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

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

**Technology. Standard 3. Level II [Grade 3-5].** Understands the relationships among science, technology, society, and the individual

**Technology. Standard 4. Level II [Grade 3-5].** Understands the nature of technological design

**Technology. Standard 6. Level II [Grade 3-5].** Understands the nature and uses of different forms of technology
1. To begin this lesson ask students, "How many of you have ever played baseball, softball or tee-ball before?" "How many of you have ever watched a game either live or on television?"

2. Gauge students' familiarity with baseball by asking questions such as:
   - How is the game played?
   - How does a team win?
   - What do you want to do as a player?
   - What do you want to do as a team?
   - What is the job of the coach?

4. Draw an outline of a baseball diamond on the board. Review the field positions on a baseball team:
   - Outfield: Left Field, Right Field, Center Field
   - Infield: First Base, Second Base, Third Base, Shortstop
   - Pitcher
   - Catcher

5. If your students are brand new to the game of baseball and require a more in-depth explanation of the game, the website "How Stuff Works" from the Discovery Channel (http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/baseball.htm) is very helpful. It explains the game, the field, and the positions in easy-to-understand language. It also includes pictures and video.

6. Discuss that in the major leagues, little leagues, or even sandlot baseball, players at each field position on the baseball diamond need some sort of equipment in order to play the game.

7. Ask students to name some of the equipment pieces they are familiar with from their own experiences with baseball, softball and tee-ball.

8. Explain that students will be "equipment detectives" as they observe equipment at work in a baseball game.
1. Give each student a Baseball Equipment worksheet. Explain that students will be watching a game of baseball (either on TV or live), and they are to fill out their worksheets as they watch.

2. On their worksheets, students should make note of the following:
   - The type of equipment used (if students do not know the name of the equipment, they can draw a picture)
   - The field positions that use that equipment
   - How that equipment helps a player

3. Watch the game.

4. After watching the game, review the pieces of baseball equipment observed by the students. Have students share how each piece of equipment protects a baseball player, or helps make their job easier. Possible equipment examples include:
   - **Batting helmet** - A helmet protects a baseball player if a ball accidentally hits him or her in the head.
   - **Batting glove** - Not all batters choose to wear batting gloves, but they help prevent blisters on the hands of batters. They also absorb sweat that would make the bat slippery. Some players also wear these gloves to protect their hands while sliding into base.
   - **Fielding glove** - Each glove looks a little different based on a player's position. A glove helps a player by creating a pocket in which to catch the ball.
   - **Catcher's equipment** - A catcher wears a helmet with a faceguard, a chest protector, shin guards, and a special padded glove.

**Conclusion:**

To complete this lesson and check for understanding, have each student write an opinion-based journal response explaining which one piece of equipment they believe is most important for a fielder to have and why.
As you watch a baseball game, write down different types of equipment that you see used by the players.

If you don't know the name of a piece of equipment, you can draw a picture instead. The first row has been filled in for you.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Which Players Use This Equipment?</th>
<th>How Does This Equipment Help the Player?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cleats</td>
<td>Infielders, Outfielders, Pitchers, Catchers</td>
<td>Cleats help players get a grip on the dirt or grass when they are running or changing direction.</td>
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