Objective: In completing this lesson, students will:

- Examine historical data from various perspectives, including museum and library collections, player contracts, labor agreements, organizational structures, artifacts and primary sources.
- Compare and contrast models of resolving differences throughout the various player organizations in baseball's labor history - such as individual contracts, management philosophies, meet and confer, collective bargaining, mediation, and arbitration.
- Understand through research, discussion, and role play: human and civil rights with responsibilities; the purpose and concept of organizing a labor union; the decision-making process that defines the employer-employee relationship, including negotiation, conflict resolution and contract enforcement.

Time Required: One class period, or as the teacher sees fit.
Post-Program Classroom Activities

(Students should choose one of the following activities to work on, either as individuals or in groups.)

1. Compare the salary, benefits and working conditions of minor league baseball players to those of major league players. Find examples of photos and primary source documents, as well as testimonials from local players and owners.

2. Conduct a comparative analysis of employment conditions in Major League Baseball, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, the Negro leagues and Minor League Baseball. Include such factors as contracts, compensation and working conditions.

3. Research and role-play a panel discussion involving players from the major leagues, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League and the Negro leagues. The characters should discuss labor issues related to their respective leagues and selected eras.

4. Evaluate the implications and repercussions of a labor strike or lockout as a means of resolving conflicts and pressuring the other side to gain an advantage in the process of collective bargaining. Research and report on an actual labor strike, either in baseball or American history, including the economic, social, political and industrial impact of a work stoppage.
5. Conduct a class debate on the role of a labor union in professional baseball. Do players of such status actually need to be represented in their contract negotiations? Choose both sides of the issue, discussing the pros and cons of player representation in collective bargaining.

6. Examine the role of the National Baseball Hall of Fame in documenting baseball's labor history. What power or influence, if any, does the Hall of Fame have in representing the tradition of player representation and performance?

7. Document the economic effect of player-owner relations in the history of well-known baseball controversies, such as the Black Sox scandal of 1919 or the joint holdout of Hall of Fame pitching greats, Don Drysdale and Sandy Koufax, in 1966. How did labor-management conflicts lead to these predicaments?

8. Compare the Major League Baseball Players Association with other professional labor unions, such as those representing teachers, autoworkers, electricians, etc.

9. Consider the economic effects and labor implications of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in 1947. To what extent were players and labor-management relations impacted by the advent of civil rights? How do current contracts protect civil rights and defend players against discrimination?

10. Study well-known court cases involving baseball labor disputes. At the very least, include the 1972 U.S. Supreme Court case, Flood vs. Kuhn. Report on the outcome of this and other judicial decisions affecting baseball and labor.

11. Create a PowerPoint presentation that chronicles the history of labor-management relations in baseball, including some of its most successful figures and milestones. When appropriate, integrate photographs, statistics, graphs, primary source documents, text, audio or video files, and key vocabulary terms.
12. Explore the extent to which support workers in baseball are unionized. These could include umpires, ticket takers, concession workers, ground crews, etc. The umpire strike of 1979 and the more recent demise of the umpire's union led by Richie Phillips are especially pertinent.
Additional Resources (Books):

Author: Kuhn, Bowie, 1926-2007.
Title: Hardball : the education of a baseball commissioner / Bowie Kuhn ; editorial assistant, Martin Appel.
©1988

Author: Miller, Marvin, 1917-2012.
Title: A whole different ball game : the inside story of the baseball revolution / Marvin Miller ; preface by Studs Terkel ; introduction by Bill James.
Imprint: Chicago : I.R. Dee, [2004]
©2004

Materials Needed:
- Writing materials
- Internet access for student research (optional)

National Learning Standards:

This lesson on Labor History meets a variety of New York State and national learning standards for Civics, Language Arts, and United States History.

For a list of specific standards, please contact the Education Department at the National Baseball Hall of Fame: education@baseballhall.org