Objective: Students will be able to:
- Discuss the leadership skills of baseball players, coaches, managers, and commissioners.
- Work in small groups to conduct research and create group projects focusing on a specific player, manager, coach, or commissioner.

Time Required: 2 class periods

Advance Preparation:
- Schedule a session for your class in your school library or media center.
- Request that the librarian pull material related to the history of baseball.

Materials Needed:
- Internet access for student research
- Library time for student research
- Other materials as needed depending on the types of projects chosen by students
Leadership: Leading Off

Applicable Common Core State Standards:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.2** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

**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.9-10.5** Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.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 grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

**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.SL.11-12.5** Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
Applicable Common Core State Standards (Continued):

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.4, W.11-12.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.7, 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.9-10.8, W.11-12.8** 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.11-12.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
1. To begin this lesson, ask students to think of a team captain or a coach with whom they have previously worked. What made that person a good/poor leader? Were they successful leaders?

2. Discuss that because a team is comprised of individuals, everyone on the team is unique and brings special talents. Great teams use individuals’ skills to their advantage. One person’s strength helps overcome another person’s weakness. A good leader can bring out everyone’s strengths and can influence the team to achieve a common goal: winning.

3. Ask students, “What are some challenges specific to being a leader in sports?”
   Answers may include the following:
   - Results-oriented
   - Short-term opportunities to prove oneself
   - The definition of success can change
   - Performance depends on getting the best from a team of talented individuals
   - Managing big talents and big egos
   - High pressure

4. To appreciate how challenging a sports leader’s work is, encourage students to consider all of the different roles that they have to play. One moment the leader must be a visionary, the next a communicator, the next a teacher. Strong leaders are always in demand precisely because it is difficult to find people who can perform well in so many different capacities.

5. Discuss the following five aspects of a sports leader:
   - **Vision**: Visionary leaders are creative thinkers and risk takers who point their teams toward incredible possibilities.
   - **Motivation**: Behind every successful team is a leader who knows how to inspire people.
• **Communication**: If a leader can make himself/herself understood, their teams not only appreciate them, but become more comfortable working together.

• **Expertise**: Possessing expert knowledge helps a leader establish his/her credibility and win respect.

• **Education**: In sports, leaders must often be able to teach players new ways of thinking and new ways of playing.

6. Based on the five aspects of sports leadership you just discussed, ask students to come up with concrete examples of how coaches or managers demonstrate their leadership. Examples may include:
   - Build different plays or game strategies
   - Create discipline on the team
   - Set the team lineup
   - Motivate players before and during the game
   - Teach new skills

7. Introduce the activity.
1. Explain to students that they will be doing research to find out more about leaders in the history of baseball. Students may present the results of their research in a variety of ways. They may choose from the following:
   • Create a PowerPoint presentation (at least 10 slides) exhibiting information about the person.
   • Create a video about the person.
   • Write a 7-10 page research paper about the person.
   • Another project discussed and approved by the teacher.

2. You may have students work in pairs or groups. No matter which project students choose, they must provide information on why the individual was considered a leader (referencing the five aspects of sports leadership discussed), and what style of leadership the individual preferred.

3. Provide students with additional research parameters:
   • Groups must use at least four sources.
   • A bibliography must be turned in with the final product.

4. Have students select their biography subjects, or assign a subject to each pair or group.

5. Go to the school library during your scheduled time slot. Have students use the Internet and the book and print sources you selected earlier to complete the research necessary to create their projects.

6. Provide all students with a due date for their projects. You may choose to assign a due date for a rough draft as well.

Conclusion:

To conclude this lesson and check for understanding, have each group share their final projects with the class.
Baseball Biography Subjects:

- Branch Rickey
- Connie Mack
- Effa Manley
- John McGraw
- George Steinbrenner
- Babe Ruth
- Henry “Hank” Aaron
- Christy Mathewson
- Jackie Robinson
- J.L. Wilkinson
- Kenesaw Mountain Landis
- Roberto Clemente
- Marvin Miller
- Derek Jeter