



Lesson 2 - Pre-Visit On the Field: The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League

Objective: Students will be able to:

- Learn about the experiences of women who played with the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League.
- Recognize the role of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League in changing public opinion about female athletes.
- Analyze and evaluate primary and secondary source documents.
- Compare a fictional film depiction of the AAGPBL with facts learned from primary and secondary source analysis.

Time Required: 2 class periods

Materials Needed:

- The film *A League of Their Own* (PG)
- *Optional* Ken Burns' *Baseball: Inning 6* (PBS)
- Your preferred means of screening a movie
- A copy of "A Guide for All-American Girls" for each student (included)
- Several copies of the "All-American Girls Document Packet" (included)

Vocabulary:

Chaperone - A person who accompanies a young unmarried woman in public

Home Front - The civilian sector of a nation at war when its armed forces are in combat abroad

Ideal - A standard of perfection or excellence

Primary Source - Source created by people who actually saw or participated in an event and recorded that event or their reactions to it

Professional - Playing a sport for pay on a full-time basis

Secondary Source - Source created by someone not present when the event took place



Applicable Common Core State Standards

RI.6.1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.2. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.6.3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

RI.6.7. Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

RI.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.7.2. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

RI.7.7. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

RI.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.8.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

RI.8.7. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.



Applicable Common Core State Standards (*Continued*)

RH.6-8.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6-8.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH.6-8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

RH.6-8.7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

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.

SL.6.2., SL.7.2., SL.8.2. Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

W.6.2., W.7.2., W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

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.



Lesson & Activity

1. Begin the lesson with a discussion about women in baseball. Gauge students' familiarity with women's baseball history by asking questions such as:
 - Can you think of any female baseball players that play today?
 - Have you ever heard of women or girls playing baseball in the past?
 - Have you ever heard of any women's baseball teams?
2. Discuss that for modern women who want to play baseball, there are several different options: playing on all-female baseball teams, playing on otherwise all-male teams, or playing softball. While women-only baseball clubs first appeared in the 1800s, the trend was most popular during the era of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League.
3. Briefly discuss how World War II influenced the experiences of many American women. Assess students' prior knowledge by asking, "What types of roles did women take on during World War II?" Students should understand that women were called on to fill many roles on the **home front**. Millions of men were fighting in Europe or in the Pacific creating the need for workers on farms and in factories.
4. Explain that these new roles and opportunities applied not only to the world of work, but also to the world of sports. Chicago Cubs owner Philip Wrigley became concerned that professional baseball might lose its players to the armed services. He came up with the idea for an all-women's baseball league in 1943.
5. *Optional* Screen the segment of the documentary "Baseball": *Inning 6, The National Pastime* that discusses the AAGPBL.
6. Explain that students will be examining primary and secondary sources related to the AAGPBL, and comparing information gained from those sources to a fictional film depiction of the AAGPBL.
7. Provide students with copies of "A Guide for All-American Girls" included with this lesson. Explain that all players in the AAGPBL received a copy of this guide when they joined a team.



8. Allow students time to read the excerpt. Then discuss the AAGPBL Guide with students using the following questions to help guide discussion:
 - What was the **ideal** for the All-American girl baseball player?
 - What did the league managers want from their players, in terms of traditional feminine qualities, appearance or behavior?
 - Why did the league give this guide to its players?
 - Why does the Guide emphasize beauty and make-up?
 - Do any parts of this guide sound strange to us today? Why?
9. Place students into several small groups. Give each group an "All-American Girls Document Packet." Each group will analyze one document, answer the questions about the document on a separate sheet of paper (to be turned in), and present the document to the rest of the class.
10. After each group has presented their document, screen the film *A League of Their Own*.
11. Hold a post-viewing class discussion. Use the following questions to help guide the discussion:
 - Who are the main characters in the film?
 - What is the story about? Encourage students to summarize using as much detail as possible.
 - How does the movie's portrayal of the AAGPBL compare to the facts you learned from the primary and secondary sources? What details were changed for the movie?

Conclusion:

To conclude this lesson and check for understanding, have students complete a writing assignment in which they express how the AAGPBL both challenged and reinforced traditional women's roles. Students should use evidence from the primary sources and the film to back up their assertions.



Chicago Daily Tribune, May 16, 1944

120 GIRLS START SOFTBALL DRILL: Former Baseball Leaders Direct Tryouts

120 girls reported today and 90 will be retained for the six teams at Racine, Kenosha, South Bend, Rockford, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis. Each team carries 15 players, four pitchers, two catchers, five infielders, and four outfielders.

Salary is \$40 to \$85 a week and, unlike in baseball, pay begins on the opening day of training. Those who are not retained will be given two week's severance pay and transportation back home.

P.K. Wrigley, owner of the Cubs, and the main sponsor of this league, believes that girl ball players – and masculine ones – for that matter, should get the same treatment as any other type of employee when services are no longer required.

The idea behind the league is to combine feminine attractiveness and athletic skill. The muscular, boyish type is out, no matter if she's a potential Babe Ruth or Bob Feller. Uniforms with flared skirts are part of the plan to present the girls as they really are.

No. 1 among the league's don'ts is the one barring the gals from wearing slacks. Each team has a chaperone. In a few days the girls will attend personality classes designed to make them more feminine than ever.

1. Based on this article, what qualities were valued in AAGPBL players? Reference specific examples from the text to support your view.
2. Why is it important that cut players were given severance pay and transportation home?
3. What was the salary range of a player in the AAGPBL?
4. What did team uniforms look like? For what reason was the design important?



Los Angeles Times, Jul. 31, 1949

SLUGGERS IN SKIRTS

You won't believe this, but the Fort Wayne Daisies baseball team had a fair chance for the pennant last year until its star pitcher dropped out mid-season to have a baby. Yes, sir, the pitcher had won 13 and lost eight, struck out 101, and compiled an earned run average of 2.01 by July. And then the baby came.

At Rockford, Ill., the Peaches' shortstop last year was Harrell. This season it's Doyle. Two different players? Not at all. Shortstop simply got married. Over in Peoria, the Redwings' shortstop also got married, and promptly decided to retire from baseball. After leading the league in runs batted in, too.

And where can such things happen? Where do matrimony and motherhood make managers wish they had nothing more than sore arms and charley horses to worry about? They happen in the All-American Girls Baseball League. This thriving Midwestern organization of eight teams proved to more than 900,000 fans in 1948 that you should never underestimate the power of a woman.

Before you decide that this is softball, vaudeville, or a leg show, let it be said that the girls play real baseball – professional baseball. They throw overhand, use man-size gloves and wear spiked shoes. They slam the ball with Louisville Slugger bats which are only slightly smaller than the models used by men in the major leagues. They can execute a drag bunt, a squeeze play, a delayed steal. The only concessions to the girls' size, strength and stamina are a slightly smaller diamond and a slightly larger ball. "We've made the game fit the girls," says League President Max Caray, an ex-big leaguer. "And we've found that they run their seventy-two feet between bases as fast as a man can run his ninety."

1. What were some of the similarities between AAGPBL baseball and major league baseball? Reference specific examples from the text to support your view.
2. This author cites two non-skill-related reasons that a player in the AAGPBL might choose to leave the game. What are they?
3. How did the game of baseball played in the AAGPBL differ from the game played at the Major League level?



Chicago Daily Tribune, Jun. 30, 1946

TAKE TO AIR IN ALL-AMERICAN GIRLS' BASEBALL

Travel by plane was inaugurated last week in the All-American Girls' Baseball league. Location of four of the cities in the circuit, Racine and Kenosha, Wis., on one side of Lake Michigan, and Muskegon and Grand Rapids, Mich., almost directly across, makes air travel advantageous, cutting the distance to one-third of the train trip. The Racine Belles were the first team to fly, making the hop from Milwaukee airport to keep a double header date the same day with Muskegon.

Attendance figures released yesterday show that for 93 playing dates this season, compared with the same number in 1945, attendance is up 105 per cent. The biggest jump in attendance, 138 per cent, is credited to the South Bend Blue Sox. Last year the Blue Sox drew 49,050. This year they are almost certain of going over the 100,000 mark and are aiming to smash the league record of 117,000 set last year at Rockford.

1. In what region of the United States did the AAGPBL host teams and play games?
2. What form of transportation became possible for AAGPBL teams in 1946? Why was it advantageous?



The Teams of the AAGPBL

Years of operation	Team Nickname	City
1943-1954	Peaches	Rockford, Illinois
1943-1954	Blue Sox	South Bend, Indiana
1943-1950	Belles	Racine, Wisconsin
1951-1952		Battle Creek, Michigan
1953		Muskegon, Michigan
1943-1951	Comets	Kenosha, Wisconsin
1944	Chicks	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1945-1954		Grand Rapids, Michigan
1944	Millerettes	Minneapolis, Minnesota
1945-54	Daisies (formerly Millerettes)	Fort Wayne, Indiana
1946-1950	Lassies	Muskegon, Michigan
1951-1954		Kalamazoo, Michigan
1946-1951	Redwings	Peoria, Illinois
1948	Colleens	Chicago, Illinois
1948	Sallies	Springfield, Illinois

1. In what part of the country were the teams of the AAGPBL located?
2. Based on the chart, when did the first teams play?
3. How many teams were formed at the beginning of the league and what were they?
4. According to the chart, when was the last year for the league?
5. What teams operated for the entire existence of the AAGPBL?



The Evolution of the Game of the AAGPBL

Year	Size of Ball	Mound Distance	Basepath Dist.	Delivery
1943	12"	40'	65'	Underhand
1944	11 ½"	40'	68'	Underhand
1945	11 ½"	42'	68'	Underhand
1946	11"	43	72'	Underhand and Sidearm
1947	11"	43'	72'	Sidearm
1948	10 3/8"	50'	72'	Overhand
1949	10"	55	72'	Overhand
1950	10"	55'	72'	Overhand
1951	10"	55'	72'	Overhand
1952	10"	55'	72'	Overhand
1953	10"	56'	75'	Overhand
1954	9 ¼"	60'	85'	Overhand
Softball and Major League Baseball Standards (for comparison)				
MLB	9 – 9 ¼"	60' 6"	90'	Overhand
Softball (American Fastpitch Association)	12"	40'	60'	Underhand

1. The game played in the AAGPBL was often described as a hybrid or blend of baseball and softball. Was the description accurate? Why?
2. In what year did the game of the AAGPBL most closely resemble Major League Baseball?



“To assure that girls had an air of good breeding about them, [Philip] Wrigley hired Helena Rubenstein, the world-renowned beauty expert, to set up a charm school for the players. Instructors were to teach the recruits proper etiquette and use of makeup...The idea of charm school was more than merely a publicity gimmick to Wrigley. He was serious about having polite, ladylike players. The press loved the idea, and articles about lady ball players going to charm school appeared in most popular magazines. Needless to say, charm school met with mixed reactions among players. Some found it ludicrous, but others saw it as helpful.”

**From Women In Baseball by Gai Ingham Berlage.
Westport, CT : Praeger, 1994.**

1. What was set up for the players in the AAGPBL in order “to assure that girls had an air of good breeding about them?”
2. What were players taught?
3. What was the players’ reaction?

<i>Grand Rapids Chicks</i> 1950		<i>Grand Rapids Chicks</i> 1950	
HOME GAMES		GAMES AWAY	
May 20	South Bend	May 18, 19	South Bend
May 27, 28* 28	Fort Wayne	May 21*, 22, 23	Fort Wayne
June 1, 2, 3	Kenosha	May 24, 25, 26	South Bend
June 4*, 5	Racine	May 29, 30-30	Muskegon
June 15, 16, 17	Peoria	June 6, 7	Kenosha
June 18*, 19, 20	Rockford	June 8, 9	Racine
June 21-21, 22	Muskegon	June 10, 11*, 12	Peoria
June 26, 27	South Bend	June 13, 14	Rockford
June 28, 29	Fort Wayne	June 23, 24	Muskegon
June 30, July 1	South Bend	June 25*	South Bend
July 2*, 3, 4-4	Muskegon	July 5, 6, 7	Fort Wayne
July 8, 9*, 10	Kenosha	July 13-13, 14	Kenosha
July 11, 12	Racine	July 15, 16* 16	Racine
July 16, 19, 20	Rockford	July 23*, 24, 25	Rockford
July 21, 22	Peoria	July 26, 27	Peoria
July 30*, 31, Aug. 1	South Bend	July 28, 29	South Bend
Aug. 6*, 7	Kenosha	Aug. 2, 3, 4	Racine
Aug. 8, 9, 10, 11	Racine	Aug. 12, 13* 13	Kenosha
Aug. 20*, 21, 22	Peoria	Aug. 17, 18, 19	Rockford
Aug. 23, 24	Rockford	Aug. 25, 26, 27*	Peoria
Aug. 30, 31, Sept. 1	Fort Wayne	Aug. 28, 29	Fort Wayne
Sept. 3*	Muskegon	Sept. 2, 4-4	Muskegon
GAME TIME		Double numerals indicate double headers	
Double-headers	7:00 P.M.	*Denotes Sunday	
Single Games	8:30 P.M.	Downtown Ticket Office:	
Beginning Aug. 6		Peck's Drug Store, Monroe at Division	
Double-headers	7:00 P.M.		
Single Games	8:30 P.M.		

1. How many teams were playing in 1950?
2. How many games were the Chicks scheduled for in 1950?
(Be careful to note double headers!)
3. What time did games start?
4. What time did double headers begin?
5. How many "off days" (days without games) did the Chicks have in the 1950 season?



“A Guide for All American Girls”

Excerpts from the All American Girls Charm School Guide

When you become a player in the All-American Girls Baseball League you have reached the highest position that a girl can attain in this sport. The All-American Girls Baseball League is getting great public attention because it is pioneering a new sport for women.

You have certain responsibilities because you, too, are in the limelight...

The girls in our League are rapidly becoming the heroines of youngsters as well as grownups all over the world. People want to be able to respect their heroines at all times. The All-American Girls Baseball League is attempting to establish a high standard that will make you proud that you are a player in the years to come.

We hand you this manual to help guide you in your personal appearance. We ask you to follow the rules of behavior for your own good as well as that of the future success of girls' baseball.

YOUR ALL-AMERICAN GIRLS BASEBALL LEAGUE BEAUTY KIT

Should always contain the following

- o Cleansing Cream
- o Lipstick
- o Rouge – Medium
- o Cream Deodorant
- o Mild Astringent
- o Face Powder for Brunette
- o Hand Lotion
- o Hair Remover

Extra precaution [should be taken] to assure all the niceties of toilette and personality. Take time to observe the necessary beauty ritual, to protect both health and appearance.

Beauty Routine

In the morning, when you have more time to attend to your beauty needs, you will undoubtedly be enabled to perform a more thorough job.

Use your cleansing cream around your neck as well as over the face. Remove it completely and apply a second time to be sure that you remove all dust, grease and grime. Wipe off thoroughly with cleansing tissue. Apply hand lotion to keep your hands as lovely as possible. Use your manicure set to preserve your nails in a presentable condition.

Teeth – There are many good tooth cleansing preparations on the market and they should be used regularly to keep the teeth and gums clean and healthy.

Deodorants – The most important feature of some of these products is the fact that the fragrance stays perspiration-proof all day. Deodorants keep you fresh and give you assurance and confidence in your social contacts.

Eyes – Perhaps no other feature of your face has more to do with the impression of beauty, sparkle and personality which you portray. A simple little exercise for the eyes can do much to strengthen your eyes and add sparkle and allure.

Hair – Hair is a woman's crowning glory. Brushing the hair will help a great deal more than is realized. It helps to stimulate the scalp which is the source of healthful hair growth. It develops the natural beauty and luster of the hair. And it will not spoil the hair-do. When brushing, bend over and let your head hang down. Then brush your hair downward until the scalp tingles. Just a few minutes of this treatment each day will tend to keep your scalp in fine condition and enhance the beauty of your "crowning glory."

Mouth – Every woman wants to have an attractive and pleasing mouth. Your beauty aids should, of course, include the appropriate type of lipstick. Caution – be sure that the lipstick has not smeared your teeth. Your mirror will tell the tale – and it is those little final touches that really count.

Hands – Cleanliness and neatness again come to the fore. Your hands should be thoroughly cleaned and washed as frequently as seems desirable or necessary. Soap and water and pumice will do this job to perfection. Then a protective cream should be applied to keep hands soft and pliable and to avoid cracking and over-dryness. Your nails should be gone over lightly each day, filing to prevent cracks and splits, oiling for the cuticle.

Clothes

Here are some suggestions for the type of wardrobe which still prove most useful and practical for you during the ball playing season:

- A dark suit.
- Skirts, blouses, and sweaters.
- Sports jackets and sports coats.
- A dress or two.
- Slacks are not permitted but you may want to include shorts or sportswear for tennis, golf, or swimming.
- Sport shoes, and at least one pair of dress shoes.
- Socks and stockings.
- A raincoat.
- Your beauty kit.

Rules of Conduct

1. Always appear in feminine attire when not actively engaged in practice or playing ball. This regulation continues through the playoffs for all, even though your team is not participating. AT NO TIME MAY A PLAYER APPEAR IN THE STANDS IN HER UNIFORM, OR WEAR SLACKS IN PUBLIC.
2. Boyish bobs are not permissible and in general your hair should be well groomed at all times with longer hair being preferable to short hair cuts. Lipstick should always be on.
3. One of the cardinal rules is not to talk too loudly. The All-American girl should avoid making personal remarks that might be overheard by others. Do not stare at people, do not knock into people, and do not argue in public.
4. Sportsmanship on the field and off is important. Win gracefully and modestly and lose gracefully too, if you can. Above all, avoid the showoff attitude in front of your opponents and the public. Play the game hard and fair and you will earn the recognition and respect of teammates, opponents, and the public.
5. Do not let the remarks of any fans make you angry to the point where you make a scene or display poor sportsmanship.
6. Obscene language will not be allowed at any time.
7. All social engagements must be approved by a chaperone.