

# WHEN IT COMES TO LEARNING... YOU HOLD THE CARDS

## CURRICULUM CONNECTION

- Social Studies**
- **Individual Development and Identity**—Work independently and cooperatively to accomplish goals.
  - **Culture**—Explain and give examples of how traditions and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
  - **People, Places and Environment**—Consider existing uses and propose and evaluate uses of resources in home, school, community, the region and beyond.
- English Language Arts**
- Reading for Perspective
  - Communication Strategies
  - Applying Language Skills

- Math**
- **Data Analysis and Probability**—Collect data using observations, surveys, and experiments. Represent data using tables and graphs such as line plots, bar graphs, and line graphs.
  - **Problem Solving**—Solve problems that arise in mathematics and in other contexts
  - **Connections**—Recognize and apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.



One of your students could win four tickets to an MLB game. Your school could win a visit from an MLB player.

**AND**  
You could win classroom supplies worth \$500! To enter, students collect wrappers from 2009 Topps and Upper Deck baseball cards and mail them in for recycling. For more information on the contest rules, see the back of this week's *Extra! Powered by Sports Illustrated KIDS*.

- Contest Hints**
- Use the classroom poster to keep track of student participation. Its daily presence will serve as a reminder to students to enter the contest.
  - Send home this week's *Extra!* and the "Dear Families" reproducible with students. Families will find the information and activities helpful and will learn about the contest.

## Dear Educator,

Just as baseball coaches help players develop their talents, teachers reinforce and nurture important life skills—such as critical thinking and community involvement—in their students. The challenge for many educators is to find exciting classroom tools to address these life skills.

With that in mind, Sports Illustrated KIDS and TIME For Kids have teamed up with the pros at Topps and Upper Deck to create this engaging and educational program. Tapping into the excitement of baseball and integrating baseball cards into fun classroom lessons, this initiative shows students how they can identify certain skills and talents in themselves by creating their own baseball-type cards.

Elements of MLB's "Learning: It's in the Cards" program includes:

- This teacher guide with discussion starters, in-class activities and four reproducibles that make for great homework assignments.
- The *TFK EXTRA! Powered by Sports Illustrated KIDS* that your class received this week.
- A customized classroom poster on the back of this guide
- The MLB's "Wrapper Wrangler" Contest

With summer right around the corner, the excitement of baseball is in the air. What better time to teach kids to their own skills?

Sincerely,

The Editors of Sports Illustrated KIDS and TIME For Kids

P.S. Don't forget to enter the contest below for your chance to win supplies for your classroom!



# DISCUSSION STARTERS

To give students background and context for discussion, offer a brief description and history of baseball cards. Explain that baseball cards...

- have been made and collected since the late 1870s
- tell the story of a player through statistics, or numbers
- use their own kind of language, such as...
  - SO: Strikeouts
  - TP: Triple Play
  - SB: Stolen Bases
- include a unique fact about each featured player

**Point out a few important dates:**

- Early 1950s: The Topps Company printed its first set of baseball cards, including one of the most famous cards of all time, the Mickey Mantle rookie card.
- 1989: The Upper Deck Company released its first set of baseball cards, including card No. 1: Ken Griffey Jr.'s rookie card.

**Share this baseball card fun fact:**

Both Topps and Upper Deck have an excellent accuracy record, especially when you consider the massive number of cards the companies have produced. This makes a rare mistake that much more memorable. For example, the picture on the 1957 Hank Aaron Topps card was reversed, mistakenly showing the soon-to-be home-run king as a left-handed batter. (Have students discuss how a mistake can often make something more valuable or interesting.)

## ASK STUDENTS:

- What makes collecting things like baseball cards fun?
- What kinds of skills do kids need to succeed in daily life? (Ability to listen, being polite, finishing what you start, etc.) What would their lives be like without those skills?
- How are the skills of a pro baseball player and an everyday kid the same? Can both types of skills be practiced and developed? How?

**Before handing out the "Show Off Your Stats" reproducible, ask:**

- How can a number, or statistic, tell us something about a person? What kinds of numbers describe you?
- How could you use numbers to show how successful you've been in school or community projects like recycling, cleaning up the park or volunteering?
- Each baseball card has an interesting fact about the player. What fact would you put on a card for George Washington? Paul Revere? Barack Obama? Now think about a fact for your own card.

**Pointing to the classroom poster, "Welcome to the Big Leagues," ask:**

- What does the term *big leagues* mean in baseball? What does it mean in everyday life?
- What do each of blank spaces for kids, such as Greater Participant and Teamwork Topper, mean to you? How do you think a student could get named to these positions?



# IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

## GEOGRAPHY

### Glo-Ball Players

Point out to students that MLB players, such as Chien-Ming Wang and David Ortiz, are from around the world. Ask students to bring in baseball cards featuring players who come from different countries. (If cards are unavailable, head online to mlbplayers.com for player ideas.) Using the players' home countries as starting points, assign different nations to students or have them select their own. Ask students to research the countries, focusing specifically on other baseball players from these countries and sports that are popular there. How would the cards for those sports compare and contrast with baseball cards? Kids will present their findings and ideas to the class.

## LANGUAGE ARTS

### Batter Chatter

Communicating with others and recognizing the importance of diversity are important life skills. Make the connection to the "Glo-Ball Players" lesson above by explaining that MLB hosts the World Baseball Classic. Sixteen countries, including Australia, China, Cuba, Italy, Japan and Venezuela, participate in this tournament. Have students bring in baseball cards of players from those and other countries. Ask students to pretend they will get to meet one of those athletes. What would the students say? Instruct students to get ready by researching the countries' national languages and preparing the following words and phrases:

Hello	Congratulations	Play ball	I've got it!	Strike one
You're safe	Home plate	Nice throw	Good game	Goodbye

### Diamonds in the Rough

Explain that students will create two "how-to" booklets. (To make the booklet, fold four or five sheets of plain paper in half and staple at the crease.) Point out that these instruction booklets can be broken down into five to six steps.

**First Booklet:** Students should describe how to bat, throw a ball, steal a base, pitch or perform another baseball skill. Younger students can include more illustrations.

**Second Booklet:** Kids should focus on how to build a life skill, such as teamwork in community projects, or reaching goals, such as building a baseball card collection.

Make the point that life skills can be practiced and developed just like sports skills.

### Reporter Cards

This is an interactive way to illustrate that using baseball cards as reference materials can be dynamic and exciting. Ask students to take a look at the back of a few different baseball cards. Using as much information and as many stats as possible from the cards, have students use their imagination and write a story or report about a fictitious baseball game and that game's MVP. To write a play-by-play account of a real baseball game, students can check out video at mlb.com.

## CIVICS

### Pack Attack Playoffs

Looking for a fun way to get kids involved with numbers and statistics? Check out the description of "Pack Attack" in this week's *Extra!* Take the game to the next level and consider hosting a Pack Attack Tournament to raise awareness of the "Wrapper Wrangler" Contest and/or to raise funds for a charity.

# IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

## MATH

### Give Me Some Learning—Stat!

The stats on baseball cards offer great material for creating word problems. For example, start with the player's date of birth. Ask students: How old is the player? How many years separate your age and the player's age? How much older than you was the player when he started playing for the big leagues? What percentage of the player's life has been spent playing professional baseball? Check out the other stats for endless possibilities in constructing more word problems.

### More for Statmasters

For this lesson, ask students to bring in their own baseball cards. Have kids create two columns on a piece of paper and label each with the name of a different player from a card. Ask students to write down the batting averages from five consecutive years for each player. Have them compare and contrast by asking questions such as: "Which player had more years with a higher batting average?" and "Which player improved his average more during these years?"

## HOW TO USE THE "WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES" CLASSROOM POSTER

1. The poster offers the opportunity to pair up your classroom stars with professional baseball stars and create even more excitement around your students' accomplishments.

On the poster, there are two blank spots for each of the nine baseball positions—one spot is for a baseball card that kids bring in from home or create. The other spot is for the "Show Off Your Stats" card kids can make using the reproducible in this teacher's guide.

First, have kids work together to build the ultimate fantasy baseball team. They can bring in and post their own baseball cards in the appropriate spots on the poster, or they can work together to research players and create cards using the "Show Off Your Stats" reproducible.

You can personalize the ultimate fantasy team for your class. When you decide that one of your students has reached the big leagues in one of the different life skills categories, such as TASK MASTER, put the student's card on the proper spot on the poster.

2. You'll see that a "Wrapper Tracker" runs along the side of the poster. Use this tracking device to record your students' participation in MLB's "Wrapper Wrangler" Contest. To be credited on the Tracker, students must have their parents sign the contest entry form (found on the back of the student guide) and mail it in. The goal will be 100 percent classroom participation.

Inspire students by reminding them that they could win a chance to win four tickets to an MLB game and have a real MLB player visit their school.

## HOW TO USE THE "SHOW OFF YOUR STATS" REPRODUCIBLE

To really bring home the importance of developing life skills, students can use this reproducible to make their own baseball-type cards. While players use stats to tell the story of how well they're doing on the diamond, students can use numbers to let the world know about their achievements.

The activities in both this week's *Extra!* and in this guide were designed to be used with either baseball cards or these student-made cards, which makes the cards important parts of the program.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## CREATE YOUR OWN CARD TEMPLATE SHOW OFF YOUR STATS!

This week's *Extra!* is all about baseball cards—how to read them, collect them and use them in games with your friends.

Ready to make your own card? Just follow the steps on this page.

**FRONT**

PHOTO: Tape or glue a photo or draw a picture of yourself here. Remember action pictures make exciting cards!

NAME: Write your name here.

**BACK**

HEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_ WEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTHDAY: \_\_\_\_\_

HOMETOWN: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: Fill in the blanks here (Name, Age, Height, Hometown)

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

	AT	DP	HR	XB	CRB
WEEK 1					
WEEK 2					
WEEK 3					
WEEK 4					

FUN FACTS:

ADD YOUR OWN TYPES OF STATS: See the STAT STARTERS list below and this week's *Extra!* for ideas.

TEST SCORE AVERAGES: Corrects answers to classroom lessons.

FUN FACT: Put a fun fact that makes yourself unique here.

Cut out the front and back and tape or glue them back-to-back to make one card!

**STAT STARTERS**  
Include a few stats and abbreviations you might find on baseball cards, and what they mean, such as:

HITTING STATS	FIELDING	PITCHING
2B — Doubles	A — Assists	BB — Base on Balls
3B — Triples	DP — Double Plays	ERA — Earned Run Average
AB — At Bats	HR — Home Runs	K — Strikeouts
AVG — Batting Average	IBB — Intentional Walks	W — Wins
B — Bases Stolen	R — Runs	
BB — Base on Balls (Walks)	RBI — Runs Batted In	
G — Games Played		

## DEAR FAMILIES,

This week, your child's class is taking part in an in-school program called "Learning: It's in the Cards."

Using Major League Baseball cards as a springboard to learning, students are exploring the importance of different life skills, such as good sportsmanship and communicating with others, in their everyday lives.

Your child is learning ways to recognize his or her talents and use numbers and statistics to express achievements.

The program is designed to have an impact beyond school. And nurturing your child's life skills at home is easier than you might think. Give these simple tips a try.

1. **House of Cards:** Open a pack of baseball cards with your child to discover fun bonding moments and build channels of communication. Talk about your own childhood experiences with collecting and your favorite baseball players.
2. **Home Run:** Create your own baseball-type cards for each member of the family. (You'll find out how in the *Extra!* your child received at school.)
3. **Go for the Goal:** Help your child establish realistic goals—such as setting up recycling bins at home—and be supportive on the path to reach those goals.
4. **Collect Ideas:** Spark your child's imagination by working together to come up with different ways of collecting baseball cards. A few examples: Collect cards of pitchers, players stealing bases, athletes from other countries, players with the longest names or even outfielders with sideburns. There's no wrong way to collect!
5. **Explore More:** This week's *Extra!* is filled with more ways to share fun learning moments with your child.

Recognizing life skills is the first step in helping children develop them into useful tools that can lead to a brighter future.

Sincerely,

The Editors of Sports Illustrated KIDS and TIME For Kids

P.S. For more information about baseball cards and the players featured on them, please visit mlb.com and mlbplayers.com.

A fun educational program developed by Sports Illustrated KIDS, TIME for Kids, Topps and Upper Deck

WRAPPER WRANGLER CONTEST

Your child could win:

- MLB Family Fantasy Prize Package
- A school visit by a Major League Baseball player
- AND \$500 worth of school supplies for their teacher's classroom

You'll find an entry form and more information about this contest, in this week's *Extra!*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL

Would you like to win a school visit by an MLB player—and four tickets to an MLB game? Then enter the "Wrapper Wrangler" Contest on the back of this week's *Extra!* To make the most of your contest entry, use this page to keep track of the baseball card wrappers you collect.

Knock it out of the park!

Goal

SET YOUR GOAL: How many baseball card wrappers will you collect for the contest? Write the number here.

THE PIES HAVE IT: Every seven days, fill in the pie chart to show how much closer you came to your goal.

WEEK 1

WEEK 2

WEEK 3

DON'T FORGET! Keep collecting wrappers from 2009 Topps and Upper Deck baseball cards all summer. Contest entries will be accepted until August 31, 2009. Visit mlbplayers.com for more info on your favorite Major League Baseball players.

Don't stop until you reach home!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Card Scramble

Unscramble the words below so the story makes sense. Look for the double-underlined letters in the words you created. These letters spell out the answer to the riddle.

My friends and I have a Collectors \_\_\_\_\_ . We get together on the \_\_\_\_\_ .

\_\_\_\_\_ LUBC \_\_\_\_\_ TSAL

Friday of every month. At each meeting, we pick a new way to \_\_\_\_\_ baseball cards.

\_\_\_\_\_ OCLLCET

For example, we might look for cards that \_\_\_\_\_ action shots, like one showing a player

making a great \_\_\_\_\_ . Get it?

\_\_\_\_\_ AHVE \_\_\_\_\_ TCHCA

Once we figured out there isn't a wrong \_\_\_\_\_ to collect, we \_\_\_\_\_ creative. \_\_\_\_\_

you \_\_\_\_\_ of any ideas?

\_\_\_\_\_ KHITK

The funniest way to collect we've picked so \_\_\_\_\_ is finding players with beards and other

\_\_\_\_\_ hair. Some of the bushy moustaches from the \_\_\_\_\_ are pretty hilarious.

\_\_\_\_\_ FCAALI \_\_\_\_\_ STAP

I get to pick how we'll collect this month. I think I'll chose the players who are more than \_\_\_\_\_ feet tall.

\_\_\_\_\_ XIS

Or players whose last \_\_\_\_\_ start with Y.

\_\_\_\_\_ SENAM

Either way, I'm sure our next meeting will be a \_\_\_\_\_ !

\_\_\_\_\_ BLATS

RIDDLE: How is a spider like a baseball player?  
ANSWER: They \_\_\_\_\_ !

