



Social Studies Exemplary Text Student Handout

Most of the owners didn't make much money from their teams. Baseball was just a hobby for them, a way to make their illegal money look good. To save money, each team would only carry fifteen or sixteen players. The major league teams each carried about twenty-five. Average salary for each player started at roughly \$125 per month back in '34, and went up to \$500-\$800 during the forties, though there were some who made much more than that, like Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. The average major league player's salary back then was \$7,000 per month. We also got around fifty cents to a dollar per day for food allowance. Back then you could get a decent meal for about twenty-five cents to seventy-five cents.

Some of the owners didn't treat their players very well. Didn't pay them enough or on time. That's why we would jump from team to team. Other owners would offer us more money, and we would leave our teams and go play for them. We were some of the first unrestricted free agents.

There were, however, a few owners who did know how to treat their ballplayers. Cum Posey was one of them. He always took care of his ballplayers, put them in the best hotels, and paid them well and on time. Buck Leonard said Posey never missed a payday in the seventeen years he played for the Grays.

Nelson, K. (2008) 4th Inning: Racket Ball: Negro League Owners. *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*. New York: Jump at the Sun.

This is an example of exemplary text found in *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Social Studies Exemplary Text Teacher Resource

Most of the owners didn't make much money from their teams. Baseball was just a hobby for them, a way to make their illegal money look good. To save money, each team would only carry fifteen or sixteen players. The major league teams each carried about twenty-five. Average salary for each player started at roughly \$125 per month back in '34, and went up to \$500-\$800 during the forties, though there were some who made much more than that, like Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. The average major league player's salary back then was \$7,000 per month. We also got around fifty cents to a dollar per day for food allowance. Back then you could get a **decent** meal for about twenty-five cents to seventy-five cents.

Some of the owners didn't treat their players very well. Didn't pay them enough or on time. That's why we would jump from team to team. Other owners would offer us more money, and we would leave our teams and go play for them. We were some of the first **unrestricted** free agents.

There were, however, a few owners who did know how to treat their ballplayers. Cum Posey was one of them. He always took care of his ballplayers, put them in the best hotels, and paid them well and on time. Buck Leonard said Posey never missed a payday in the seventeen years he played for the Grays.

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EFL 3
Word Count 236

Teacher introduces the text with minimal commentary and students read it independently. Teacher then reads passage aloud. Give a brief definition to words students would likely not be able to define from context (underlined in text). Teacher guides the students through a series of text-dependent questions. Complete the performance task as a cumulative evaluation of the close-reading.

Text-Dependent Questions

1. Why did the owners have their teams if they didn't make much money on them?
2. Based on the food allowance the players received per day, could the players at least sometimes afford two "decent meals" a day?
3. Describe the issues faced by Negro baseball players. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
4. List the words and phrases used to describe the Negro League owners. From these words and phrases what can you determine about the owners? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
5. What did the players do to get more money?
6. How did the teams save money?
7. The author uses the words "unrestricted free agent." What does it mean to be an unrestricted free agent?
8. What are the similarities and differences between the Negro baseball league and the major league? Use evidence from the text to support your thoughts.
9. What is the main idea of each paragraph?

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Performance Tasks for Informational Texts

Students compare and contrast a firsthand account of African American ballplayers in the Negro Leagues to a secondhand account of their treatment found in books such as Kadir Nelson's *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, attending to the focus of each account and the information provided by each. [RI.4.6]

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