

Interdisciplinary Ideas

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Create an Honesty Hall of Fame for your school. Write about a person from history, your family, your school, or community who has displayed honesty and give examples. Design an Honesty Hall of Fame plaque page, copy your tribute on the page, and post on a school bulletin board.
 2. List expressions used in the book such as "jumping jehoshaphat" and "humdinger." Write expressions used today with comparable meanings.
- * Visit www.heartwoodethics.org and choose Teaching Heartwood, Activities, Intermediate, for more honesty dilemmas.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Together, compile a list of topics related to Jackie Robinson, such as early years, influence on civil rights, or induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Choose one of the topics, research, write reports, and make into a class booklet. On April 15th, Jackie Robinson Day, present reports to another class.
2. Find out about people who were active in the Civil Rights Movement to end discrimination against minorities. (Keyword: civil rights leaders) Compile pictures and brief biographies. (See Art activity.)

3. Find out the responsibilities of a bat boy or bat girl on a professional baseball team. Would you like to have this job? Why or why not?

MATH

In pairs, play a game of baseball math (Keyword: baseball math).

ART

Create a poster honoring people who have fought discrimination (see Social Studies #2).

Jackie's Bat

Marybeth Lorbiecki
2006
New York: Simon & Schuster

HONESTY
USA
Historical Fiction
Reading Time: 12 minutes

CONCEPTS

Honesty
Respect
Justice

SUMMARY

"Pop says it ain't right, a white boy serving a black man." So begins Joey's dilemma as bat boy for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, the year Jackie Robinson joined the team. As he observes Jackie and interacts with him, Joey's learned prejudice is replaced with respect and admiration for this man. Ultimately, Joey is honest with Jackie Robinson, securing a "home run" for both. Brian Pinkney's expressive dry-brush watercolor illustrations highlight emotional moments in the story.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to identify, define, and discuss honesty, respect, and justice as they apply to the story. The student will be encouraged to consider how he/she can make a difference in the world by standing up against prejudice and discrimination.

After the Story

Jackie's Bat

DISCUSSION

1. Describe how Joey and others treat Jackie Robinson in the beginning of the story. By the end, how does this change and why?
2. When Joey feels sorry for how he has acted toward Jackie, what does he do about it?
3. What do you think Jackie Robinson means when he says, "They don't know what a man is"? How does replacing the word "man" with "woman" or "human being" change the meaning?
4. What promise does Jackie keep? How is keeping promises related to honesty? What hopes does Jackie Robinson have for the future?
5. Joey is tempted to be dishonest with Jackie when he gives him the bat. Why do you think he decides to be honest? How is honesty related to trust? Why are they both important to friendship?
6. How do the manager and teammates show loyalty toward Jackie Robinson? What can you do when you see people treated unfairly?

ACTIVITIES

1. Locate New York City on a world map.
2. In small groups, create one or two dilemmas students face in being honest. Discuss the situations and brainstorm solutions. Present to the class. (E.g., your friend asks you to give her an answer during a test.)*
3. Prior to sharing the information in the Afterword, discuss elements of historical fiction such as setting and language. (Keyword: NCTE definition historical fiction) In pairs, make two lists: one of details that seem true in the story and the other of details that you think are made up. Together, review the Afterword and compare your lists. How did the author display honesty by adding this note to her book?

HOME CONNECTION

1. Ask family members to tell about people who taught them to be honest. With permission, share stories with the class.
2. Retell the story at home. Read or watch the news for examples of injustice in the world today. Discuss ways to fight injustices when you see them.

JOURNAL

1. Reflect on a character from a book who displays dishonesty, such as Count Olaf (*A Series of Unfortunate Events*) or Peter Pettigrew (*Harry Potter*). Pretend you are his or her friend. How can you help him or her be more honest?
2. Write about a time you judged someone based on a prejudice, but like Joey, you changed your mind. Who influenced you?

VOCABULARY

Note: Words are from Afterword and Rachel Robinson's quote on the back cover of the book.

pioneer(v.)
racism
underdog

discrimination
prejudice
taint

legacy
perceptions