

A Tough Call

Lesson 1: Tactile Bag

Focus Questions

What is an artifact? What do we learn from artifacts and why are they important? Who collects and preserves history? What was the Black Sox scandal?

Core Understandings

Students will understand that everything in Chicago's history has a story behind it, just as everyone has a story to tell. They will understand that "witnesses to history" can help all people discover the past through the artifacts they collect.

Knowledge

Students will know key historical facts about Chicago baseball and the White Sox. They will know that average people can play a huge role in preserving history through the artifacts they collect. They will know what a scandal is and that sometimes moral decisions can have a major impact on history and culture.

Skills

Students will be able to use their senses and their independent research skills to uncover information about Chicago baseball history. They will be able to contrast primary and secondary sources and formulate questions for personal inquiry.

Common Core ELA Standards

CCSSR1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSSR7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

ISBE Social Science Standards

Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the US.

Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the US, and other nations.

Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the US.

In This Lesson

Students will engage in a sensory learning experience through a tactile bag of White Sox baseball "artifacts." They will expand their knowledge of Chicago baseball history and begin to grapple with the moral dilemmas posed by the Black Sox scandal. The story element of obstacles/problems is addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Amy Andrews.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Activity

Before the lesson begins, download *A Tough Call* as a PDF and make individual copies for each student. http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/A_Tough_Call_by_Pamela_Dell.pdf

Also prior to the lesson, prepare your tactile bag. Fill a plain paper shopping bag with items that could be associated with White Sox baseball, e.g., schedules, score books, souvenirs, a baseball, photographs, etc. (If anyone you know has one of the old Comiskey Park bricks, this would be a great discussion starter!)

When class begins, take the items out of the tactile bag one by one and pass them around for students to touch and examine. Ask students what the objects might have in common. You might also want to hold up the photograph of Joe Jackson from the artifact image set for *A Tough Call* and ask students if they know who he is. http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_tough_call.pdf

After students share ideas, ask them what they know about the history of baseball in Chicago. Brainstorm prior knowledge of the White Sox team, Comiskey Park, and U.S. Cellular Field. Provide students with background information about the setting from the *Great Chicago Stories* website. <http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/toughcall/background.php>

Next read aloud the first three chapters of the story to the class, letting students follow along in their printed copies. Alternatively you may want to play the story audio. <http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/site/storyaudio/index.html?story=10>

Finish up with a discussion about the meaning of the word “scandal” and how it might apply to the White Sox. Ask students whether it could also apply to Danny’s situation.

Lesson 1 Home Connection

Have students interview a parent (or grandparent) about what they know or have heard about the Black Sox scandal and how it affected the game of baseball. Students should record their findings and bring them in to share.

Materials & Resources

- **Tactile bag** (see directions on page 2)
- ***A Tough Call* story:**
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/A_Tough_Call_by_Pamela_Dell.pdf
- ***A Tough Call* artifact image set:**
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_tough_call.pdf
- **Sentence strips** (optional)
- **Computer access for students in the classroom** (optional)

Instructional Notes

Get students thinking about these essential questions: What is an artifact? What do we learn from artifacts and why are they important? Who collects and preserves artifacts? What was the Black Sox scandal? You might want to post the questions on sentence strips for the duration of the unit so you can continually refer back to them.

Extension Activities

Prior to Lesson 1, have students answer this question in their journals: “Why and how do you think the game of baseball is an important part of Chicago’s history?”

Play the song “Say It Ain’t So, Joe” by Roger Daulty and ask students where they think the expression came from.

Explore nonfiction books that contain information about White Sox history and the Black Sox scandal. The following are available at the Chicago Public Library:

Take Me Out to the Ball Game by Jim Burke

The Chicago Black Sox Trial: A Primary Source Account by Wayne Anderson

The History of the Chicago White Sox by Wayne Stewart

Chicago White Sox by Richard Rambeck

Eight Men Out by Eliot Asinof

America at Bat: Baseball Stuff and Stories by Paul Rosenthal

Catching the Moon, the Story of a Young Girl’s Baseball Dream by Crystal Hubbard