

A Tough Call

Lesson 3: “Found” Poetry

Focus Questions

What was the Black Sox scandal?

What long-term effects did the Black Sox scandal have on baseball and the city of Chicago?

Is it ever okay to cheat?

Core Understandings

Students will understand that the Black Sox scandal is an important part of Chicago’s history and culture. They will understand that everything in Chicago’s history has a story behind it, just as everyone has a story to tell.

Knowledge

Students will know key historical facts about Chicago baseball and the White Sox. 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 read with understanding and fluency. They will be able to make intellectual and emotional connections with historical figures from the past and discern between fact and fiction. They will be able to fashion a new creative work inspired by another literary source.

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.

CCSS.W.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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.

ISBE Fine Arts Standard

Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

In This Lesson

Students will make personal connections with the characters in *A Tough Call*—both real and fictional—and express their interpretations by creating a “found” poem inspired by the story. The story element of character is addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Amy Andrews.



Activity

Read the final two chapters of *A Tough Call* aloud to the class. http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/A_Tough_Call_by_Pamela_Dell.pdf

Alternatively you may want to play the story audio. <http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/site/storyaudio/index.html?story=10>

As they listen and follow along with their printed copies of the story, instruct students to highlight words, phrases, or sentences that they find particularly interesting, powerful, or moving.

When you have completed the reading, tell students they are going to create a “found” poem using the words they highlighted. This is a collection of words or phrases taken from another source and rearranged into an original poem. Lead students through the handouts at the end of this lesson, which include instructions and an example of a found poem.

Lesson 3 Home Connection

Write a found poem using the text in the story *A Tough Call*.

Materials & Resources

- *A Tough Call* story:
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/A_Tough_Call_by_Pamela_Dell.pdf
- **Highlighters**
- **Student handouts** (see end of lesson)

Instructional Notes

You might want to compose a class poem to make sure students understand the assignment. My class and I wrote a found poem about the moon after reading an article about moon phases. Be sure to provide several examples.

Extension Activities

Journal assignment: Is it ever OK to cheat? If yes, give an example. If no, explain why.

Handout: Guidelines for Writing a “Found” Poem

Read the narrative *A Tough Call*. From this story, you will get ideas, words, and/or phrases to write a “found” poem. This is a collection of words or phrases taken from another source and rearranged into an original poem. Follow the directions below, but please ask me if you have any questions.

After you have read the story, look for words and/or phrases that you find powerful, moving, or interesting. You might want to choose a theme or a special topic in the story that you feel strongly about and choose your words around that.

Make a list of all your words on a separate sheet of paper, keeping them in the order that you found them. You might want to double space the lines so they are easier to work with. Read back over your list and cross out all words or phrases that you find dull or unnecessary. Also delete words that do not fit in with the topic of your poem.

When you look over your poem again, make sure that it represents your feelings about the subject. If not, you may want to find more words. However, you should only find them from the story—do not add words of your own.

Now check over your poem and think of a title that relates to your topic.

Rewrite (or type) your poem on another piece of paper in “final copy” form. Be sure to edit!

Handout: Tough—A “Found” Poem Inspired by *A Tough Call*

Make it happen
No problem
Think about it
Grandpa Charlie
Big White Sox fan
Passed away
sad
Shaking the package
his first scrapbook
imagine
Think again
50 dollars
Fat time at the lake
mad at coach
All right, all right
Let’s do it
lost moral compass
confused
Selling your soul
Pretty big business
Stomach churning
So tempted
A crime
Out of the game
Avoiding his gaze
Amazing gift
Scrapbooks
Done deal
Think again
Not worth it
Can’t do it.