

Dear Middle School Student,

Your Middle School teachers wish you a safe and happy summer! While you are enjoying your time off, we would like you to complete the following assignments for the first day of school.

- Each student is required to **read 1 book of fiction.**
 - * The book **MUST** be on AR.
 - * Go to www.arbookfind.com to make sure that it is.
 - * Incoming 6th graders - a 5 point book
 - * Incoming 7th graders - a 5 point book
 - * Incoming 8th graders - a 6 point book

You will be taking an AR quiz on the computer when you return to school.
- Each student is required to read their **Summer Reading Packet.**
 - * Each packet includes:
 - * one short story (fiction)
 - * one piece of non-fiction
 - * three poems

(Specific stories in each packet will vary by grade.)
 - * Over the summer, you must answer all questions pertaining to your summer reading. Remember, all of your questions must be answered in COMPLETE and detailed sentences.
 - * When answering a question asking you to expand your thoughts, answer using the acronym CRESS - Connect, Restate, Explain, Support #1, and Support #2.

There will be copies available in the office, but assignments can be found on the schools website at www.aes.k12.nj.us

Both assignments will count as two separate quiz grades for the first marking period.

If there are any questions, feel free to contact the middles school teachers via email at

Mrs. Patterson : vpatterson@aes.k12.nj.us

Or Mrs. Ricci : mr Ricci@aes.k12.nj.us

Thanks and happy reading!!

Mrs. Patterson

Mrs. Ricci

6th Grade Summer Reading Assignment

- Each student is required to read 1 book of fiction.

- * The book MUST be on AR.

- * Go to www.arbookfind.com to make sure that it is.

- * Incoming 6th graders - a 5 point book

You will be taking an AR quiz on the computer when you return to school.

- Each student is required to read their **Summer Reading Packet**.

- * Each packet includes:

- * one short story (fiction)

- * one piece of non-fiction

- * three poems

(Specific stories in each packet will vary by grade.)

- * Over the summer, you must answer all questions pertaining to your summer reading.

Remember, all of your questions must be answered in COMPLETE and detailed sentences.

- * When answering a question asking you to expand your thoughts, answer using the acronym CRESS – Connect, Restate, Explain, Support #1, and Support #2.

Assignment-Fiction Reading

"Dragon, Dragon" by John Gardner

Please make sure you restate the question in all of your answers and use details from the text to support your answers.

1. Name two reasons the king has been unable to get rid of the dragon?
2. What advice does the cobbler give his sons?
3. Summarize the way each son responds to his father's advice.
4. What quality leads the two elder brothers to reject their father's advice?
5. What quality leads the youngest brother to accept this advice?
6. Explain what the story teaches about the value of following advice. (Use CRESS to answer)

Assignment-Non-Fiction Reading

"The Shutout" by Patricia C. McKissack and Frederick McKissack, Jr

Please make sure you restate the question in all of your answers and use details from the text to support your answers.

1. When did baseball probably begin?
2. What did the Knickerbockers do for baseball?
3. In what part of the country did African Americans first play the sport?
4. What limits were put on their involvement in baseball?
5. Explain whether the team owners' reasons for not letting African Americans play were reasonable? (Use CRESS to answer this one)

Assignment-Poetry

"Jimmy Jet and His TV Set" by Shel Silverstein

Please make sure you restate the question in all of your answers and use details from the text to support your answers.

1. What is funny about Jimmy's name and his behavior?
2. What does the story suggest about the effects of watching television?
3. Identify one way television could contribute to a person's physical fitness and one way it could interfere with a person's physical fitness? (Use CRESS to answer this one)

"O to be Up and Doing" by Robert Louis Stevenson

Please make sure you restate the question in all of your answers and use details from the text to support your answers.

1. At the end of the poem what three things does the poet feel called to do?
2. Describe the kind of life the speaker in the poem thinks is valuable. (Use CRESS to answer this one)

"The Open Road" by Walt Whitman

Please make sure you restate the question in all of your answers and use details from the text to support your answers.

1. At the beginning of the poem what is the speaker about to do?
2. What decision does he announce?
3. Would you prefer life in a city or life on the "open road"? Explain. (Use CRESS to answer this one)

DRAGON, DRAGON

MODEL

John Gardner

There was once a king whose kingdom was plagued by a dragon. The king did not know which way to turn. The king's knights were all cowards who hid under their beds whenever the dragon came in sight, so they were of no use to the king at all. And the king's wizard could not help either because, being old, he had forgotten his magic spells. Nor could the wizard look up the spells that had slipped his mind, for he had unfortunately misplaced his wizard's book many years before. The king was at his wit's end.

Every time there was a full moon the dragon came out of his lair and ravaged the countryside. He frightened maidens and stopped up chimneys and broke store windows and set people's clocks back and made dogs bark until no one could hear himself think.

He tipped over fences and robbed graves and put frogs in people's drinking water and tore the last chapters out of novels and changed house numbers around so that people crawled into bed with their neighbors.

He stole spark plugs out of people's cars and put firecrackers in people's cigars and stole the clappers from all the church bells and sprung

every bear trap for miles around so the bears could wander wherever they pleased.

And to top it all off, he changed around all the roads in the kingdom so that people could not get anywhere except by starting out in the wrong direction.

"That," said the king in a fury, "is enough!" And he called a meeting of everyone in the kingdom.

Now it happened that there lived in the kingdom a wise old cobbler who had a wife and three sons. The cobbler and his family came to the king's meeting and stood way in back by the door, for the cobbler had a feeling that since he was nobody important there had probably been some mistake, and no doubt the king had intended the meeting for everyone in the kingdom except his family and him.

Based on the preceding information about the dragon, you can predict that the king will look for a hero to slay the dragon.

◆ Build Vocabulary

plagued (plāgd) v.: Tormented

ravaged (rav' ijd) v.: Violently destroyed; ruined

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the king when everyone was present, "I've put up with that dragon as long as I can. He has got to be stopped."

All the people whispered amongst themselves, and the king smiled, pleased with the impression he had made.

But the wise cobbler said gloomily, "It's all very well to talk about it—but how are you going to do it?"

And now all the people smiled and winked as if to say, "Well, King, he's got you there!"

The king frowned.

"It's not that His Majesty hasn't tried," the queen spoke up loyally.

"Yes," said the king, "I've told my knights again and again that they ought to slay that dragon. But I can't

The king has not been able to get his knights to fight the dragon. You can make the inference that the king is not an effective ruler.

force them to go. I'm not a tyrant."

"Why doesn't the wizard say a magic spell?" asked the cobbler.

"He's done the best he can," said the king.

The wizard blushed and everyone looked embarrassed. "I used to do all sorts of spells and chants when I was younger," the wizard explained. "But I've lost my spell book, and I begin to fear I'm losing my memory too. For instance, I've been trying for days to recall one spell I used to do. I forget, just now, what the deuce it was for. It went something like—

Bimble,
Wimble,
Chai, cha
CHOOMPFI

Suddenly, to everyone's surprise, the queen

turned into a rosebush.

"Oh dear," said the wizard.

"Now you've done it," groaned the king.

"Poor Mother," said the princess.

"I don't know what can have happened," the wizard said nervously,

"but don't worry, I'll have her changed back in a jiffy." He shut his eyes and racked his brain for a spell that would change her back.

But the king said quickly, "You'd better leave well enough alone. If you change her into a rattlesnake we'll have to chop off her head."

Meanwhile the cobbler stood with his hands in his pockets, sighing at the waste of time. "About the dragon . . ." he began.

"Oh yes," said the king. "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give the princess's hand in marriage to anyone who can make the dragon stop."

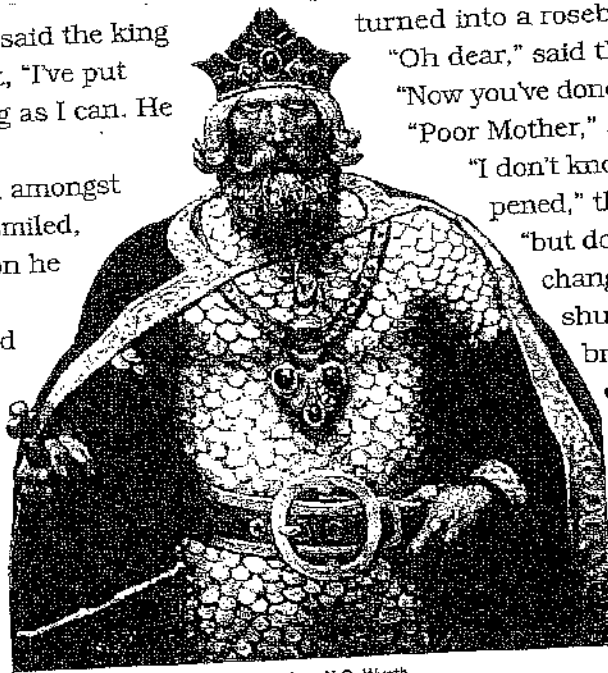
"It's not enough," said the cobbler. "She's a nice enough girl, you understand. But how would an ordinary person support her? Also, what about those of us that are already married?"

"In that case," said the king, "I'll offer the princess's hand or half the kingdom or both—whichever is most convenient."

The cobbler scratched his chin and considered it. "It's not enough," he said at last. "It's a good enough kingdom, you understand, but it's too much responsibility."

"Take it or leave it," the king said.

"I'll leave it," said the cobbler. And he shrugged and went home.



Frontispiece of The Boy's King Arthur, N.C. Wyeth

▲ Critical Viewing Contrast the king in the picture with the king in the story. [Compare and Contrast]

◆ Build Vocabulary

tyrant (tī rent) n.: Cruel, unjust ruler

But the cobbler's eldest son thought the bargain was a good one, for the princess was very beautiful and he liked the idea of having half the kingdom to run as he pleased. So he said to the king, "I'll accept those terms, Your Majesty. By tomorrow morning the dragon will be slain."

"Bless you!" cried the king.

"Hooray, hooray, hooray!" cried all the people, throwing their hats in the air.

The cobbler's eldest son beamed with pride, and the second eldest looked at him enviously. The youngest son said timidly, "Excuse me, Your Majesty, but don't you think the queen

Because heroes usually win, you might predict that the cobbler's eldest son will defeat the dragon. However, that would probably be the end of the story. You might predict instead that he will be defeated.

looks a little unwell? If I were you I think I'd water her."

"Good heavens," cried the king, glancing at the queen who had been changed into a rosebush. "I'm glad you mentioned it!"

Now the cobbler's eldest son was very clever and was known far and wide for how quickly he could multiply fractions in his head. He was perfectly sure he could slay the dragon by somehow or other playing a trick on him, and he didn't feel that he needed his wise old father's advice. But he thought it was only polite to ask, and so he went to his father, who was working as usual at his cobbler's bench, and said, "Well, Father, I'm off to slay the dragon. Have you any advice to give me?"

The cobbler thought a moment and replied, "When and if you come to the dragon's lair, recite the following poem:

*Dragon, dragon, how do you do?
I've come from the king to murder you.
Say it very loudly and firmly and the dragon
will fall, God willing, at your feet."*

"How curious!" said the eldest son. And he thought to himself, "The old man is not as wise as I thought. If I say something like that

to the dragon, he will eat me up in an instant. The way to kill a dragon is to out-fox him." And keeping his opinion to himself, the eldest son set forth on his quest.

When he came at last to the dragon's lair, which was a cave, the eldest son slyly disguised himself as a peddler and knocked on the door and called out, "Hello there!"

"There's nobody home!" roared a voice.

The voice was as loud as an earthquake, and the eldest son's knees knocked together in terror.

"I don't come to trouble you," the eldest son said meekly. "I merely thought you might be interested in looking at some of our brushes. Or if you'd prefer," he added quickly, "I could leave our catalogue with you and I could drop by again, say, early next week."

"I don't want any brushes," the voice roared, "and I especially don't want any brushes next week."

"Oh," said the eldest son. By now his knees were knocking together so badly that he had to sit down.

Suddenly a great shadow fell over him, and the eldest son looked up. It was the dragon. The eldest son drew his sword, but the dragon lunged and swallowed him in a single gulp, sword and all, and the eldest son found himself in the dark of the dragon's belly. "What a fool I was not to listen to my wise old father!" thought the eldest son. And he began to weep bitterly.

"Well," sighed the king the next morning, "I see the dragon has not been slain yet."

"I'm just as glad, personally," said the princess, sprinkling the queen. "I would have had to marry that eldest son, and he had warts."

Identify with the eldest son to understand his decision. He has just gotten advice that does not make any sense to him. Like him, you might decide to come up with your own plan.

Now the cobbler's middle son decided it was his turn to try. The middle son was very strong and he was known far and wide for being able to lift up the corner of a church. He felt perfectly sure he could slay the dragon by simply laying into him, but he thought it would be only polite to ask his father's advice. So he went to his father and said to him, "Well, Father, I'm off to slay the dragon. Have you any advice for me?"

The cobbler told the middle son exactly what he'd told the eldest.

"When and if you come to the dragon's lair, recite the following poem:

Dragon, dragon, how do you do?

I've come from the king to murder you.

Say it very loudly and firmly, and the dragon will fall, God willing, at your feet."

"What an odd thing to say," thought the middle son. "The old man is not as wise as I thought. You have to take these dragons by surprise." But he kept his opinion to himself and set forth.

Based on what happened to the first son, you can predict that the second son will also fail.

When he came in sight of the dragon's lair, the middle son spurred his horse to a gallop and thundered into the entrance swinging his sword with all his might.

But the dragon had seen him while he was still a long way off, and being very clever, the dragon had crawled up on top of the door so that when the son came charging in he went under the dragon and on to the back of the cave and slammed into the wall. Then the dragon chuckled and got down off the door, taking his time, and strolled back to where the man and the horse lay unconscious from the terrific blow. Opening his mouth as if for a yawn, the dragon swallowed the middle son in a single gulp and put the horse in the freezer to eat another day.

"What a fool I was not to listen to my wise old father," thought the middle son when he came to in the dragon's belly. And he too

began to weep bitterly.

That night there was a full moon, and the dragon ravaged the countryside so terribly that several families moved to another kingdom.

"Well," sighed the king in the morning, "still no luck in this dragon business, I see."

"I'm just as glad, myself," said the princess, moving her mother, pot and all, to the window where the sun could get at her. "The cobbler's middle son was a kind of humpback."

Now the cobbler's youngest son saw that his turn had come. He was very upset and nervous, and he wished he had never been born. He was not clever, like his eldest brother, and he was not strong, like his second-eldest brother. He was a decent, honest boy who always minded his elders.

He borrowed a suit of armor from a friend of his who was a knight, and when the youngest son put the armor on it was so heavy he could hardly walk. From another knight he borrowed a sword, and that was so heavy that the only way the youngest son could get it to the dragon's lair was to drag it along behind his horse like a plow.

When everything was in readiness, the youngest son went for a last conversation with his father.

"Father, have you any advice to give me?" he asked.

"Only this," said the cobbler. "When and if you come to the dragon's lair, recite the following poem:

Dragon, dragon, how do you do?

I've come from the king to murder you.

Say it very loudly and firmly, and the dragon will fall, God willing, at your feet."

"Are you certain?" asked the youngest son uneasily.

"As certain as one can ever be in these matters," said the wise old cobbler.

And so the youngest son set forth on his quest. He traveled over hill and dale and at last came to the dragon's cave.

The dragon, who had seen the cobbler's youngest son while he was still a long way off, was seated up above the door, inside the cave, waiting and smiling to himself. But minutes passed and no one came thundering in. The dragon frowned, puzzled, and was tempted to peek out. However, reflecting that patience seldom goes unrewarded, the dragon kept his head up out of sight and went on waiting. At last, when he could stand it no longer, the dragon craned his neck and looked. There at the entrance of the cave stood a trembling young man in a suit of armor twice his size, struggling with a sword so heavy he could lift only one end of it at a time.

At sight of the dragon, the cobbler's youngest son began to tremble so violently that his armor rattled like a house caving in. He heaved with all his might at the sword and got the handle up level with his chest, but even now the point was down in the dirt. As loudly and firmly as he could manage, the youngest son cried—

Dragon, dragon, how do you do?

I've come from the king to murder you.

"What?" cried the dragon, flabbergasted. "You? You? Murder Me???" All at once he began to laugh, pointing at the little cobbler's son. "He he he ho ha!" he roared, shaking all over, and tears filled his eyes. "He he he ho ho ha ha ha!" laughed the dragon. He was laughing so hard he had to hang onto his sides, and



Dick Whittington on his way to London from *My Nursery Story Book*, Private Collection

▲ Critical Viewing Does the boy in this picture look like a dragon slayer? Explain. [Evaluate]

he fell off the door and landed on his back, still laughing, kicking his legs helplessly, rolling from side to side, laughing and laughing and laughing.

The cobbler's son was annoyed, "I do come from the king to murder you," he said. "A person doesn't like to be laughed at for a thing like that."

"He he he!" wailed the dragon, almost sobbing, gasping for breath. "Of course not, poor dear boy! But really, he he, the idea of it, ha, ha, ha! And that simply ridiculous poem!" Tears streamed from the dragon's eyes and he lay on

his back perfectly helpless with laughter.

"It's a good poem," said the cobbler's youngest son loyally. "My father made it up." And growing angrier he shouted, "I want you to stop that laughing, or I'll—I'll—" But the dragon could not stop for the life of him. And suddenly, in a terrific rage, the cobbler's son began flopping the sword end over end in the direction of the dragon. Sweat ran off the youngest son's forehead, but he labored on,

From the dragon's laughter, you can infer that the youngest son does not scare him one bit.

◆ Build Vocabulary

reflecting (rī fīekt' in) *adj.*: Thinking seriously
craned (krānd) *v.*: Stretched out (one's neck) for a better view

blistering mad, and at last, with one supreme heave, he had the sword standing on its handle a foot from the dragon's throat. Of its own weight the sword fell, slicing the dragon's head off.

"He he ho huk," went the dragon—and then he lay dead.

The two older brothers crawled out and thanked their younger brother for saving their lives. "We have learned our lesson," they said.

Then the three brothers gathered all the treasures from the dragon's cave and tied them to the back end of the youngest brother's horse, and tied the dragon's head on behind the treasures, and started home. "I'm glad I listened to my father," the youngest son thought. "Now I'll be the richest man in the kingdom."

There were hand-carved picture frames and silver spoons and boxes of jewels and chests of money and silver compasses and maps telling where there were more treasures buried when

these ran out. There was also a curious old book with a picture of an owl on the cover, and inside, poems and odd sentences and recipes that seemed to make no sense.

When they reached the king's castle the people all leaped for joy to see that the dragon was dead, and the princess ran out and kissed the youngest brother on the forehead, for secretly she had hoped it would be him.

"Well," said the king, "which half of the kingdom do you want?"

"My wizard's book!" exclaimed the wizard. "He's found my wizard's book!" He opened the book and ran his finger along under the words and then said in a loud voice, "Glmuzk, shkzmlp, blam!"

Instantly the queen stood before them in her natural shape, except she was soaking wet from being sprinkled too often. She glared at the king.

"Oh dear," said the king, hurrying toward the door.



The Shutout

*Patricia C. McKissack and
Frederick McKissack, Jr.*

The history of baseball is difficult to trace because it is embroidered with wonderful anecdotes that are fun but not necessarily supported by fact. There are a lot of myths that persist about baseball—the games, the players, the owners, and the fans—in spite of contemporary research that disproves most of them. For example, the story that West Point cadet Abner Doubleday “invented” baseball in 1839 while at Cooperstown, New York, continues to be widely accepted, even though, according to his diaries, Doubleday

If your **purpose** is to find out how baseball began, you will learn that Abner Doubleday probably did not invent the sport.

never visited Cooperstown. A number of records and documents show that people were playing stick-and-ball games long before the 1839 date.

Albigeance Waldo, a surgeon with George Washington's troops at Valley Forge, wrote in his diary that soldiers were “batting balls and running bases” in their free time. Samuel Hopkins Adams (1871–1958),

an American historical novelist, stated that his grandfather “played baseball on Mr. Mumford's pasture” in the 1820's.

Waldo's diary entry and Adams's statement are **evidence** that baseball started before 1839.

Although baseball is a uniquely American sport, it was not invented by a single person. Probably the game evolved from a variety of stick-and-ball games that were played in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas for centuries and brought to the colonies by the most diverse group of people ever to populate a continent. More specifically, some historians believe baseball is an outgrowth of its first cousin, *rounders*, an English game. Robin Carver wrote in his *Book of Sports*

◆ Build Vocabulary

anecdotes (an' ik dōts') *n.*: Short, entertaining tales

evolved (ē vōlv'd') *v.*: Grew gradually; developed

diverse (de vurs') *adj.*: Various; with differing characteristics

(1834) that "an American version of rounders called *goal ball* was rivaling cricket in popularity."

It is generally accepted that by 1845, baseball, as it is recognized today, was becoming popular, especially in New York. In that year a group of baseball enthusiasts organized the New York Knickerbocker Club. They tried to standardize the game by establishing guidelines for "proper play."

The Knickerbockers' rules set the playing field—a diamond-shaped infield with four bases (first, second, third, and home) placed ninety feet apart. At that time, the pitching distance was forty-five feet from home base and the "pitch" was thrown underhanded. The three-strikes-out rule, the three-out in-

ning, and the ways in which a player could be called out were also specified. However, the nine-man team and nine-inning game were

In the first section of the essay, you can see that one of the authors' main points is about the origins of baseball.

not established until later. Over the years, the Knickerbockers' basic rules of play haven't changed much.

In 1857–1858, the newly organized National Association of Base Ball Players was formed, and baseball became a business. Twenty-five clubs—mostly from eastern states—formed the Association for the purpose of setting rules and guidelines for club and team competition. The Association defined a professional player as a person who "played for money, place or emolument (profit)." The Association also authorized an admission fee for one of the first "all-star" games between Brooklyn and New York. Fifteen hundred people paid fifty cents to see that game. Baseball was on its way to becoming the nation's number-one sport.

By 1860, the same year South Carolina seceded from the Union, there were about

sixty teams in the Association. For obvious reasons none of them were from the South. Baseball's development was slow during the Civil War years, but teams continued to compete, and military records show that, sometimes between battles, Union soldiers chose up teams and played baseball

games. It was during this time that records began mentioning African-American players. One war journalist noted that black players were "sought after as teammates because of their skill as ball handlers."

Information about the role of African Americans in the early stages of baseball development is slight. Several West African cultures had stick-and-ball and running games, so at least some blacks were familiar with the concept of baseball. Baseball, however, was not a popular southern sport, never equal to boxing, wrestling, footracing, or horse racing among the privileged landowners.

Slave owners preferred these individual sports because they could enter their slaves in competitions, watch the event from a safe distance, pocket the winnings, and personally never raise a sweat. There are documents to show that slave masters made a great deal of money from the athletic skills of their slaves.

Free blacks, on the other hand, played on and against integrated¹ teams in large eastern cities and in small midwestern hamlets. It is believed that some of the emancipated²

Here the authors introduce a new **main idea**: the role of African Americans in the sport.

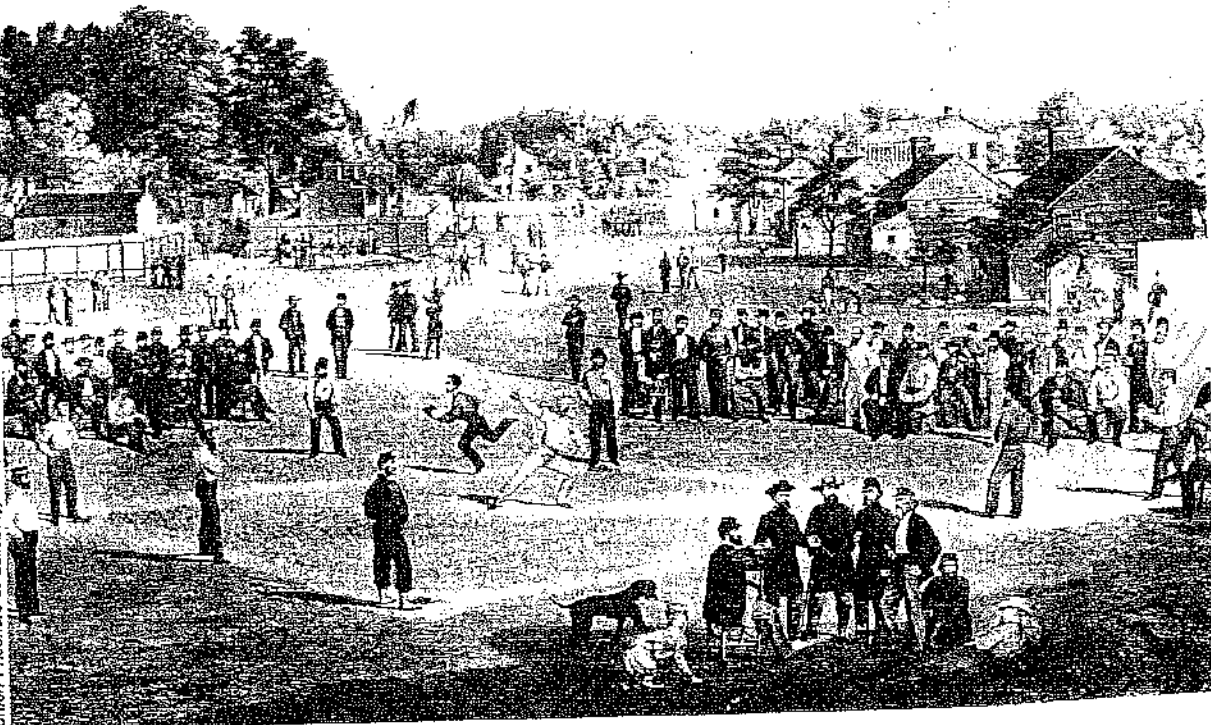
The authors' evidence for the fact that slaveowners entered slaves into athletic contests is the existence of certain historical documents.

1. **integrated** (in' tə grā tid) *adj.*: Open to both African Americans and whites.

2. **emancipated** (ə man' sē pā' tid) *adj.*: Freed from slavery.

▼ Critical Viewing What information about the history of baseball can you learn from this picture? [Analyze]

Union Prisoners at Salisbury, N.C., National Baseball Library and Archive, Cooperstown, NY



slaves and runaways who served in the Union Army learned how to play baseball from northern blacks and whites who had been playing together for years.

After the Civil War, returning soldiers helped to inspire a new interest in baseball all over the country. Teams sprung up in northern and midwestern cities, and naturally African Americans were interested in joining some of these clubs. But the National Association of Base Ball Players had other ideas. They voted in December 1867 not to admit any team for membership that "may be composed of one or more colored persons." Their reasoning was as irrational as the racism that shaped it: "If colored clubs were

admitted," the Association stated, "there would be in all probability some division of feeling whereas, by excluding them no injury could result to anyone . . . and [we wish] to keep out of the convention the discussion of any subjects having a political bearing as this [admission of blacks on the Association teams] undoubtedly would."

So, from the start, organized baseball tried to limit or exclude African-American

◆ Build Vocabulary

composed (kəm pōzd') *adj.*: Made up (of)

irrational (ir rash' ə nəl) *adj.*: Unreasonable; not making sense

participation. In the early days a few black ball players managed to play on integrated minor league teams. A few even made it to the majors, but by the turn of the century, black players were shut out of the major leagues until after World War II. That doesn't mean African Americans didn't play the game. They did.

Black people organized their own teams, formed leagues, and competed for championships. The history of the old "Negro Leagues" and the players who barnstormed³ on black diamonds is one of baseball's most interesting chapters, but the story is a

3. barnstormed v.: Went from one small town to another, putting on an exhibition.

researcher's nightmare. Black baseball was outside the mainstream of the major leagues, so team and player records weren't well kept, and for the most part, the white press ignored black clubs or portrayed them as clowns. And for a long time the Baseball Hall of Fame didn't recognize any of the Negro League players. Because of the lack of documentation, many people thought the Negro Leagues' stories were nothing more than myths and yarns, but that is not the case. The history of the Negro Leagues is a patchwork of human drama and comedy, filled with legendary heroes, infamous owners, triple-headers, low pay, and long bus rides home—not unlike the majors.

O to Be Up and Doing

Robert Louis Stevenson

- O to be up and doing,
Unfearing and unashamed to go
In all the uproar and the press
About my human business!
- 5 My undissuaded heart I hear
Whisper courage in my ear.
With voiceless calls, the ancient earth
Summons me to a daily birth,
Thou, O my love, ye, O my friends—
- 10 The gist¹ of life, the end of ends—
To laugh, to love, to live, to die
Ye call me by the ear and eye!

1. gist (jist) *n.*: Main point.

◆ Build Vocabulary

undissuaded (un dis swā'dəd) *adj.*: Not discouraged; not persuaded to give up

summons (sum'enz) *v.*: Calls; orders to come

THE OPEN ROAD

Walt Whitman

Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open
road.

Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me, leading
wherever I choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself
am good-fortune.

5 Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone
no more, need nothing.

Done with indoor complaints, libraries,
querulous criticisms,

Strong and content, I travel the open road.

◆ Build Vocabulary

henceforth (hens fōrth) *adv.*: From now on

whimper (hwim'per) *v.*: Make a low, whining
sound, as of fear or pain

querulous (kwer'yōō lēs) *adj.*: Inclined to find
mistakes; complaining

Jimmy Jet and His TV Set

Shel Silverstein

I'll tell you the story of Jimmy Jet—
And you know what I tell you is true.
He loved to watch his TV set
Almost as much as you.

- 5 He watched all day, he watched all night
Till he grew pale and lean,
From *The Early Show* to *The Late Late Show*
And all the shows between.

- 10 He watched till his eyes were frozen wide,
And his bottom grew into his chair.
And his chin turned into a tuning dial,
And antennae grew out of his hair.

- And his brains turned into TV tubes,
And his face to a TV screen.
15 And two knobs saying "VERT." and "HORIZ."
Grew where his ears had been.

- And he grew a plug that looked like a tail
So we plugged in little Jim.
And now instead of him watching TV
20 We all sit around and watch him.

◆ Build Vocabulary

lean (lēn) *adj.*: Thin

antennae (an ten' ē) *n.*: Metal rods that receive TV
or radio signals