

Coal Culture

Lesson Plans

Baseball in the Coal Fields

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Grade Level: 7-10

Introduction:

This is a lesson about the life of coalminers that focuses on baseball. It can be taught in a Geography or History class.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- a) Identify main ideas in a secondary source.
- b) Develop critical thinking skills.
- c) Draw conclusions about life in a coal town.

Teaching Time: One 40-minute period

Disciplines:

Language Arts

History

Teacher Preparation:

1. Transfer the image of the baseball team from Sagamore, Pennsylvania onto a transparency. Include the source in the transparency (Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Company Media Collection, MG 94: Series II, Box 1 Negatives, EMC 4: 11.)



<http://libs0800.acadlib.iup.edu:2006/u/?Mining,179>

2. Make copies of Jim Dougherty, [“Recreation in the Coal Fields: The Case of Baseball”](#) for students.
3. Make copies of the reading guide for students.

Correlation to PA Standards

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening	History
1.1.5.G	8.1.6.A
1.2.5.G	8.1.6.B
1.6.5.E	8.1.6.D
1.1.8.G	8.1.9.A
1.2.8.G	8.1.9.B
1.4.5.B	8.1.9.D
1.4.8.B	8.2.6.C
1.6.8.E	8.2.6.D
	8.3.9.C

Procedure

Introduction

- Project photograph of the baseball team onto a screen.
- Lead students in a discussion of the photograph – for example, have students speculate on the team. Who did they represent? Teach students how to use contextual clues (focus their attention on the source—R and P coal Company) in interpreting primary sources.

Reading Activity

- Distribute copies of Dougherty, “Recreation in the Coal Fields: The Case of Baseball.”
- Give students time to read the article. Provide a guide to help students extract main ideas.
- Alternatively, students can first read the article independently, and then be put in pairs to complete the [reading guide](#).

Class discussion

- Teacher can guide the discussion of the article. Focus on baseball not only as recreation, but also as a means of community building. Students should be encouraged to discuss the types of activities today that help nurture a sense of community among those living in towns and municipalities across the state.

Writing Activity

- Students are to write a short sports article about a Friday night at the baseball game.