

# JACKIE ROBINSON

BRIGHT STAR THEATRE : A NATIONALLY TOURING PROFESSIONAL THEATRE COMPANY

## About our Production!

It's always so much fun to learn about ordinary Americans who accomplish extraordinary things. Jackie Robinson began his life humbly, and was able to become a ground breaker in professional sports. In addition to being the first Black Major league baseball player in modern times, Robinson was a symbol of hope and inspiration for young people across the United States. We know young audiences will find inspiration in Jackie Robinson even today.

In this fun and active play, we introduce all the important people in Jackie's life, from his Mom to Martin Luther King Jr.

Young audience are asked to take part in his successes and challenges, from helping him decide not to give up his seat on an army bus, to cheering him on during his first home run.



## The Story of Jackie Robinson

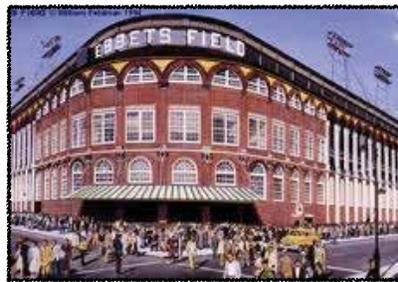
Jackie Robinson was born in Georgia; he and his brothers and sisters were raised by a single Mom who taught them at a young age that they needed to stand up for what they believed in. Their family didn't have much money, but Jackie was a good student and great at sports, especially baseball.

He served in the military during World War II, but he was dismissed when he refused to give up his seat for a white soldier on an army bus. After his time in the army, he played for Black baseball teams, and was finally asked to join the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. His baseball number was 42.

Despite being treated terribly by other players, by managers of other teams, and even by strangers in the stands, Jackie Robinson never gave up, yet he refused to fight back. His peaceful response to racial segregation was something he was well known for. Other leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, used these methods later on in order to get equal rights for Black Americans.



Jackie Robinson's first hero was his mother, Mallie. Have students draw a picture, or write a letter to the greatest hero in their lives.



EBBETS FIELD IS WHERE JACKIE ROBINSON PLAYED BASEBALL FOR THE DODGERS. HAVE STUDENTS DRAW OR WRITE ABOUT A PLACE WHERE THEY DO THEIR FAVORITE ACTIVITIES.



IN THE PLAY, JACKIE ROBINSON HAS STUDENTS MAKE A PROMISE NOT TO BE MEAN OR TO BULLY EACH OTHER. WHAT OTHER PROMISES CAN YOU COME UP WITH AS A CLASS WHICH ENCOURAGE RESPECT? HAVE STUDENTS MAKE A LIST AND SIGN THAT THEY AGREE!



# JACKIE ROBINSON: NUMBER 42

## A sneak peek at some of the characters and vocabulary words from our play



**Buddy Baseman:** Baseball Announcer. Buddy is a made-up character. We made up Buddy in order to help Jackie Robinson tell his story. Although Buddy wasn't a real man, he is based on real-life sports announcers from the time.

**Ask students:** If they made up their own character for a story or play, what would they be like? What would be their job?

**Jackie Robinson:** Jackie Robinson is the main character in the play. He was a real man; the first Black baseball player to play in the Major Leagues.

**Ask Students:** Why do they think Jackie Robinson is important? Why was he picked as the first Black player?

**Segregation:** Segregation is the separation of people based on their race. In Jackie Robinson's time, segregation was legal. It meant that Black Americans couldn't go to the same schools, eat at the same places, or even use the same water fountains as white Americans. Jackie Robinson ended segregation in professional sports.



**Equal Rights:** Equal rights means that all American people have the same chances to go to school, work, make choices, and be successful. Black Americans didn't used to have equal rights. Thanks to the work of Jackie Robinson and many others, segregation became illegal, and America started making sure people had equal rights.



**Joe Lewis:** One of the most famous boxers of all time. He worked with Robinson in the army and even helped him get into a special school in the army.

**Activity:** Pair students up and have them decide a goal they each have, and how they could help each other accomplish that goal.



**Rachel Robinson:** Rachel married Jackie Robinson right before he started playing professional baseball. She never let Jackie give up and helped him through many hard times. She was also very successful; she helped run a hospital, and helped Jackie run the first bank that was owned by Black Americans. She is 91 years old and lives in Connecticut.

**Ask students:** Why is it important to help your family and friends?

### Fun highlights from Jackie Robinson's Career

Robinson scored over 130 home runs in the major leagues.

He stole 197 bases in his career.

He won Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player.

Robinson was one of the only baseball players to ever steal home in a World Series game.

Jackie Robinson's number-Number 42-is retired from baseball. That means no one else in baseball wears his number BUT once a year, on Jackie Robinson day, everyone in baseball wears the number 42.

He became the highest paid player for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Jackie Robinson was the first Black player to be inducted into the baseball Hall of Fame.



## BEFORE SEEING THE PLAY...

Seeing a play is very different from watching a movie or watching TV.

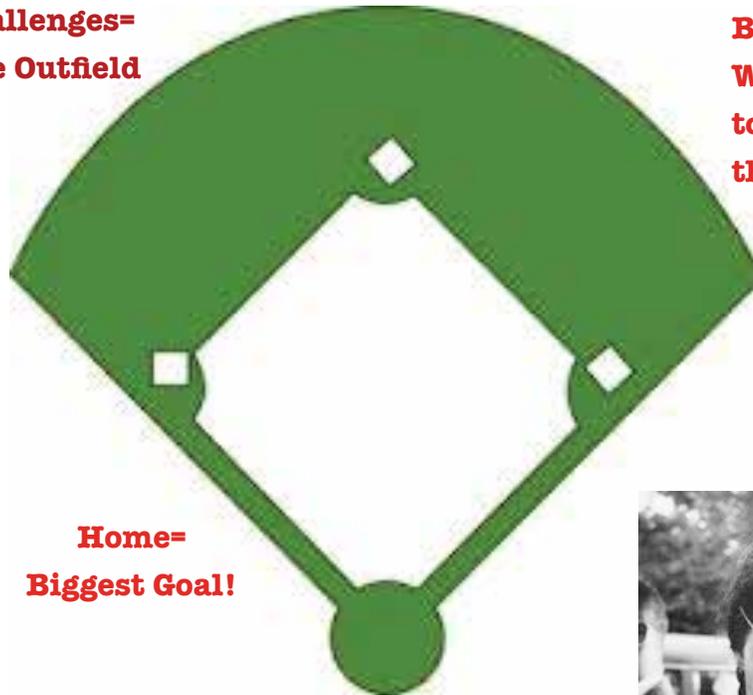
For one thing the actors are real people who can here and see you. Here are some tips for being a great audience member so that the actors can do their best, and so you can get the most out of the play!

1. If something is funny, it's okay to laugh.
2. If the actors ask you to participate or respond, feel free to do so!
3. Please be quiet and respectful during the performance so you can see and hear the story, and so those around you can see and hear too!
4. If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.
5. Use your imagination, have fun, and enjoy the story!

# Life is a lot like Baseball...

**Challenges=**  
**The Outfield**

**Bases=**  
**What you can do**  
**to accomplish**  
**that goal**



**Home=**  
**Biggest Goal!**

## After Seeing the Play...

In the play, Jackie Robinson says, "Life is a lot like baseball." This is a good way to say that no matter what challenges he faced, he kept running, kept going toward his goals.

Use the following activity to help demonstrate this!

1. Create a baseball diamond-draw it out, or use one that is already printed.
2. Make home plate whatever your biggest goal is. This could be your dream job, travel, or even playing a sport! You can write this, or draw a picture.
3. Make 1st, 2nd, and 3rd base things that you need to do in order to accomplish this goal. This could be things like practicing really hard, graduating from school, or getting certain supplies.
4. Are there any challenges that might stand in your way? Put these in the outfield!
5. Share these with the class or post on classroom walls!



## Celebrating Black History

Black history month happens every February. It's a month dedicated to all of the great accomplishments of Black Americans like Rosa Parks, whose picture is above. Who is your favorite Black American from history? See what you can find out about them and share what you learn with the class. Pick someone from below, or choose someone you know!

- Rosa Parks
- Harriet Tubman
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- George Washington Carver
- Frederick Douglass
- Booker T. Washington
- Sojourner Truth
- Thurgood Marshall

# Classroom Activities

\* Write your own review of the play! What did you like

about it? What was your favorite moment? What

character did you like best?

If you had written or directed

this play, would you have

done anything differently?

\* Bright Star actors travel all over the country performing

for young audiences. If you

were a traveling actor, where

would you want to go? What

plays would you want to do?

\*Some of the main characters

in Jackie's story were his

Mom, his wife, and Branch

Rickey, his baseball manager.

Try making up a play where

you are the star! Who would

the other characters be?

\* Jackie Robinson was the first

Black man to play in

professional sports. If you

were the first to do something

great, what would it be? Draw

a picture, or write a journal.

## Discussion Points

1. What do you think professional sports would be like if Jackie Robinson hadn't played for the Dodgers? Who are your favorite black sports players today?

2. If you were Jackie Robinson, would you have been brave enough to do what he did and not fight back?

3. Why does Jackie Robinson say that violence doesn't solve anything?

4. Why is it important to stand up for what you think is right?

5. Is there anything you wish you could change about America today?

## MAKE YOUR OWN JACKIE ROBINSON BASEBALL CARD

Using all that you learned from the play, make a Jackie Robinson Baseball card! Draw or find a picture of him for the front and make sure you include all of the great things he did both on and off the field.

What were some of his baseball highlights?

What was his biggest accomplishment?

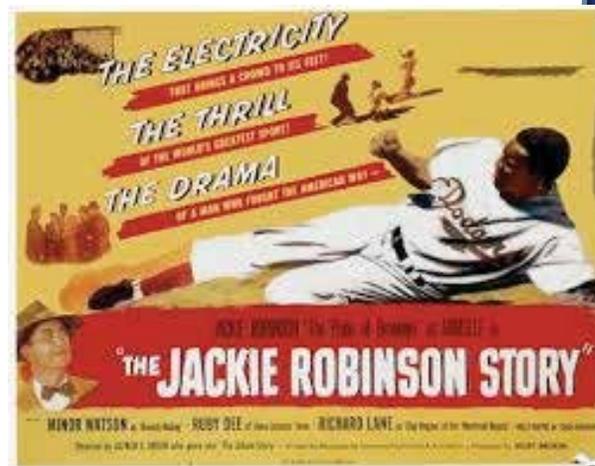
Did he do anything important after playing baseball?

For this activity you will need:

-Cardboard or construction paper

-Tape or glue

-Markers, Colored Pencils or crayons



Who is Bright Star Theatre? Quickly becoming one of America's largest nationally touring theatre companies-- Bright Star has built a national reputation of delivering professional programs at all-inclusive pricing. Black history, literary, curriculum and character education focused shows make up the season. The company has toured since August 2003 serving audiences as diverse as the National Theatre in Washington DC to the Spoleto Festival in Charleston to the National Underground Railroad Museum.

Website:

[www.brightstartheatre.com](http://www.brightstartheatre.com)

Videos/study guides & more!

Actors

Annually, our company watches over 1200 actors audition for our season. The actors depicted in this study guide, are not necessarily the same actors that will be arriving at your venue.

Jackie Robinson

Sole Property of Bright Star Children's Theatre, LLC. The show was written by David Ostergaard. For rights and inquiries connect with us anytime at [www.brightstartheatre.com](http://www.brightstartheatre.com) Questions? Concerns? Anything!

[david@brightstartheatre.com](mailto:david@brightstartheatre.com)