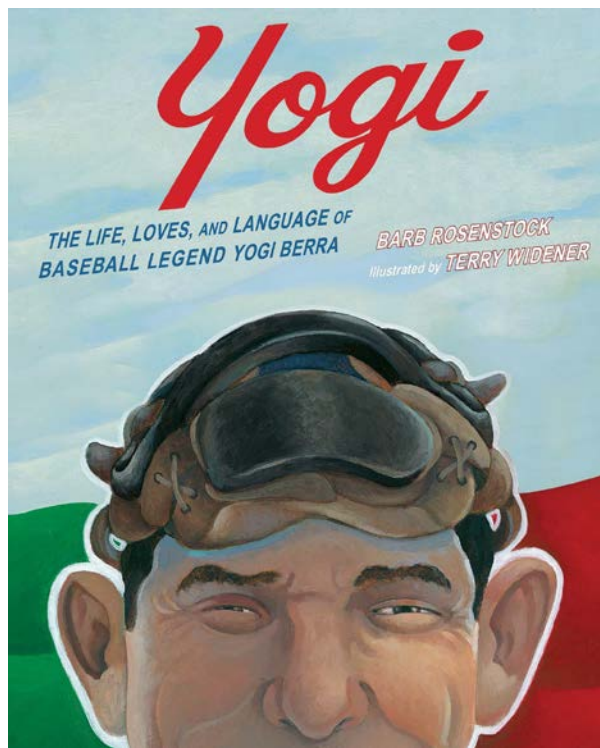


## YOGI: THE LIFE, LOVES, AND LANGUAGE OF BASEBALL LEGEND YOGI BERRA BY BARB ROSENSTOCK, ILLUSTRATED BY TERRY WIDENER



By Barb Rosenstock  
Illustrated by Terry Widener  
Publisher: Calkins Creek  
ISBN: 978-1629798240  
Grades 2-5

**LAWRENCE “YOGI” BERRA** loved his family, his neighborhood, his friends, and, most of all, baseball. He was crazy for it. But baseball didn’t love him back—at least not right away. Yogi didn’t look like other players. When he finally made it to the Major Leagues, Yogi endured pranks and harassment from players, sportswriters, and fans. Their words hurt but they didn’t stop him. Yogi soon became known for playing exceptional ball and talking a good game. Yogi’s quirky sayings—his “Yogi-isms”—became the stuff of legend. Barb Rosenstock’s dynamic text and Terry Widener’s powerful illustrations celebrate the talents, loves, and inspirational words of Yogi Berra, who earned a World Series ring for each finger, and who made baseball love him back.

### More about the Author

**BARB ROSENSTOCK** is best known for her picture book biographies, including *Thomas Jefferson Builds a Library*; *Ben Franklin’s Big Splash: The Mostly True Story of His First Invention*; *The Streak: How Joe DiMaggio Became America’s Hero*; *Dorothea’s Eyes: Dorothea Lange Photographs the Truth*; and *Blue Grass Boy: The Story of Bill Monroe, Father of Bluegrass Music*, all published by Calkins Creek. Her picture book on Vasily Kandinsky, *The Noisy Paint Box: The Colors and Sounds of Kandinsky’s Abstract Art*, was a 2015 Caldecott Honor Book. She lives outside Chicago with her family. Visit [barbrosenstock.com](http://barbrosenstock.com).

### More about the Illustrator

**TERRY WIDENER** is the award-winning illustrator of picture books on athletes, including *The Streak: How Joe DiMaggio Became America’s Hero*; *Girl Wonder: A Baseball Story in Nine Innings*; *American Champion Swimmer: Gertrude Ederle*; and *Lou Gehrig, The Luckiest Man*. He is also the illustrator of *The Kite That Bridged Two Nations* by Alexis O’Neill. He lives in McKinney, Texas, with his wife. He is the father of three grown children. Visit [terrywidenerart.com](http://terrywidenerart.com).

### Yogi-isms

Yogi-isms are malapropisms, meaning “an unusual unintentionally humorous misuse or distortion of a word or phrase, especially the use of a word sounding somewhat like the one intended but ludicrously wrong in the context.” (Merriam Webster)  
The suffix “ism” is from the Greek, meaning “characteristic.” Write Yogi’s sayings on the board and discuss each one as a class or assign the sayings to a small group. Students can talk about and present to the class what they think their Yogi-ism means.

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## Discussion Questions for Students

Yogi said he wanted to play baseball, but others responded that “baseball was a bum’s game.”

Describe how he might have felt.

What did Yogi mean when he said, “I don’t hit with my face,” and that he let his bat do the talking?

How can you tell how Lawdie feels about school from the pictures and text in the book?

When Yogi was young, he held many jobs that did not last. But how was he still a hard worker?

Discuss how Yogi received his nickname “Yogi”. How was his nickname related to how observant he was? Write about a nickname you or someone else you know has and how that came to be.

What did the author mean when she said that Lawdie loved his coaches, but the coaches didn’t always love him back?

Why did Yogi have to put baseball on hold in 1942?

After reading the book, discuss with students how Yogi -- a Hall of Famer -- was a survivor of bullying. Examine how he may have felt, and have students talk about their feelings when bullying has affected them.

Yogi had to compensate for his short fingers. To what extremes did Yogi go to help pitchers see his signals?

Explain what the author means by “home plate became like Yogi’s living room.”

What is chatter?

When Yogi’s playing days were eventually over, explain how he stayed in baseball for 29 more years.

## Language Arts Common Core

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3

Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.6

Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.8

Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.7

Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.2

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.



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## Math

### Base-Ten Baseball

To practice base-ten numerals here is a base-ten baseball game for students.

Materials are a set of dice, picture of a baseball diamond, an innings chart, pencils, and paper.

The game may be played with two students or two teams. Team A goes first, by rolling 1 dice. The first dice is the ones. Roll the second dice this becomes the tens place. For example the first roll was a 5, the second roll was a 3,  $5 + 30 = 35$ . Working up to the hundreds place, roll a third dice, it's a 2. So you have  $200 + 30 + 5 = 235$ .

Add another dice for the thousands, it's a 4. That 4 turns into thousands:  $4000 + 200 + 30 + 5 = 4235$ .

The student's level will determine how many dice used for practicing base-ten numerals. When a team or student has a wrong answer it's a strike.

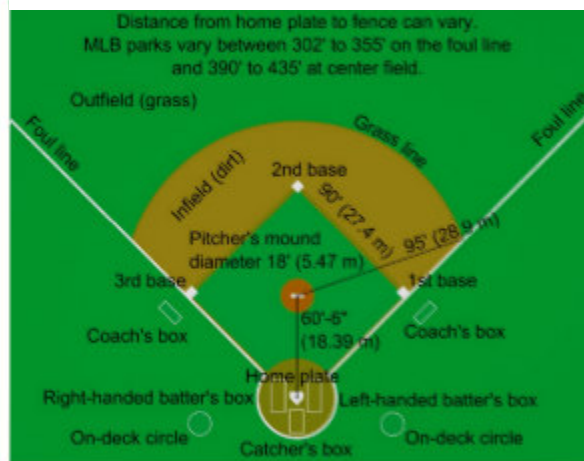
When both teams have three strikes it's the end of the inning.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Team A							
Team B							

Play baseball in the classroom a different way can be found here: <https://www.teachers.net/gazette/MAR02/slutz.html>

### Major League Baseball Field Measurements

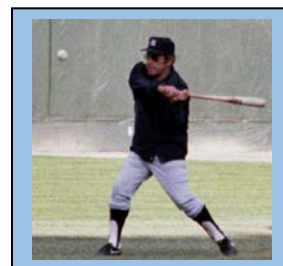


<http://clipart-library.com/clipart/kc85ny76i.htm>

Using the Major League Baseball field measurements, have students calculate how far they would have to hit the ball to get a single? A double? A triple? And a home run!

## Geometry

Task the students to build a ball field inside. Use many different kinds of materials such as pattern blocks, wood blocks, tiles, balls, etc. The first step is for them to make a plan, a design to help them think about what their field will look like. This link: <https://www.ballparksofbaseball.com/american-league/> will help the students see all the shapes that make up a ball field. Have the students ask themselves what shapes they see and what shapes they will need to use for their ball field. What other tools will they need to use? Choices of size for their fields will be determined by the classroom space definitions.



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## Math Common Core

CCSS.Math.Content.2.NBT.A.1

Understand that the three digits of a three-digit number represent amounts of hundreds, tens, and ones; e.g., 706 equals 7 hundreds, 0 tens, and 6 ones.

CCSS.Math.Content.2.NBT.A.3

Read and write numbers to 1000 using base-ten numerals, number names, and expanded form.

CCSS.Math.Content.2.G.A.1

Recognize and draw shapes having specified attributes, such as a given number of angles or a given number of equal faces.<sup>1</sup> Identify triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, and cubes.

CCSS.Math.Content.4.G.A.1

Draw points, lines, line segments, rays, angles (right, acute, obtuse), and perpendicular and parallel lines. Identify these in two-dimensional figures.

CCSS.Math.Content.5.G.B.3

Understand that attributes belonging to a category of two-dimensional figures also belong to all subcategories of that category. For example, all rectangles have four right angles and squares are rectangles, so all squares have four right angles

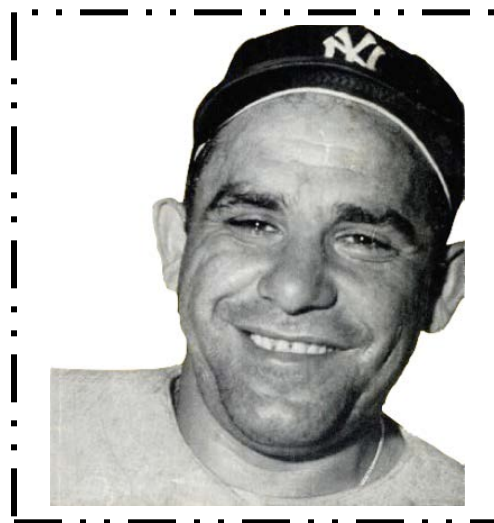
## Geography

Play Major League Baseball geography by printing out the MLB Logos and blank map of the United States. Baseball became known as the nation's favorite pastime in the 1920s and it is still popular today. Students can work in groups to find out where each team resides. After locating the hometown affix the MLB Logo to that spot on the map.

Which team is closest to them? Do they or their family have a favorite team? Have students write about a baseball memory. Begin by asking the students to interview a parent or grandparent

about a favorite baseball memory. Then, the students can write about that experience and share it with the class. This can be demonstrated on a blog, a bulletin board, or for a parent evening.

Baseball isn't just popular in the United States of America; it's loved around the world.



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Yogi's stamp was in the U. S., but there are stamps from all over the world. Have the students choose a Major League Baseball Player and make a stamp for their choice. Expand on this by selecting a pro sports athlete known internationally. Research their home, their sport, and their life. This small stamp assignment turns into a wider world project.





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## Make a Baseball Card

Have the students draw a self-portrait as if they were a Major League Baseball Player. Then, ask them to write in their statistics and other information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Team \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

Bats: \_\_\_\_\_ Throws: \_\_\_\_\_

Born: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_

### Major League Batting Record

	Games	At Bat	Runs	Hits	2B	3B	HR	RBI	Avg.
YR									
Life									

## Science & Health

For grades 2 & 3, the topics of taking care of your body, digestive system, and muscular system are core components. For grades 4 & 5, include circulatory and respiratory systems. Collaborate with the Physical Education teacher for this lesson and find more information in this article: "Train Like a Major League Baseball Player".

<https://health.usnews.com/wellness/fitness/articles/2018-03-22/how-to-train-like-a-major-league-baseball-player>

## Health and Science Discussion Questions

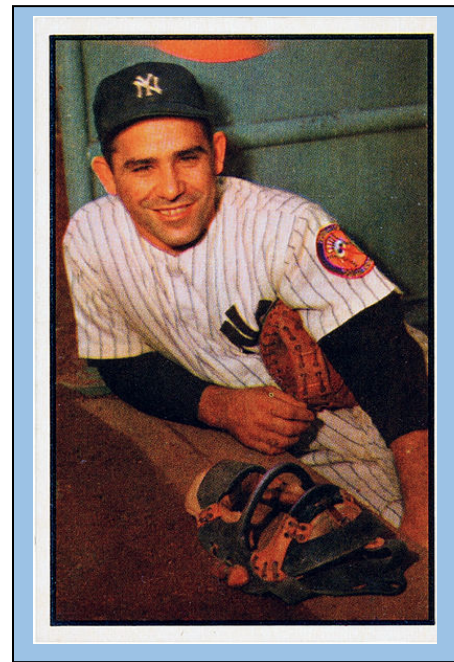
Why and how do baseball players need to take care of their bodies?

What kind of foods should a baseball player eat?

A baseball player needs to work his or her muscles carefully and in the correct manner. Why is this?

What does the circulatory system have to do with baseball? Why is it important?

What role does the respiratory system play in becoming a Major League Player?

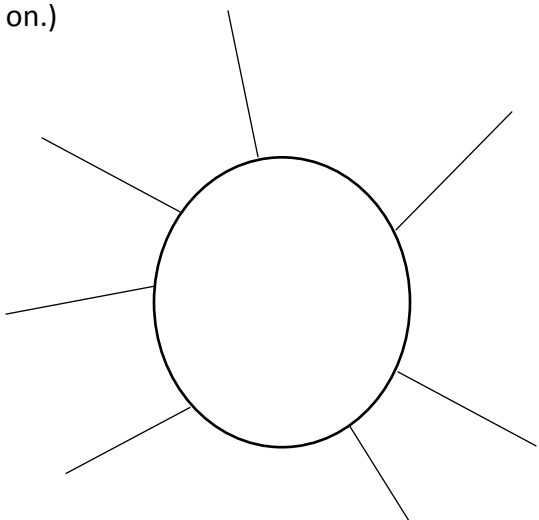


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## More Language Arts

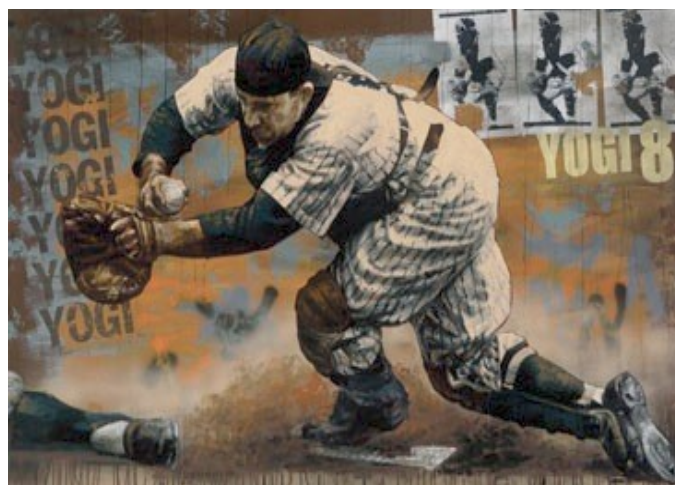
Make a character graphic organizer. Place Yogi in the middle, and write on the lines different parts of his personality (like: sense of humor, fearless heart, fierce drive, love of baseball, love of family, and so on.)



Many sports pros promote food, drinks, cars, and more. Yogi Berra was known for his advertising with the Yoo-hoo chocolate drink. Have each student imagine themselves as pro sports person. What product would they recommend? Distribute poster board and assign an advertisement with their choice and themselves up front and center.



B-151.2014 (Milo Stewart, Jr. / National Baseball Hall of Fame)



Stephen Holland [GFDL (<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>) or CC BY-SA 3.0 us (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/us/deed.en>)]

## Social Studies

People collect all kinds of items from stamps to coins, to ceramic plates to video games. Assign students to interview a relative with a collection. When feasible, invite interviewees to the classroom to share their collection. Discuss what has been collected in the past – like baseball cards – to what kids collect today. Compare and contrast the kinds of items the monetary value, the sentimental value, and how that may change as you grow older.

One of the best things about Yogi was how much he loved his family. Take time for students to write about their family. What makes each member special? How does each person in the family do their part? How does a family work together like a team? Here's a short story that Yogi wrote: [https://myhero.com/Berra\\_Brothers\\_bk06](https://myhero.com/Berra_Brothers_bk06) It's how his brothers stood up for him so he could play baseball. Read it and have the students respond.

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