



SPORTS STORIES

RESOURCE GUIDE



LORIMER
CHILDREN & TEENS

LARRY SWARTZ AND DEBBIE NYMAN

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LARRY SWARTZ AND DEBBIE NYMAN

JAMES LORIMER & COMPANY LTD., PUBLISHERS
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* ABOUT THE AUTHORS *

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Creating Caring Classrooms (with Kathleen Gould Lundy). Pembroke Publishers, 2011.

Drama Schemes, Themes & Dreams (with Debbie Nyman). Pembroke Publishers, 2010.

Good Books Matter (with Shelley Stagg Peterson). Pembroke Publishers, 2008.

The Novel Experience: Steps for Choosing and Using Fiction in the Classroom: Pembroke Publishers, 2006.

Literacy Techniques, 2nd Edition (with David Booth). Pembroke Publishers, 2004.

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* INTRODUCTION *

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Lorimer Sports Stories guide provides teachers with

- an outline for helping students to choose novels in the Sports Stories series,
- a choice of twenty-one response activities that offer students opportunities to make sense of what they have read in a variety of modes,
- teacher- and self-assessment profiles, and
- blackline masters for each activity as required.

RESPONDING TO NOVELS

Students should be encouraged to experience a variety of response modes. Whenever possible, students should be given choice in the response activities that they will spend time with. Students can work on activities independently, with a partner, or perhaps in groups of four or five. Activities fit into one of the following response modes:

- Reading Activities
- Writing Activities
- Oral Language
- The Arts
- Media and Technology
- Language, Vocabulary, and Style

Extensions at the end of some activities invite students to celebrate their reading of a Recordbooks story by sharing their opinions and promoting the books they have enjoyed with others.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING

Three assessment profiles provide templates for teacher- and self-assessment of a student's Sports Stories reading and comprehension.

- Assessment Profile #1: Reading Observation Checklist
- Assessment Profile #2: Self-Assessment
- Assessment Profile #3: My Independent Reading

APPENDIX (REPRODUCIBLE MASTERS)

In some cases, a reproducible blackline master is needed to complete an activity. In each instance, the activity will reference the page number of the blackline master within the appendix at the end of this guide. Each blackline master also references the number of the activity it is for.

* ABOUT THE LORIMER SPORTS STORIES SERIES *

LORIMER SPORTS STORIES OFFER

- Gripping, realistic stories full of authentic sports action
- A broad range of contemporary themes
- Character diversity
- Boy and girl characters in grades 6-9
- Over 15 different sports . . . and counting!
- Award-winning authors who know their sports

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

- To provide opportunities for students to choose and complete a novel independently;
- To offer a range of response activities that includes reading, writing, and speaking; exploring the arts; and researching in order to help students make sense of what they read;
- To enrich reading comprehension strategies (e.g., visualizing, questioning, making connections, making inferences, etc.) through response activities;
- To complete response activities that help students consider the plot, character, style, and language of a novel, as well as to offer a critique of the novel as a whole;
- To connect reading to cross-curricular subjects;
- To make links from the world of books to students' own life experiences;
- To develop critical-thinking skills by having students reflect on and review the novels they have read;
- To deepen students' understanding of the sports world by considering the skills, challenges, and accomplishments of those who choose to participate in sports;
- To encourage students to widen their reading repertoire by reading a number of novels in a series;
- To enrich students' enjoyment of reading by experiencing success in completing a novel and completing activities that encourage personal response;
- To experience texts at appropriate reading and interest levels;
- To provide students with both success at completing books, as well as rigour that encourages inquiry, discussion, and collaboration, with opportunities to apply evidence-based reasoning.

* ALIGNING THE SPORTS STORIES SERIES AND COMMON CORE STANDARDS *

The Lorimer Sports Stories series is designed to meet the academic expectations of Common Core Standards by:

- providing novels that are relevant to the students' lives;
- engaging learners with multiple learning modalities, enabling them to achieve success as they complete books that respect their interests and reading levels;
- offering realistic, contemporary storylines that help to overcome some obstacles, such as limited life experiences, deficiencies in abilities, and limited access to resources and time; and
- challenging students with appropriate levels of rigour, while encouraging inquiry, discussion, and collaboration, and opportunities to apply evidence-based reasoning.

Response activities also provide opportunities for students to challenge themselves. The activities are designed to promote collaboration and organization as students write, read, and talk about the novels.

Cross-curricular applications are given consideration by inviting a range of written modes, visual and dramatic arts responses, media and technology use, and vocabulary and language usage that comply with language arts, mathematics, physical education and health, social studies, and history curriculum expectations.

Reading activities that pair fiction and non-fiction texts offer teachers a program that incorporates informational texts into English Language Arts classes and incorporates broader literacy skills into their non-ELA classes.

* A NOVEL-CENTRED APPROACH TO TEACHING *

Reading novels provides us with opportunities to reflect on human behaviours, emotions, values, relationships, and conflicts. When we read a novel, we are invited to step outside of our own lives and to become spectators observing imaginary events that might or might not occur in real life. At the same time, we become participants in these events as we are drawn into the story and share the feelings and experiences of the characters.

There are essential ways to organize a novel program:

Whole class, which can take two forms:

- All students experience the same novel, OR
- The teacher reads a novel aloud to the whole class.

Small groups where teachers form small reading groups in one of two ways:

- Members of the group read the same novel.
- Each member of the group reads different selections by the same author, or books that explore a similar theme or genre.

Reading groups can be formed according to different criteria, such as:

- homogeneous abilities,
- heterogeneous abilities,
- social skills,
- gender,
- interests, and
- random selection.

Independent reading

There are several factors that influence a student's choice of novels, but ultimately CHOICE is essential to ensure success. In this way, students are given some control over their own learning.

The chart on the next page outlines the strengths and challenges offered by each approach to organizing a novel program.

* ORGANIZING A NOVEL PROGRAM *

	STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
Whole Class	<p>Minimal organization is required.</p> <p>Before, during, and after responses are easy to manage.</p> <p>Student progress is relatively easy to monitor and assess.</p>	<p>No individual student choice is permitted.</p> <p>The diversity of readers' abilities and interests is not addressed.</p> <p>Students cannot pace the reading experience for themselves.</p>
Small Groups	<p>Only a small number of novels in a set is required.</p> <p>Groups can be organized by gender, interests, and ability.</p> <p>Rich, interactive response opportunities are provided.</p>	<p>Careful monitoring is needed to ensure that groups stay on task.</p> <p>Students need prior experience of collaboration within a group.</p> <p>The teacher must balance group interaction with instruction.</p>
Independent Reading	<p>Students enjoy choosing their own material to read.</p> <p>Individual needs and interests are accommodated.</p> <p>Only one copy of a book per student is required.</p>	<p>The teacher must ensure that all students are reading deeply.</p> <p>Each student's reading progress must be tracked.</p> <p>The teacher must monitor and assess a wide range of reading behaviours and responses.</p>

* ORGANIZING THE LORIMER SPORTS STORIES PROGRAM *

Regardless of the time period in which it occurs, daily independent reading is an essential part of a literature-based program. To begin, at least twenty minutes per day should be devoted to this activity. Our students can witness the fact that we are readers when we discuss our own reading interests and habits, how we choose novels, and our reactions to the books we read. The main role of the teacher is one of guide and facilitator.

Students need to take control over their learning and should be given opportunities with:

TIME TO CHOOSE

Available titles in the Sports Stories series program should be presented to the students. Students should then be given opportunities to choose novels independently, with some guidance and consultation with the teacher.

Some factors that draw students to read a novel include:

- the sport being featured
- the gender of the protagonist
- the title of the novel
- the jacket blurb
- personal interests
- teacher recommendations
- peer recommendations

The reading levels, page lengths, and format of the Lorimer titles are consistent. In some cases, multiple copies of a title may be available in a classroom setting, which therefore allows for paired or small group investigations.

TIME TO READ

Students read a Sports Stories title by having an allotted time set aside to read the novel within a classroom program, as well as being encouraged to continue reading the novel outside the classroom.

TIME TO RESPOND

- Students need to choose from a range of response activities that include reading, writing, the arts, technology and media, style and language, and reviewing the novel as a whole.
- Opportunities should be given to experience a variety of responses as well as a variety of group contexts for completing and sharing response activities (i.e., working alone, with a partner, in small groups, and with the whole class).

TIME TO CELEBRATE

- When students share their viewpoints with their classmates in small or large group settings, they have a chance to reveal some of their reactions to the story elements as well as to appreciate the viewpoints of others.
- The process of students recommending books to peers needs to be a part of the classroom reading community.

* A LITERATURE CIRCLE APPROACH *

A literature circle typically comprises a group of students who are reading the same book and who come together in small heterogeneous groups to discuss, react to, and share responses. The purpose of the circle is to promote reading and responses to literature through discussion, and to provide opportunities for students to work in small groups. Students take charge of their learning and improve listening and comprehension skills as ideas are exchanged. Generally, through literature circles, students come to appreciate that everyone has different points of view while all have the opportunity to speak and be heard.

Teachers are often encouraged to assign roles to students to focus their attention on particular aspects of the novel and facilitate group management. Harvey Daniels, the pioneer of the Literature Circle program, suggests that students be assigned different roles for each literature circle meeting. Sample roles include:

- **Discussion Director:** raises issues for the group to discuss based on the reading completed over a period of one or two days.
- **Linguist:** draws attention to interesting words in the story, perhaps finding examples of effective use of the author's language and literacy techniques.
- **Reteller:** summarizes the day's reading for the group.
- **Questioner:** presents puzzling issues and can help readers make connections to their own personal experiences.
- **Literary Artist:** chooses an event or mood conveyed in the reading and illustrates it for the group.

Assigning roles might be a good way to begin, but these roles sometimes get in the way of interesting, thoughtful, from-the-heart conversation. Daniels himself offers caution, saying that the roles were meant to be used on a temporary basis until students become familiar with the routines and expectations of literature circles.

A literature circle approach may be useful with the Sports Stories series. Teachers may organize the class into groups of four to six, with each student reading the same novel. It is recommended that a journal be used both as a follow-up to the discussion and as preparation and guiding statements during the discussion. Journal entries can be prepared before meeting as a group. Students can share their entries in literature circle discussions. Alternatively, students can write journal entries following a discussion they've had with others about the books they've read.

* READING RESPONSE JOURNALS *

The **Reading Response Journal** (also called a dialogue journal or a literature log) is a convenient and flexible tool to help readers reflect on their reading. Keeping a journal permits readers to communicate and explore the ideas and feelings that a novel evokes, and to relate what they read to their own lives. It can be both enjoyable and informative to share journals with others. A teacher, friend, or family member who reads selected entries can begin a dialogue with the reader by offering comments on their responses, pointing out connections with their thinking, and expressing their viewpoints.

When a trusted audience responds to the journal in a conversation, readers can clarify their thinking about the story, raise questions to explore further, or make connections with their own lives. A reading response journal fosters a connection between reading and writing.

Reading response journals place readers at the centre of their learning. These journals can serve as a record of the reader's thinking about literature and of his or her reactions as a reader. They prompt learners to reflect on, interact with, and find personal meaning in works of literature. They encourage storytelling, questioning, imagining, and speculating. A journal provides ongoing information about readers' thinking and learning – for students as readers and for teachers as audiences and guides. A reading response journal is a powerful way to stimulate interaction among teacher, text, and learner.

JOURNAL PROMPTS

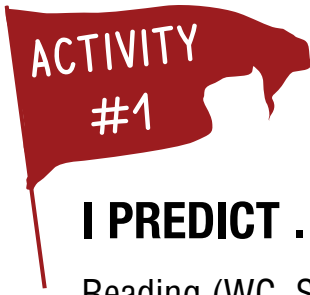
The following sample journal prompts can help students reflect on their reading as they record their responses:

1. What are you enjoying/not enjoying about the novel?
2. What, if anything, puzzles you as you read the novel?
3. Is the novel easy or hard to read? Do you sometimes reread parts?
4. During your reading, do you “see” the story in your mind? Draw illustrations of scenes that you visualize.
5. What problems emerge in the novel? How do you think these problems will be resolved?
6. What words, phrases, or sentences made an impression on you?
7. What interests you about the character(s) in the novel?
8. What advice would you give to one of the characters in the novel?
9. What advice would you give to the author of the novel?
10. How do you feel about the way the author tells the story? Is it true to life?
11. Have you or someone you know experienced events similar to the ones that took place in the novel? What happened?
12. What did the novel make you wonder about?
13. What do you think the author is trying to say about participation in sports?
14. Do you think the chapter titles are appropriate? How do they summarize the events of the chapters?
15. What will you tell your friends about this novel?

* ACTIVITIES *

Independent Reading (IR) approaches as delineated in each activity.

	Whole Class (WC)	Small Group (SG)	Independent Reading (IR)	Page #
#1 I Predict . . .		✓	✓	16
#2 Idea Shuffle		✓	✓	17
#3 The Roots of the Game			✓	18
#4 Act It Out!			✓	19
#5 Coach's Progress Report			✓	21
#6 Character Journal		✓	✓	22
#7 Sport Instruction Manual	✓	✓	✓	23
#8 Idea Shuffle		✓	✓	24
#9 Statistics of Success		✓	✓	25
#10 Panel Discussion		✓	✓	26
#11 Competition: Just Do It?	✓	✓	✓	28
#12 Novel Pyramid: The 36-Word Book Report			✓	29
#13 Novel Snapshots		✓	✓	30
#14 Game-Day Interviews	✓		✓	31
#15 Twitter Play-by-Play		✓	✓	32
#16 Graphic Story		✓	✓	33
#17 Creating an Avatar			✓	34
#18 Word and Sentence Treasure Hunt			✓	35
#19 Free-Verse Poetry	✓		✓	36
#20 Sports Banquet Awards			✓	37
#21 Ten Questions	✓	✓	✓	38



I PREDICT . . .

Reading (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot

Comprehension Strategy: Making Predictions

Students will complete the chart (see Blackline Master #1 on pg. 42) to make predictions after reading each chapter in their novel.

To begin, have students list the titles of the chapters in Column A. In Column B, students make a prediction about what they think might happen in the next chapter. In Column C, students evaluate to what degree their prediction was correct or not.



IDEA SHUFFLE

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot, Summarizing, Sequencing

Curriculum Connections: Reading, Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Ideas

Each student will need twelve file cards (or twelve pieces of paper). On each file card, students write a sentence that describes an important event in the novel). Once completed, students mix up the cards so that they are out of order.

Students will work with a partner who has read a different novel. Each student is challenged to arrange the twelve cards (i.e., twelve events) listed by his or her partner in what they think is a correct sequential order. Partners will then take turns retelling the story of the novel they read, using the twelve file cards as cues.



THE ROOTS OF THE GAME

Reading (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Theme

Curriculum Connections: Social Studies, History

Comprehension Strategy: Research, Non-fiction Connections

Each of the sports featured in the Sports Stories series has a historical background. For this activity, students are invited to find out the history of the sport that is featured in the novel they have read. Students can use information from the library or the Internet to investigate:

- When was the sport invented?
- What is the country of origin for this sport?
- Who are the sport's earliest inventors or pioneers?
- How was the sport first played?
- Why was this sport important to society?
- Did you know? — Some interesting facts.

Students can present information about their sport by creating a one-page report that answers the above questions. The questions can serve as headings for presenting information.



ACT IT OUT!

Writing (WC, SG)

Novel Focus: Plot

Curriculum Connections: Dramatic Arts, Creative Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Ideas, Summarizing, Understanding Characters

For this activity students are given opportunities to transform any scene from the novel into a short script. The scene can be drawn from any chapter in the novel, but should give important information to the audience who hasn't read the novel.

To begin, demonstrate to the students how to transform prose into script form. To write a script, students will need to make decisions about a narrator or narrators and which characters will be featured in the scene. To prepare the script, students can work independently or with others who have read the same novel.

From the novel: *Off the Wall* (Chapter 7, page 72)

Characters:

Lizzie Lucas: A talented soccer player

Mr. Lucas: Lizzie's dad

Shelby: Lizzie's sister

Narrator #1 and Narrator #2

Narrator #1: Lizzie Lucas is a star soccer player.

Narrator #2: She is driving home from a game with her father and sister.

Narrator #1: Lizzie's team has just won a game, thanks to her miraculous goal.

Lizzie: Do you believe in magic?

Mr. Lucas: Depends on what you mean. Love is magical. Seeing you kids born was pure magic. Ask your mom.

Lizzie: *Dad*. You know I don't mean that.

Mr. Lucas: Honey, I think you played well because you felt confident, not because of magic.

Lizzie: But what about the tingling fingers?

Shelby: Static. When you rubbed your shirt you caused static electricity. Right, Dad?

Mr. Lucas: No doubt, sweetie. This is synthetic fabric, Lizzie.

Lizzie: Smarty pants. Trust you to come up with a logical reason.

Shelby: Glad to help!

Narrator #1: Lizzie looks down at her shirt.

Narrator #2: Suddenly she just felt ordinary.

EXTENSION:

Students work in small groups to rehearse and present the scripted scene to others. In the rehearsal process, students are encouraged to portray the different roles presented in the script.



COACH'S PROGRESS REPORT

Writing (WC, SG)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Character Education, Health and Physical Education, Dramatic Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Ideas, Summarizing, Understanding Character

Comprehension Strategy: Making Inferences, Synthesizing Information

Many of the athlete characters in the Sports Stories series are under the guidance of a coach. For this activity, students are told to imagine that they are the coach of the main character of the novel. One of the jobs of a coach is to assess the athlete's progress by filling in a progress report (see Blackline Master #2 on pg. 43). Students complete the progress report giving their opinions about the character's stamina, skills, and weaknesses. Students are encouraged to provide specific examples from the novel in the comments section of the report that would give evidence of the character's development as an athlete.

Following the activity, students work with a partner to share reports. One student will play the role of the coach who wrote the report and the partner will play the role of the student athlete who is receiving the report. Encourage the students in the role of the student athletes to question the coach to explain the choices in each area of the report.



ACTIVITY
#6

CHARACTER JOURNAL

Writing (WG, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character, Conflict

Curriculum Connections: Dramatic Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing, Making Inferences

Writing a journal entry in the role of a character helps students to understand how that character might feel about the problems, people, and events of a novel. Remind the students that a journal is a medium that allows writers to be reflective. Not only will writers record events that have happened but they are encouraged to share the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and conflicts that are going on inside a character's mind.

Students choose any character from a Sports Stories novel. Tell the students to imagine that he or she keeps a journal of the events in the novel. In the role of the character, students write their thoughts and feelings about an event or experience. Students might:

- a) write a journal entry that focuses on the events of a single chapter;
- b) describe a specific game event that the character was involved in; or
- c) create a series of journal entries to describe what happens over time.

EXTENSION (WC, SG)

Students exchange in-role journal entries with a partner and interview each other in role. One partner can role play the novel character; the other partner, the interviewer. The interviewer could be the character's friend, parent, teacher, or coach.



SPORT INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Writing (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Vocabulary, Comprehension

Curriculum Connections: Health and Physical Education

Comprehension Strategy: Research, Non-fiction Connections

Students work with a partner who is reading a novel featuring a sport different from the one featured in their own novel. Ask the students to imagine that the partner has never played and knows nothing about this sport and wants to learn how to play. Students, in turn, describe the sport, the equipment used, the playing field or area, the number of players, the rules, and the way to score and win in the sport. Encourage the partners to ask questions to challenge their partners to clearly explain and if possible partially demonstrate how the sport is played. Partners take turns describing how to play the sport that was the focus of the novel they read.

Following the discussion, students will create an instruction manual that outlines “How to play...” The following items can be used to prepare their guide:

- A description of the sport
- The equipment needed
- The playing area (field, court, etc.)
- Number of team members and positions
- Two or three strategies for scoring and winning
- The challenges and obstacles of the game
- Penalties (describe 4-5 infractions and consequences)
- 5 to 10 important rules for playing fairly
- Terminology connected particularly to their sport. Words and phrases from the novel can be featured in the manual.
- Diagrams to explain how to play



ACTIVITY
#8

IDEA SHUFFLE

Writing/Media and Technology (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Summarizing

Curriculum Connections: Visual Arts, Creative Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing

For this activity, instruct the students to create a synopsis (i.e., book blurb) for the novel they have read. One of the purposes of a book synopsis is to persuade others to read the novel. Explain that a synopsis is a brief summary that tells others about a story, article, report, or novel. When preparing a synopsis for a novel, the writer needs to:

- summarize the plot,
- explain the major conflict,
- mention and describe the characters, and
- highlight the main theme(s) of the novel.

To begin, students prepare a synopsis of the novel by writing a summary that is 100 words in length. A further challenge is to ensure that the synopsis is exactly 100 words. In this way, the students revise and edit and choose the best words to inform others about the novel.

Once the summaries are completed, students find a partner who has written a synopsis for the same novel. Partners compare ideas and then combine them to make a new summary that is exactly 100 words long.

EXTENSION

As a class, students can post these synopses on a class website or bulletin board to inform others and invite them to read books in the Sports Stories series.



STATISTICS OF SUCCESS

Response Mode: Oral Language (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character, Comprehension

Curriculum Connections: Math, Media Literacy

Comprehension Strategy: Close Reading, Non-fiction Connections

Discuss with students how we or the media measure a player's success in a sport. One way is to calculate the player's statistics. Ask the students to consider the success of the character in the novel they read based on their overall scoring and passing contributions, for example. Given what they learned about the character's importance to the team, and the success the character experienced in the games described in the novel, ask the students to create an imaginary stats line for the entire season using the following model. This model should be applicable to most sports.

- Number of games played
- Points scored overall (i.e., goals, baskets, runs batted in)
- Points attempted (i.e., shots taken)
- Assists (i.e., pass to player who scores)

EXTENSIONS

After filling in the stats, students can calculate:

- Average number of points (shots taken) attempted per game
- Average number of points made per game
- Average number of assists per game

Students can research the statistics of current professional or amateur players in the sport. They can find statistics and box scores in the sports section of newspapers and on line at team and player websites. Ask students to compare players based on their statistics.



ACTIVITY #10

PANEL DISCUSSION

Oral Language (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Theme

Curriculum Connections: Health and Physical Education

Comprehension Strategy: Research, Non-fiction Connections, Compare/Contrast

For this activity, students are encouraged to consider the pros and cons of playing competitive sports. Students can draw on events outlined in the novels they have read, as well as personal experiences that have happened to them or to someone they know.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS (PROS)

Each student will create a chart, listing reasons why playing on a sports team was so important to the character(s) in the novel as well as the negative impact of their experience by considering:

- How did the characters feel about playing?
- Why were they so passionate about their sport?
- Did they eat differently? Were they thoughtful about nutrition?
- What kind of relationships did they form playing on a team?
- What did they learn about themselves?
- What choices did the character(s) make as a result of playing a sport?

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS (CONS)

Students then turn the chart over on the flip side to prepare a second list. Students are invited to consider and list the risks and challenges to their characters playing on the teams. What are some of the negative aspects of being so devoted to playing a sport?

- Were they ever injured? Were other players on their teams injured? (E.g., a student experiences a concussion in *Pick and Roll*.)
- Were characters too tired to concentrate in class? To complete chores?
- Did their grades suffer?
- Did they have to convince their parents to let them play? Why?
- How did playing sports affect their families and friends?

RESEARCH

Using a variety of resources and media, students will research topics relevant to some of the pros and cons that they have listed in parts A and B. For example, they might look up articles on sports-related concussions.

DEBATE/PANEL DISCUSSION

Students organize themselves into groups of four or five to present a debate on the issue of competitive sports. Inform the students that this panel of student athletes has

been invited to participate in a teachers' conference. Each of the students can role play a character from the novel they have read. The purpose of this panel is to answer the question: Should students be encouraged to participate in competitive sports at school?

For the debate, students are encouraged to draw on events from the novels they have read, as well as personal experiences to defend a point of view. To prepare for the debate, it is important that students provide as much data from fictional and/or real-life sports events. The teacher or a student volunteer can serve as moderator of the debate/panel discussion.



COMPETITION: JUST DO IT?

Oral Language (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Theme, Character

Curriculum Connections: Health and Physical Education, Character Education

Comprehension Strategy: Non-fiction Connections, Compare/Contrast, Problem-solving

Ask the students to think about competition in their lives. When do they compete outside of sports? How do they feel when they are competing? Do they feel pressure from parents, coaches, or peers to win, to be successful? How do they cope with competition? Do they experience negative effects of competition?

Working in small groups of three or four, students can think about how the character in the novel they are reading responds to competition. Is he/she nervous? What does she do to calm the nerves and stay focused? Is the competition healthy? How does she feel if she or the team loses a game?

Invite the students, in groups, to create a T-chart outlining the positive and negative effects of competition with examples from the novels and their personal experiences. Once completed, students can share and compare responses with another group. As a class, students can then share their views about the role of competitive sports.

EXTENSION

Students can brainstorm strategies to counter the negative effects on the list, again referring to both the novels and personal experiences, and record these strategies below the chart.

Note: Some students may wish to investigate how professional athletes deal with competition. They can find information about a favourite athlete from any sports, and report their findings.



NOVEL PYRAMID: THE 36-WORD BOOK REPORT

Oral Language (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Evaluating a Whole Novel

Curriculum Connections: Health and Physical Education

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Information, Summarizing

Students will be given an opportunity to discuss the novel they have read with someone who has read a different novel than them. To prepare for the conversation, students complete the following outline to summarize the novel in 36 words. (See Blackline Master #3 on pg. 44.)

ONE word that explains the theme of the novel

TWO words that give your opinion of the novel

THREE words that describe the setting

FOUR words that describe the main character

FIVE characters' names

SIX new words you learned by reading the novel

SEVEN words that summarize the main problem of the novel

EIGHT words that summarize the plot

Once the pyramids are completed, students meet with one or two others who read different novels. Students discuss their books and provide reasons for their choice of words for the pyramid. Though this 36-word pyramid summarizes the novel succinctly, students should be prepared to tell more about the characters, plot, and problems of the novel. Group members are encouraged to ask questions to get more information about the novel.

ACTIVITY #13

NOVEL SNAPSHOTS

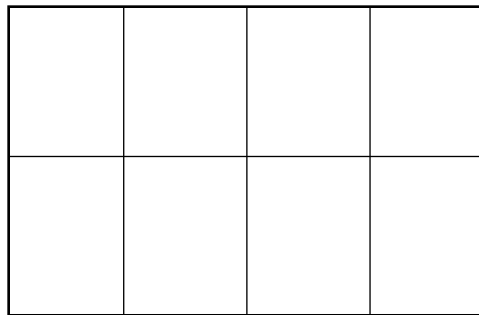
The Arts (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot

Curriculum Connections: Visual Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Visualizing, Determining Important Ideas, Inference

Students create a photo album for a novel they have read. A large sheet of chart paper approximately 28 cm x 43 cm is best. Students fold the paper to make eight equal-sized frames.



In each frame, students draw an illustration that helps identify significant plot events of the novel. Students can provide a title or caption that summarizes or describes the events that occur in each illustration or “photograph.”

Here are some suggestions for eight photographs:

- Photo 1: title of novel, author’s name
- Photo 2: opening scene (introduction) of the novel
- Photo 3: major event
- Photo 4: major event
- Photo 5: major event
- Photo 5: a turning point in the story
- Photo 6: solving the problem of the novel
- Photo 7: ending of the novel

Once the albums are completed, students exchange them with a partner. Based on the illustrations in your partner’s album, describe what you think the story of the novel is. If two students have illustrated the same novel, they can compare the events that have been illustrated.

Whole Class modification: Assign different events from the novel to groups of approximately four students. Compile all the photo albums to create a master album of the whole book.



ACTIVITY #14

GAME-DAY INTERVIEWS

Media and Technology/Oral Language/Arts (WC, SG)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Dramatic Arts, Media Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Critical Thinking

For this activity, students are invited to imagine that they are media reporters (i.e., radio, television, magazine, newspaper). As reporters they are given a chance to interview young adolescents about their lives as athletes. Students will have opportunities to role play a media reporter and/or a character from a novel they have read in the Sports Stories series.

PREPARING QUESTIONS

To prepare for the interview, students can write a list of questions that they feel would give insight into the character's feelings, hopes, and fears around this important game. Students can also decide whether the interview will be conducted a) before the game, b) at half time, or c) after the game (or any combination of the three).

INTERVIEWING IN ROLE

Students work in pairs or small groups to conduct an interview between a reporter and a novel character. To begin, it is probably best to focus on a single character, although there can be more than one reporter in the interview.

The activity can be repeated with students switching roles.

EXTENSIONS

- The interview is tape-recorded for others to listen to.
- The interview is videotaped for others to watch.
- The information from the interview is used to present a newspaper or magazine report about young athletes.



ACTIVITY
#15

TWITTER PLAY-BY-PLAY

Media and Technology (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot

Curriculum Connections: Media, Drama, Creative Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Events, Summarizing

Invite the students to choose an event in the novel or a game moment that was significant to the main characters and/or the plot. Ask the students to imagine that they are at this event and witnessing this significant moment. For this activity, students share the moment as it unfolds with their Twitter contacts by writing a series of eight to ten tweets. The tweets should describe the event, the feeling of the crowd, and its impact.

Remind the students that each tweet is a maximum of 140 characters. For example, students might tweet about the game-winning buzzer-beater in the novel *Pick and Roll* or the questionable screen that had Jazz ejected from the game.

Invite the students to share their tweets in a group or read one or two aloud to the whole class to get a sense of the excitement of a final game.



ACTIVITY
#16

GRAPHIC STORY

Media and Technology/Writing/Arts (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot

Curriculum Connections: Technology, Visual Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Events, Summarizing

Inform the students that the novel they are reading is going to be transformed into a graphic story or comic. Students can choose a significant event from the novel and create a graphic page featuring six to eight panels to tell the story. For the graphic presentation, students might consider:

- which characters will appear in the illustrations,
- varying the perspective of the scenes (close-up, middle distance, long-shot POV),
- how the setting will be featured, and
- how much of the story can be told in illustration vs dialogue or narration.

NOTE: If possible, students may wish to use a computer program (e.g., Comic Life, Bit Strips) that helps them create a graphic story.

Some students may wish to create a comic that is longer than six to eight panels.

If more than one student has read the same novel, students can work collaboratively to create a graphic story drawn from a single chapter or several chapters.



ACTIVITY
#17

CREATING AN AVATAR

Media and Technology (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Technology, Visual Arts

Comprehension Strategy: Drawing Inference

Using an online tool, (e.g., Clay Yourself or Portrait Avatar Maker) students will create an avatar that represents the main character in the novel. Remind students that an avatar is a symbolic representation of someone's personality, not necessarily a literal portrait.

Encourage students to balance literal features (i.e., brown hair, blue eyes) with symbolic features (baseball cap, sunglasses). Ask the students to write a brief introduction to accompany the avatar. Allow them to substitute symbolic features for concrete features as long as they are able to justify their choices using specific examples from the novel. For example, Leigh in *Hat Trick* might have wild hair to represent the way she speeds across the ice on her skates.

If students do not have access to these programs they could create an avatar using other media (pencil crayon, modeling clay, collage, etc.).

Students can share their avatars online or in a display in the classroom.



ACTIVITY
#18

WORD AND SENTENCE TREASURE HUNT

Language, Vocabulary and Style (SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Language, Vocabulary, and Style

Curriculum Connections: Spelling, Grammar

Comprehension Strategy: Close Reading, Evaluating Word Choices

This activity helps students to investigate the words, sentences, and dialogue an author uses in a novel. For each item listed below, students record a matching sentence, phrase, or word from the novel. Students can work independently or with one or two classmates who have read the same novel.

Once completed, students will meet with others who have read the same novel (if applicable) and compare how each of the items have been completed. (See Blackline Master #4 on pg. 45.)

Write the first sentence of the novel.

Write the last sentence of the novel.

Copy the first line of dialogue that is used in the novel.

Turn to pages 35 and 36. Find and record the longest line of dialogue on those pages.

Find the first three words on the top of pages 55, 56, 57. Circle any words with two syllables.

Turn to the second last page of the novel. Write three of the longest words you can find on the page.

Turn to page 88. Write the shortest sentence on that page.

Record any two questions found in Chapter 3.

Find and record the first sentence of the second paragraph on the third page.

Find and record any sentence in the novel that is exactly twelve words long. Record where you found the sentence.

Find and record three vocabulary words that you think are particular to the sport presented in your novel. Record the pages where you found the words.

Find and record one or more sentences that paint a strong picture in your mind.



ACTIVITY
#19

FREE-VERSE POETRY

Words and Style, Writing (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Vocabulary, Author Style

Curriculum Connections: Visual Arts, Poetry, Creative writing

Comprehension Strategy: Summarizing, Evaluating Word Choices

Students revisit the novel the read sentences that they think paint a vivid sensory picture (e.g. sight, sound etc.) or convey a feeling that the character has about events in his or her life. The example(s) could include sentences from any chapter in the novel. Encourage students to find four or five examples.

Students can then choose one statement that they think is particularly effective. Demonstrate how these words can be arranged into a free-verse poem. In a free-verse poem, there might be one word, two words, three words, or more on a line. Consideration is also given to the way the words are spaced on the line. Some words can also be used to create a visual image by using different fonts. The word “big” for example could be written **BIG**, the word “dynamic” might be written **DYNAMIC**.

Here is an example from the novel *Replay* by Steven Sandor (page 48):

Warren could handle being nervous about the game if he didn't have to worry that he would disappoint his dad.

Warren

could handle being

Nervous

about the game

if

he didn't have to

WORRY

that he would *disappoint*

his

dad.

EXTENSION

Students can use the statement as a source for creating an image. If an illustration was included in the novel, how might this powerful statement be represented? Students can use markers, oil pastels, chalk pastels, or paint to create their art.

SPORTS BANQUET AWARDS

Celebrating and Sharing Our Learning/Oral Language (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Character

Curriculum Connections: Character Education

Comprehension Strategy: Drawing Inferences, Close Reading, Evaluating/
Making Judgments

This activity invites students to share the different titles from the Sports Stories books. Tell the students to imagine that all the characters from the novel that they read are meeting at the annual sports banquet to share their accomplishments. Each character is eligible for an award of distinction. These awards could include Athlete of the Year, Most Sportsmanlike, Best Team Player, Big Heart Award, Most Improved Player, Leadership in Sport, etc.

To prepare for the banquet, students prepare a one- or two-minute speech that includes the following:

- a description of the character
- a list of his or her particular skills and talents
- an account of some of the obstacles and problems the character overcame
- a significant accomplishment(s) or courageous act
- an explanation of how the character helped others
- reasons why this person is worthy of an award

Students meet in groups of five or six at the “banquet” to inform others about their characters’ accomplishments. Students exchange letters of recommendation. Students decide amongst themselves which sort of award each character has earned.



**ACTIVITY
#21**

TEN QUESTIONS

Celebrating and Sharing the Learning/Oral Language (WC, SG, IR)

Novel Focus: Plot (Reviewing the Novel as a Whole)

Curriculum Connections: Visual Arts, Writing

Comprehension Strategy: Determining Important Events, Summarizing, Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Evaluating/Making Judgments

Students complete the outline (see Blackline Master #5 on pg. 46). These ten questions invite students to review their novel and offer critical opinions and reactions to the novel.

Once the questions are completed, students can work with one or two classmates to discuss how successful their novel was at portraying the life of a young athlete. Students can use this outline to compare novels by discussing the similarities and differences in plot, characterization, conflict, and author's style.

EXTENSION

Students can create a bulletin board display of Ten Questions to Answer outlines to promote their novels to others. Students can create an illustration or two to accompany the completed outline.

* ASSESSMENT PROFILE #1 *

READING OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Name _____

STUDENT READING BEHAVIORS

	Consistently	Often	Sometimes	Not Yet
Appears to enjoy reading a Sports Stories series novel				
Attempts to finish novel				
Can choose novel(s) independently				
Enjoys reading more than one novel in the Sports Stories series				
Concentrates when reading				
Focuses on meaning when reading				

STUDENT RESPONSES TO NOVELS

	Consistently	Often	Sometimes	Not Yet
Retells stories				
Talks about novels with peers				
Writes about novels				
Can respond in role				
Interprets aspects of the novel through art or other non-print media				
Asks thoughtful questions about the novel				
Relates novels to personal experiences				
Is aware of author's style, language and vocabulary use				
Expresses opinions and demonstrates critical thinking				
Chooses response activities independently				
Chooses activities that focus on various aspects of the novel				
Is able to promote the novel to others				

Comments:

* ASSESSMENT PROFILE #2 *

Self-Assessment: Reflecting on Your Novel Reading

1. The novel I enjoyed reading the most in the Sports Stories series is . . .

because . . .

2. I like to respond to the novels by...

	Often	Sometimes	Not Yet
Writing in a variety of genres, (list, diary, letter, script)			
Writing in a personal response journal			
Writing in the role of a character			
Illustrating, designing and constructing (visual arts)			
Improvising and role playing (drama)			
Discussing with a partner or in small groups (talk)			
Discussing in large groups			
Researching more about a topic.			

3. A novel activity I particularly enjoyed was _____ because . . .

4. One way that reading the novel(s) has helped me with my reading is . . .

5. One way that reading the novel(s) has helped me with my writing is . . .

6. One way that talking about the novel(s) has helped me with my reading is . . .

7. Things that I find difficult when reading are . . .

8. Place a checkmark beside each point that you think can help you with your reading of novels:

- Reading a number of novels in the Sports Stories series____
- Reading a variety of novel genres____
- Reading longer books____
- Working with others who have read the same book that I read____
- Working with others who have read a different book than I read____
- Working closely with the teacher to guide me in my reading____
- Finding a quiet space and time to read____

MY INDEPENDENT READING

* ASSESSMENT PROFILE #3 *

Title of Book _____

Author _____

Number of Pages _____

1. a) When did you start reading the novel? _____

b) When did you finish reading the novel? _____

2. On a scale from 1 to 10 (lowest to highest), how would you rate this novel?
Explain your rating. What did you like? Dislike?

3. Summarize this novel in exactly 25 words.

4. Find a sentence or paragraph from this novel that you particularly liked.
Briefly explain your choice.

5. What did you learn about playing sports by reading this novel?

6. What about this novel reminded you of relationships or events in your own life (or in the life of someone you know)?

7. What are three questions that you would like to ask the author?

8. Is the title of this novel truthful? Explain why or why not.

*** I PREDICT . . . ***

My prediction was not confirmed	
My prediction was confirmed	
I predict that in the next chapter . . .	
Chapter Title	

Blackline Master #2: Activity #5

*** COACH'S PROGRESS REPORT FOR ALL STUDENT ATHLETES PLAYING ON SCHOOL TEAMS ***

Name of athlete:

Grade:

Team:

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Is a good team player			
Works hard, hustles in practice			
Works hard, hustles in the game			
Takes instruction and direction from coaches and team			
Shows respect and good sportsmanship to coaches, referees, and players			
Demonstrates strong leadership skills both in academics and in the games			
Works on their game, developing skills			
Demonstrates good time management e.g. is able to complete homework and assignments and attend all practices and games			

Comments:

Strengths:

Areas needing improvement:

Improvement Plan:

Coach's signature _____

Date _____

*** A NOVEL PYRAMID ***

Fill in the blanks to complete the following instructions.

ONE word that explains the theme of the novel

TWO words that give your opinion of the novel

THREE words that describe the setting

FOUR words that describe the main character

FIVE characters' names

SIX new words you learned by reading the novel

SEVEN words that summarize the main problem of the novel

EIGHT words that summarize the plot

*** WORD AND SENTENCE TREASURE HUNT ***

For this activity, you will be investigating the author's use of words, sentences, and dialogue. For each item listed below, record a matching sentence, phrase, or word from the novel. You can work independently or with one or two classmates who have read the same book.

Once the list is completed, meet with a partner to compare your findings.

1. Write the first sentence of the novel.
2. Write the last sentence of the novel.
3. Copy the first line of dialogue that is used in the novel.
4. Turn to pages 35 and 36. Find and record the longest line of dialogue on those pages.
5. Find the first three words on the top of pages 55, 56, 57 and list them. Circle any words with two or more syllables.
6. Turn to the second last page of the novel. Record three of the longest words you can find on the page.
7. Turn to page 88. Write the shortest sentence on that page.
8. Record any two questions found in Chapter 3.
9. Find and record the first sentence of the second paragraph on the third page.
10. Find and record any sentence in the novel that is exactly 12 words long. Record where you found it.
11. Find and record 3 vocabulary words that you think are particular to the sport presented in your novel. Include the page numbers where you found them.
12. Find and record one or more sentences that paint a strong picture in your mind and record where they are in the novel.

*** TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT A NOVEL ***

1. If one of the characters from your novel registered in your school, how well might the character fit in?
2. If you were to make a film of this story, what scene(s) might you skip if you couldn't feature them all? Why?
3. Why do you think the author wrote this sports novel? What do you think someone would learn about sports by reading this novel?
4. What might you tell someone about this novel – in exactly 50 words?
5. What is one event that happened in this story that reminded you of an event in your own life or in the life of someone you know?
6. What sort of information would like to see in an Epilogue for this story? What do you think the future holds for each character?
7. Suggest alternative titles to 4 chapters.
8. Which sentence, paragraph, or section made a vivid impression on your imagination? Create an illustration that would represent this text.
9. How might aspects of this novel change if the main characters were of the opposite gender?
10. How did this novel help you grow as a reader?

THIS GUIDE PROVIDES TEACHERS WITH AN OVERVIEW OF THE SERIES AS WELL AS OVER 20 WHOLE CLASS, SMALL GROUP, OR INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITIES ACTIVITIES, PLUS

- **CULMINATING ACTIVITIES**
- **ASSESSMENT PROFILES**
- **REPRODUCIBLE BLACKLINE MASTERS**

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