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# BEYOND BASEBALL



A Literature-based Simulation Developing Character  
Through Reasoning and Teamwork

# BEYOND BASEBALL

**A Literature-based Simulation Developing Character Through Reasoning and Teamwork**

Author PATRICIA K. LADD currently serves as a Staff Developer for San Diego Unified Schools. As a classroom teacher, she taught grades 2–8, yet spent the majority of her career working with middle school students. Her B.A. in Psychology and M.A. in Counseling and Guidance support her passion for serving the needs of those students “caught in the middle.” She is certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2000) in the area of Early Adolescent/English Language Arts. An avid reader, writer, and lover of baseball, Mrs. Ladd realizes the multiple connections between John H. Ritter’s first novel, *Choosing Up Sides*, and the challenges young adolescents face as they move from childhood to adulthood.

*To Mother,  
The World’s Sweetest Baseball Fan*

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# WELCOME



**Hours of Instruction: 20+**

**Grades: 5–10**

**Overview:** Develop character and build teamwork! BEYOND BASEBALL addresses the social, emotional, and academic needs of students as they read, write, and work their way towards The Baseball Hall of Fame.

**Your students will:**

- Begin the simulation as academic players in the major leagues rotating leadership roles and responsibilities as pitchers, catchers, infielders, and outfielders
- Complete independent assignments and team projects addressing language arts standards in a reading-writing workshop model
- Work in cooperative groups and Jigsaw Teams
- Participate in Socratic Seminars

Includes the International Reading Association award-winning book *Choosing Up Sides* by John H. Ritter!

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## ICONS KEY When you see these icons...



**Answer Key**  
For student activities with specific objective responses, this icon directs you to the answer key.



**Learning Tip**  
Found in the Student Guide. This directs your students to important procedures or directions.



**Teaching Tip**  
In the margins of your Teacher Notebook, these tips clarify materials or procedures.



**Read or Tell**  
This is important information your students need for the activity. Be sure to read the passage or clearly instruct your students as stated in your Teacher Notebook.



**Grouping**  
This shows if your students work independently, in partners or in cooperative groups for each activity.



**Reproducible**  
Find this icon in the upper outside corner of every master page needing duplication.



**Timing**  
Many activities vary in length. Use this icon to help plan your teaching time.

The nationwide movement for high standards has not only determined what students should learn, but also has mandated that students demonstrate what they know. BEYOND BASEBALL is a standards-based program addressing National English Language Arts Standards. The content and skills taught are targets of most state frameworks for literature, writing, and research. There are many opportunities to assess student understanding by using the prompts and rubrics provided.

The peer teaching and cooperative problem solving required in BEYOND BASEBALL also address Applied Learning standards.

The purpose, lesson plans, and assignments of BEYOND BASEBALL also help schools to address Character Education Quality Standards. The Character Education Partnership has developed *Eleven Principles of Character Education*. Many of these principles address an entire school community and go far beyond the scope of this single instructional unit. BEYOND BASEBALL introduces participating students to some of these principles. Throughout the unit, students have many opportunities to work cooperatively, demonstrate civility, integrity, and responsibility, and help other students to attain a common goal.

## NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts

**Standard 1:** Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of text, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world, to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

**Standard 3:** Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features.

**Standard 4:** Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

**Standard 5:** Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

# STANDARDS

**Standard 6:** Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions, (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

**Standard 8:** Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

**Standard 12:** Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

### California Applied Learning Standards

**Standard 3:** Students will understand how to solve problems through teaching and learning. Students will develop and implement a teaching-learning program.

**Standard 6:** Students will understand how to apply communication skills and techniques. Students will demonstrate ability to communicate orally and in writing.

**Standard 8:** Students will understand the importance of teamwork. Students will work in teams to achieve project objectives.

### Character Education Quality Standards

**Principle #2:** *Character is comprehensively defined to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.*

**2.2** The school takes deliberate and effective steps to help everyone appreciate the core values, reflect upon them, desire to embody them, and become committed to them.

- Staff make consistent and proactive efforts to develop in students a deeply felt commitment to core values (perhaps through use of high quality literature, art, exemplars, sports, etc.)

**Principle #3:** *Effective character education requires an intentional, proactive, and comprehensive approach that promotes the core values in all phases of school life.*

- 3.2** Character education is regularly integrated into all subjects.
- Staff integrate character education into the content and educational strategies of all subjects (e.g., English, history, and other humanities-related subjects, as well as math, science, and health).
  - Character education is inherent in how classes are conducted (routines) and in how students interact and learn (educational strategies are respectful of students and encourage diligence, autonomy, and logical reasoning).

**Principle #4:** *The school is a caring community.*

- 4.2** The school makes it a high priority to help students form caring attachments to each other.
- Educational strategies, such as cooperative learning, encourage mutual respect and appreciation of interdependence among students.
- 4.4** Students are explicitly involved in the creation and maintenance of community.

**Principle #5:** *To develop character, the school provides students opportunities for moral action.*

- 5.2** The school provides students with repeated and varied opportunities for engaging in moral action within the school and the students engage in these opportunities and are positively affected by them.
- The school effectively provides students with opportunities for moral actions within the school by:
    - a. Endorsing and encouraging participation in, e.g., cooperative learning, peer or cross-age tutoring, classroom or student body governance, service projects, or work.
    - d. Setting aside school time for supporting, engaging in, and individually and collectively reflecting on moral action.

STANDARDS

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