

Novel Resource #5

Heat—a #1 *New York Times* bestseller

By Mike Lupica

Published 2006

Penguin Group



Diane H. Reilly

Mike Lupica's Website:

<http://www.mikelupicabooks.com/>

Other books by Lupica:

Travel Team--#1 *New York Times*
Bestseller

Red Zone

Bump and Run

Wild Pitch

Reggie

Parcells

Wait 'Till Next Year

Shooting From the Lip

Mad as Hell

Summer of '98

Dead Air

Extra Credits

Limited Partner

Jump

About the Author:

Mike Lupica is a nationally syndicated columnist for the *New York Daily News*. His column "Shooting from the Lip" appears on Sundays. He began working at the newspaper when he was 23. He is a regular anchor on ESPN's "The Sports Reporters." He also has a monthly column, "The Sporting Life" in *Esquire* Magazine, a column that he started. In 2003 he was awarded the Jim Murray Award from the National Football Foundation. He lives in Connecticut with his wife and four children and has coached Little League baseball for years.

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Connection to the Book:

Obviously, Mike Lupica is a sports fan. His jobs have always been sports-related. The book *Heat* was somewhat inspired by the real life case of Danny Almonte, a boy who claimed to be 12 years old. He was an all-star pitcher for a Little League team in the Bronx. However, the truth came out that he was actually 14 years old, too old to play in the Little League. Lupica thought it would be interesting to write about a boy who people thought was older than he said he was, but really wasn't.

Genres:

Contemporary Fiction

Multicultural Fiction

Sports Stories Fiction

Point of View

Third Person

Themes:

Baseball

Illegal Aliens

Brothers

Orphans

Cuba

Bronx

Conflict

Michael and Carlos Arroyo both face much external conflict. Because their father is dead and they have no relatives living in the United States, they must depend on each other. Some of the difficulties they face involve lack of money, trying to pay bills, and trying to pretend their father is visiting a sick relative, all the while by not standing out or doing anything that would cause them to be noticed. Both boys also face internal conflict as they push down their feelings about their father's death in order to survive. Carlos feels he must be the head of the household and Michael feels guilty because he cannot contribute financially.

Conflict Resolution

At the very end of the book, the great El Grande baseball player comes to the rescue and helps "pull some strings" so Michael can get a copy of his birth certificate. It is thanks to El Grande and Michael's friend Manny that Michael was able to play in the big Little League game. Because Mrs. Cora ultimately told social services the truth about the boys, they are allowed to remain together.

Characters

Michael/Miguel Arroyo-a twelve-year-old boy who came to the United States with his brother and father on a boat from Cuba. He is an excellent baseball pitcher. Other than his father, baseball is the main thing he thinks about.

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Carlos Arroyo—Michael’s 17-year-old brother who works two jobs to support him and Michael. He is the “father” and provider for the two of them. He can’t wait until he is 18 and then can be considered an “adult” guardian for Michael.

Victor (Papi) Arroyo—Michael and Carlos’ father who died. In Cuba he coached his sons’ Little League teams. In the United States, he worked as a taxi driver. After protecting a female customer from an abusive male, he had a heart attack and died.

Manny Cabrera—Michael’s best friend and the best catcher on the baseball team. He is teased about his size—he’s 20 pounds heavier than Michael and a foot shorter. His nickname is “No Neck Cabrera.” Aside from Mrs. Cora, Manny is the only other person who knows the truth about Carlos and Michael’s father.

Ellie Garcia—a twelve-year-old girl also from Cuba who is a good baseball player. She keeps her father’s name a secret from everyone until Michael sees her on television and finds out.

Mr. Minaya—the coach of Michael’s team. Manages a small bus company and uses the busses to take his team to games

Mrs. Cora—an elderly woman who lives in the same apartment building as Michael and Carlos. She was with Victor Arroyo when he died and knows the boys’ secret. She considers herself the boys’ “grandmother” and often feeds them and provides them with support and love.

Setting

Present day, the Bronx in New York

Interest Level and Reading Level

Reading Level 5.3 Lexile Score 940 (www.perma-bound.com)

Interest Level: Grades 6-12

Booktalk

“My name is Miguel, or Michael Arroyo. I’m 12-years-old and live in the Bronx. My favorite thing in the world to do is play baseball. I don’t mean to brag, but I am a great pitcher. Don’t tell anyone, but I can pitch 80 miles an hour. Don’t tell anyone. It seems like lately all I’ve been doing is keeping secrets. I can’t answer the telephone, I can’t talk to any adults if I don’t know them, and I have to save any money I have. I guess you could say my 17-year-old brother, Carlos, is the head of our house right now. I can’t tell you where my father is. He’s just not here. If the Child Protective Services people found out two brothers were living alone, we would be split up for sure. So don’t tell anyone. My dad will be back someday, sometime. Just please don’t tell anyone.”

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Discussion Questions

Because the chapters are so short (3-6 pages) and there are so many chapters (28), I have divided the questions into seven groups. Each group covers four chapters. I included which questions correspond to which chapter.

1. Chapters 1-4

Ch. 1

Pre-Reading

1. Looking at the cover of the book, what do you anticipate the book will be about?
2. Why do you think the book is titled *Heat*?

During Reading

3. Chapter One is told from three different character perspectives. What are the three perspectives?
4. Did you like reading from three different points of view? Why or why not?

Post Reading

5. What style do you think the book will have in the upcoming chapters?

Ch. 2

During Reading

6. Papi would often tell his son he had an amazing arm. "It's something you are born with, a gift from the gods, like a singer's voice. Or a boxer's left hand. Or an artist's brush" (6). Do you agree? Are people born with talents or can they learn their talent? Are some people better at certain talents than others, no matter how much they practice?
7. What are Carlos' two jobs?
8. Why is it good for Carlos to be paid "off the books" (8)?
9. Michael's coach leaves a message for his dad. On the message he says, "Just tell your dad to give me a call if her ever does get back" (14). Where do you think Michael's dad is? What is he doing there? Why isn't he with his sons?

Ch. 3

During Reading

10. What is the significance of the speed 80 (19)?
11. How much is Michael allowed to pitch in the Little League? Why do you think there is a set limit?

Ch. 4

During Reading

12. What do we learn about El Grande and how he came to the United States?
13. How might El Grande's story be similar to Michael and Carlos'?
14. What do we finally learn about Michael's father at the very end of the chapter?

Post Reading

15. What do you think happened to Michael's father?

2. Chapters 5-8

Ch. 5

Pre-Reading

1. Now that we know Michael and Carlos' father is dead, how does this help explain Carlos' two jobs and his instructions to Michael to be careful what he says?

During Reading

2. Explain how Victor Arroyo died.
3. What request did Mr. Arroyo make to Mrs. Cora?
4. Why couldn't Mrs. Cora adopt the two brothers?

Ch. 6

During Reading

5. Michael stops by the stadium with the hopes of seeing the baseball players. Many of the people there were adults, waiting to get signatures. Have you ever gotten a signature of a famous athlete, actor, or performer? Carlos says many of the people turn around and sell the signature. Why might people do that?
6. Michael has seen girls before but never been interested. What makes this girl different than the others?

Ch. 7

During Reading

7. How are Michael and Manny different in their attempts to talk to Ellie?
8. Explain how Ellie does as a pitcher.
9. If you were Michael, would Ellie intimidate you? Why or why not?

Ch. 8

During Reading

10. Why did Michael recognize the policeman?
11. Why isn't Michael supposed to talk to any "official" adults?
12. Even though the officials want to recognize and honor Michael, why might this be a negative thing for him?

Post Reading

13. What do you think of the book so far? What do you predict will happen?

3. Chapters 9-12

Ch. 9

Pre-Reading

1. How would this book be different if Michael was playing a different sport, such as football or swimming?

During Reading

2. Describe the field in New Rochelle where the boys play (60).
3. Who is "Justin the Jerk?" Does his nickname fit him? Explain why or why not.
4. Mr. Minaya reminds the boys about the rule on the team: no trash talk. Do you think that is a realistic rule? Why or why not?

Ch. 10

5. According to Michael, why is it silly for coaches to give advice to "Just relax and throw strikes" (66)?
6. What happened to Michael when Justin pitched? Do you think Justin did it on purpose? Explain your thoughts.
7. Why do you think Michael threw a curve ball to Justin? Was this a smart thing to do?

Ch. 11

During Reading

8. Why does Michael yawn when talking with Fred Lima? What would he really like to do?
9. What does Mr. Lima want to do to honor Michael?
10. List three problems this could cause.

Ch. 12

During Reading

11. What is Manny's plan for a surrogate dad for Michael?
12. Give two other possible ideas of ways the boys could get out of this commitment.
13. Give three reasons why Mr. Gibbs would want to see Michael's birth certificate.

Post Reading

14. Since Michael only has his baptism certificate, what could Michael and Carlos do to get his birth certificate? Why might this be complicated by their father's death?

4. Chapters 13-16

Ch. 13

Pre-Reading

1. Michael needs his birth certificate. What about a passport or social security card? Explain why Michael doesn't have these items.

During Reading

2. We find out that the main concourse coach, Mr. Gibbs, works with ACS. Explain why this is devastating news for Michael.
3. What advice would you give Michael and Carlos about how to get a copy of his birth certificate?

Ch. 14

During Reading

4. For Michael, baseball is his best friend, "a constant companion for him, no matter how many times he came into the quiet of the empty apartment" (91). What is your constant companion? Explain.
5. Give three reasons why Michael hates going home to an empty apartment.
6. Why do you think Michael decided to go to the baseball game even though he couldn't play?
7. Mr. Gibbs tells Michael, "Sometimes it's the grown-ups who act like children" (98). What does he mean? Do you agree with him?
8. Who is Ellie, really?
9. Why do you think she kept her father's identity a secret from Michael?

Ch. 15

During Reading

10. According to Manny, "People sometimes have a good reason for holding stuff back" (105). What is he referring to? Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
11. Why does Manny think Michael has a chance with Ellie?
12. Why does Michael think he doesn't have a chance with Ellie?
13. Which of the boys (Manny or Michael) has a better argument? Explain.

Ch. 16

During Reading

14. The chapter begins from the perspective of Tony Gibbs. Why do you think author Mike Lupica decided to do this?
15. List three things we learn about Tony Gibbs.
16. Tony Gibbs tells Michael, “I’m one of the good guys” (114). Do you agree? Can Mr. Gibbs be trusted?

Post Reading

17. Now that Tony Gibbs thinks Michael and Carlos’ father has run off and abandoned them, what do you think he will do next?

5. Ch. 17-20

Ch. 17

During Reading

1. Give two reasons why Carlos agrees to go along with Manny’s plan.
2. What does Manny’s uncle do for a living? How will this help the plan?
3. List at least four things Uncle Timo says or does that makes Michael worry that they won’t be able to pull the plan off.

Ch. 18

During Reading

4. This chapter begins from the perspective of Carlos. What are three things Carlos has been keeping from Michael?
5. Give two reasons why it’s dangerous for Carlos to scalp tickets.
6. Why would Michael purposely hurt Ellie’s feelings when he likes her and was glad to see her?

Ch. 19

During Reading

7. What does Mrs. Cora symbolize, or represent, for Michael?
8. According to Mrs. Cora, for resentful people, “it’s like they take poison and then hope for the other person to die” (136). What does she mean by this?
9. Mrs. Cora has Michael play their game “where everything in his world worked out the way he wanted it to” (137). Why might this be a good thing for Michael to do?
10. If you played Mrs. Cora’s game, what are five things you would say?

Ch. 20

During Reading

11. What does Uncle Timo’s “performance” mean for Michael and Carlos?
12. What excuses would you give Mr. Gibbs for why your dad wasn’t there yet?

Post Reading

13. At the very end of the chapter, Uncle Timo finally shows up. How do you think he will do as Michael’s father? Explain your answer.

6. Ch. 21-24

Ch. 21

Pre-Reading

1. Mr. Gibbs’ job is to help children. If he knew the true story of what happened to Michael and Carlos’ father, what do you think he could do to help them?

During Reading

2. List five things that Uncle Timo has done to change his appearance.
3. According to Mr. Gibbs, how many children are in the foster care system?
4. Give three reasons why children are put into the foster care system.
5. If you had to grade Uncle Timo's performance, what grade would you give him? Why?
6. If you were Mr. Gibbs, would you have any reason to doubt that you were talking to Michael's father?

Ch. 22

During Reading

7. Michael thinks, "Maybe that was the way you should go through life, if you really thought about it. Maybe if you didn't expect good things to happen to you, well, when something did, it would seem much bigger and better than it actually was" (149). Do you agree with that statement? Explain your answer.
8. How is Manny's perspective different than Michael's in #6?
9. Why does Mr. Minaya want Michael to coach third base?

Ch. 23

During Reading

10. How did Michael's play help his team win the game?
11. Why do you think Michael wanted to be inside the stadium more this night than other nights?
12. Who does Michael see with Ramon and the two policemen?

Ch. 24

During Reading

13. Why do you think the police officer let Carlos go?
14. Why didn't the officers let Ramon go?
15. If you were Michael, how would you react to hearing your brother has been scalping tickets to help pay the bills?
16. Mrs. Cora said, "Scalping is against the law. Loving your brother is not" (174). By scalping tickets, was Carlos helping love his brother? Explain.

Post Reading

17. Do you think Carlos will continue scalping tickets?
18. What can Carlos do for money since he lost one of his two jobs?

7. Ch. 25-28

Ch. 25

Pre-Reading

1. We're getting to the last four chapters of the book. What do you anticipate will happen?

During Reading

2. Why did Michael want to see Ellie even though he had insulted her?
3. Describe what El Grande looks like.
4. How does Michael manage to get El Grande's attention? Many people were calling for him. Why do you think this worked?

Ch. 26

During Reading

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5. What happened to El Grande’s foot? Why would baseball injuries be particularly bad?
6. Manny tells Michael, “You really are due for a happy ending one of these days” (187). What is Manny trying to tell Michael?
7. Why does Justin have such a problem with Michael? Is it really all about his age?
8. Manny tells Justin, “It’s like my mom says. The rotten apple never falls far from the tree” (189). What is the original saying? By Manny changing the saying around, what is he telling Justin?
9. Why would Michael “give anything to be [Justin]” (190)?
10. Who are the two surprise visitors at the baseball game?

Ch. 27

During Reading

11. List the names of the people walking toward Michael.
12. What does Ellie give Michael?
13. How did Manny figure in to the plan to get the birth certificate?
14. Do you think it was difficult for Michael to suddenly join into the middle of the baseball game?

Ch. 28

During Reading

15. Why is Mr. Gibbs “another one of [Michael and Carlos’] heroes” (213)?
16. What is so special for Michael about going inside Yankee Stadium? What does the stadium represent for him?
17. Why do you think El Grande had Michael go out on the field first?
18. Who came to watch Michael’s game?

Post Reading

19. What is the significance of the title of the book? Is this a title that can have multiple meanings? Explain.
20. Why do you think the book ends after Michael has thrown the first pitch of the game?
21. Fast-forward one year. What do you predict will have happened to Michael, Carlos, Manny, and Ellie?

Language (Spelling/Vocabulary)

Definitions—found at <http://www.dictionary.com> and rewritten in more “accessible” language

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Page found
Flourish	To thrive and be successful (The flowers will <u>flourish</u> once they are planted in better soil and watered regularly.)	9
Infinity	Can’t be measured, boundless, a number or amount larger than anything possible	18
Coherent	Clearly understood, makes sense	45
Amping	An “amp” is used to make something louder. When	64

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	“amping” something up, you are making it louder, larger, or more noticeable.	
Miraculous	Amazing, surprising, happening by a miracle	68
Inevitable	When something is going to happen no matter what	78
Felled	To make something fall by striking, cutting, or knocking it down	102
Stifle	To withhold or suppress (He tried to <u>stifle</u> his laugh during the funeral.)	208

Indiana Academic Standards

Language Arts:

6.1.5, 6.2.7, 6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.5, 6.3.6

7.1.3, 7.2.4, 7.3.3, 7.3.4

8.1.3, 8.2.6, 8.3.2, 8.3.4, 8.3.5

Anticipation Statements: Heat

1. Baseball is an easy sport to play.
2. Baseball is the most popular sport in America.
3. Sports teams should be all male or all female.
4. Illegal immigrants should be forced to go back to their own countries.
5. Everyone needs to live with two parents, a mother and father.
6. The Foster Care System in the United States always keeps siblings together.

Read-Aloud Pages/Passages :

1. Read, beginning on p. 47 and continuing until the bottom of p. 48
Michael and Manny meet Ellie for the first time and try to act casual around her, even though they are very nervous.
2. Read, beginning on p. 122, the seventh paragraph (“Michael went into his room...”) and continue to p. 123 at the end of the paragraph (... “as if frozen in the position.”)
Michael is getting out pictures of his father, the few pictures he has of the man who has been dead for three months.

Read-Alikes

Baseball in April: And Other Stories by Gary Soto
Sports Illustrated: The Baseball Book by Editors of Sports Illustrated
The Crazy Horse Electric Game by Chris Crutcher
Over the Wall by John H. Ritter
Crossing the Wire by Will Hobbs
The Boy Who Saved Baseball by John H. Ritter
High Heat by Carl Deuker
Beanball by Gene Fehler
Out of Order by A.M. Jenkins

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Shakespeare Bats Cleanup by Ron Koertge
Extra Innings by Robert Newton Peck
Dean Duffy by Randy Powell
Over the Wall by John H. Ritter
7 Days at the Hot Corner by Terry Trueman
Farm Team by Will Weaver

Suggested books by Mike Lupica:

Miracle on 49th Street
Bump and Run

Across the Curriculum Connections:

1. Figuring out Batting Averages

Go to <http://web.buddyproject.org/web012/web012/averages.htm> and follow the instructions to figure out batting averages. When you are finished, go to Math Baseball at <http://www.funbrain.com/math/>. While you might begin at an easy level, challenge yourself once to “hard” and “super brain” you’ve figured out the game. You can choose between addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Do at least five problems in each category.

Resources to Use: Computer, with Internet Access

Supplies Needed: Computer

Technology Education Standards Covered:

3-A, 3-B

Math Standards Covered:

6.1.4, 6.1.5, 6.2.9

7.2.2, 7.2.4

8.2.4

2. The Science of Baseball

Go to the following website: http://www.education-world.com/a_tsl/archives/00-2/tslballTchart.shtml Highlight the true and false statements and copy them onto a new Microsoft Word document. Save your document. The statements you will be answering are about information you will find at the website

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/baseball/>

Record the correct answers. Save your document and turn in.

Resources to Use: Computer with Internet Access

Supplies Needed: Paper for printing

Technology Education Standards Covered:

3-A, 3-B

Math Standards Covered:

6.1.4, 6.1.5, 6.2.9, 6.6.5, 6.7.4

7.2.2, 7.2.4, 7.6.2, 7.6.5

8.2.4, 8.7.1

Language Arts Standards Covered:

6.4.6, 6.4.7, 6.4.8, 6.6.4, 6.6.5

7.4.7, 7.6.8, 7.6.9

8.4.4, 8.4.6

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Resources

Resources are suggested materials that students could access if they have a particular interest in the book and its topics. Websites can be visited if students have free time in the library or computer labs. Due to limited class time, movies are not meant to be shown in the classroom; rather they are suggestions for students and parents/guardians to watch at home. Film ratings are included. Explanations for the film ratings can be found at <http://www.filmratings.org>

Baseball—A Film by Ken Burns. Dir. Ken Burns. PBS Paramount, 2004. (Not Rated)
A documentary on 10 discs that cover baseball from its “beginning” in the 1840’s and continues to 1994.

Baseball—A Film by Ken Burns 2003. 26 June 2008
<<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/baseball/>>.
A website connected to the Ken Burns’ film. The site provides links about the documentary, timelines, stories about African’ American and women ball players.

Fanbay. 26 June 2008. <<http://www.fanbay.net/>>.
This website provides baseball links, statistics, fantasy baseball information, player rankings, and current baseball schedules.

Field of Dreams. Dir. Phil Adlen Robinson. Perf. Kevin Costner, Ray Liotta. Universal, 1989. (Rated PG)
A movie about a man who is directed to build a baseball field in his backyard. A movie about listening to your heart and following your instincts.

A League of Their Own. Dir. Penny Marshall. Perf. Geena Davis, Rosie O'Donnell. Columbia, 1992. (Rated PG)
A movie that celebrates the beginning of the first professional women’s baseball league during the war. Although the women have to make countless sacrifices and put up with endless insults, they show they can play just as good as the men.

Little Big League. Dir. Andrew Scheinman. Perf. Jason Robards, Dennis Farina. Tri-Star, 1994. (Rated PG)
One of Manny and Michael’s favorite baseball movies. Manny loves it because of its happy ending, telling Michael he deserves a happy ending.

The Rookie. Dir. John Lee Hancock. Perf. Dennis Quaid, Rachel Griffiths. Buena Vista, 2002. (Rated G)
A true story about Jim Morris, a man who dreamed of pitching for Major League Baseball. Years later, he is urged to try out for the Major Leagues one more time.

The Sandlot. Dir. David M. Evans. Perf. Denis Leary, James Earl Jones. DVD. Twentieth Century Fox, 1993. (Rated PG)

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A movie that takes place in 1962 when a new kid moves to town. He doesn't know anything about baseball, but joins the neighborhood team to make friends.

Book Activities

1. This assignment could be done independently, as a class, with partners, etc. It could be done before reading the book or after.

Read Little League Lessons of Life:

<http://www.bandersnatch.com/little.htm>

The author lists 14 things Little League teaches its players about life.

In Microsoft Word, type the answers to the following questions:

- a. In your opinion, which are the four most important lessons?
- b. What is one lesson not listed that you feel should be included? (Even if you don't play baseball, think about a sport or activity you do enjoy. Think about what you learn from it.)

Type up your "10 Lessons of Life." These can connect to a sport or activity you enjoy or can be about your life in general.

Language Arts Standards covered:

6.2.7, 6.4.6, 6.4.7, 6.5.7, 6.6.4, 6.6.5

7.4.7, 7.4.8, 7.4.9, 7.6.8, 7.6.9

8.4.6, 8.4.7, 8.4.8, 8.4.9, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, 8.6.7

Technology Education Standards Covered:

3-A, 3-B

2. This assignment could be done independently or with a partner. It should be done after finishing the book.

How would this book be different if written from the perspective of Ellie? In *Heat*, we have portions of chapters or entire chapters from the perspectives of Mrs. Cora, Ramon, Mr. Gibbs, and Carlos. Why do you think Mike Lupica didn't include Ellie's perspective?

Choose any chapter from the book that includes Ellie and rewrite it from Ellie's point of view. In addition to your rewritten chapter, include the number of the chapter and answers to the two questions in the first paragraph. Your writing should be typed, double-spaced.

Technology Education Standards Covered:

3-A, 3-B

Language Arts Standards covered:

6.2.7, 6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.5, 6.3.6, 6.4.3, 6.4.8, 6.5.1, 6.5.4, 6.5.6, 6.6.4, 6.6.5

7.3.3, 7.3.4, 7.3.5, 7.4.8, 7.4.9, 7.4.10, 7.5.2, 7.5.6, 7.5.7, 7.6.8, 7.6.9

8.3.3, 8.4.7, 8.4.8, 8.4.9, 8.5.2, 8.5.7, 8.6.1, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, 8.6.7

Bibliography

<http://www.amazon.com>

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<http://www.imdb.com>

<http://www.filmratings.org>

<http://www.teenreads.com/authors/au-lupica-mike.asp>

<http://us.penguingroup.com/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,,1000009423,00.html>

<http://www.mikelupicabooks.com/>

http://www.bostonbaseball.com/baseball_movies/

<http://web.baseballhalloffame.org/index.jsp>

http://www.pbs.org/teachers/mathline/lessonplans/msmp/fantasy/fantasy_procedure.shtm

<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/baseball/>

<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/baseball/teachers/lesson8.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/stealinghome/>

<http://web.buddyproject.org/web012/web012/averages.htm>

<http://www.funbrain.com/math/>

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/baseball/>

http://www.education-world.com/a_tsl/archives/00-2/tslbballTchart.shtml

<http://www.fanbay.net>

http://www.education-world.com/a_tsl/archives/00-2/tslbballTchart.shtml

<http://www.littleleague.org/>

<http://www.sport-smart.com/little-league-baseball-rules/>

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