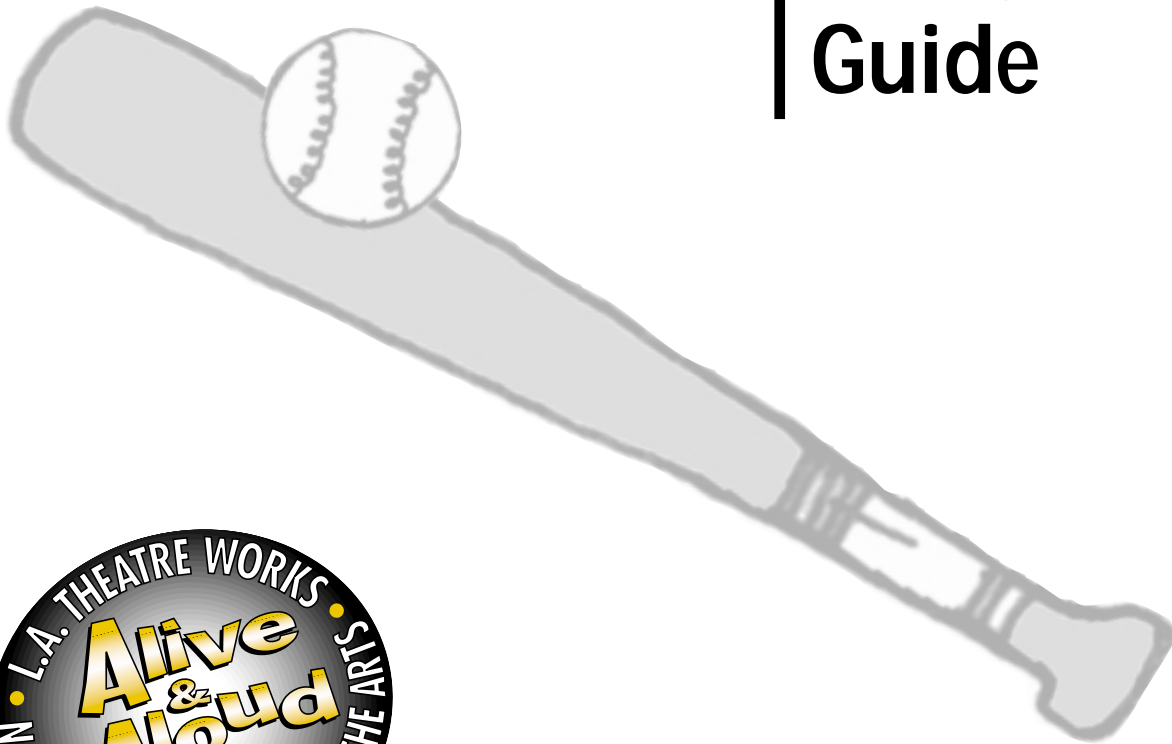


MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING

by Ed Schmidt



Teacher's Study Guide



Alive & Aloud • Radio Plays for Learning in the Classroom

Dear Participating Teacher,

Winter 1999

We are pleased to provide you this Study Guide as part of our educational program **ALIVE & ALOUD: Radio Plays for Learning in the Classroom**. It is our hope that the enclosures will support your classroom lesson plans for all your students—wherever they are on the learning continuum. Using the educational materials to prepare the students to listen to the radio play will deepen the educational value of the theatre experience.

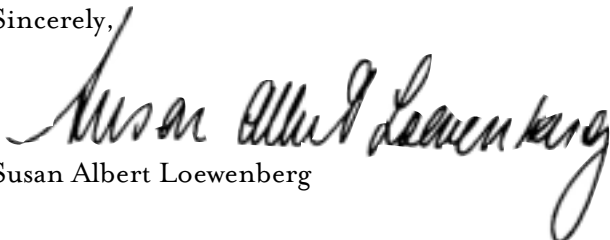
MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING by Ed Schmidt, highlights the moment that Jackie Robinson integrated Major League Baseball. With energy and forcefulness, the play looks at the terrible consequences of racism and the fierce debate over the meaning of integration within the African American community.

We advise that all student and classroom listeners be prepared for some difficult language at the beginning of the story. Mr. Rickey is testing Jackie Robinson by badgering him with insults and racial slurs to see if Robinson has the fortitude to withstand the attacks he will receive in public. This passage clearly demonstrates why Robinson was chosen to break “the color line” and how he was to suffer in his career.

You may want to experiment with various approaches to integrating **ALIVE & ALOUD** into your lesson plans. Students can listen to the audio plays individually with their own headset, in a group setting or on their own time outside of class. You may find that certain Study Guide exercises and activities require group listening in teams of students or with the class as a whole. Dividing the play into sections to focus on one part at a time can enhance group listening to the plays.

The Study Guide emphasizes the curriculum core subjects of secondary schools. It is organized to pose important questions and to develop significant study units inspired by the content of the play. These curriculum ideas are our way of promoting academic achievement and enriching the learning process of young people in the classroom.

Sincerely,



Susan Albert Loewenberg



MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING by Ed Schmidt

Director, Sheldon Epps

Executive Producer, Susan Albert Loewenberg

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ALIVE & ALOUD: Radio Plays for Learning in the Classroom, a program of L.A. Theatre Works, is made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

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Mr. Rickey Calls a Meeting

by Ed Schmidt

•TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE•

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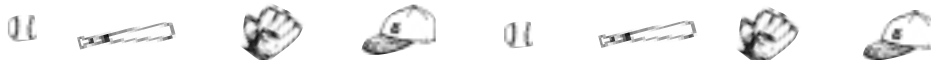
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“ But I still feel I owe — till every man can rent and lease and buy according to his money and desires; until every child can have an equal opportunity in youth and manhood; until hunger is not only immoral but illegal; until hatred is recognized as a disease...; until racism and sexism are conquered...; until any man can be elected if he qualifies.”

—Jackie Robinson



A handshake between Robinson and Rickey in 1947 seals the deal bringing Jackie up to the Dodgers.



Brooklyn fans honor their new star with a Jackie Robinson Day. Outstanding token of their esteem was this Cadillac sedan. Jackie's wife Rachel at left and Bill (Bojangles) Robinson in the car. Bill's description of Jackie: "Ty Cobb in Technicolor!"



Johnny Jorgensen, Pee Wee Reese, Eddie Stanky and Jackie Robinson.



Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson, Rachel Robinson and Mallie Robinson (Jackie's mother) at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony, 1962.

“Good Luck is what is left over after intelligence and effort have combined at their best.”

—Branch Rickey

BIOGRAPHY
Jack Roosevelt Robinson
THE EARLY YEARS
(1919–1972)

“I have many memories. I remember standing alone at first base—the only black man on the field. I had to fight hard against loneliness, abuse and the knowledge that any mistake I made would be magnified because I was the only black man out there.”

At Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, New York, on April 15, 1947, the first African American to play professional Major League baseball, Jackie Robinson, came out on the field wearing Dodger uniform #42. He played in the first base position for this historic opening game against the Boston Braves.



Twenty-seven years earlier, the Robinsons’ mother, Mallie Robinson, moved with her five children to Pasadena, California. They made their way there from Georgia, where Jack Roosevelt Robinson had been born the previous year, on January 31, 1919. His mother and father had been “half-croppers,” people who shared the profits from the farm’s pickings. When his father Jerry deserted the family, Mallie Robinson decided to leave the South and join her brother who had often spoken of the better opportunities available in California. As an older man, Jackie Robinson realized the enormous courage it took for his mother, the daughter of a slave, to leave the only world she knew with all her children and travel to the unknown.

The five Robinson children grew up in a two-story frame house in Pasadena that Mallie bought with savings. The children, one of their cousins and Mallie all lived in two rooms so that the other bedrooms could be rented to borders. The family was barely able to survive, struggling to live on the income from the borders and Mallie’s work washing and ironing for white families.

Even so, during the years of 1929 and 1930 there was hardly any money for the family—as with many others—because of the Depression. Food for the Robinsons was scarce, but Jackie rarely went hungry. The kids at school would bribe him with food to play on their team during school recess. By the time Jackie Robinson was eight years old, he showed a talent for sports—and for making money with his talent. Also, he was always able to find odd jobs and collect obscure items to sell. The money he earned made him more independent in the family, and he often paid his mother to do some of the personal chores like making his bed that the other children were required to do. No matter how hard their life became, Mallie Robinson insisted that every Sunday they attend church services.

Once Jackie reached high school in Pasadena, he was already known as a great athlete. He was big for his age, and made the team for all sports—basketball, football, baseball and track. This meant he had a busy schedule year-round, setting the pattern for the rest of his life. There was also other athletic talent in the family. His brother Mack was a renowned track star who went on to the Berlin Olympics in 1936, and came in second to the champion, Jesse Owens.



After graduation from high school, Jackie went to Pasadena Community College and in 1940, transferred to UCLA where this grandson of a slave became a famous football name. In his two years on the UCLA campus, he was the first athlete to earn major letters in four different sports. At that time, baseball was not important to him and it was considered a weak program at the University. Despite his recognition and honors, he was not very popular. Jackie Robinson was outspoken, a quality not easily tolerated in an African American. During his time at the University, he met his future wife Rachel.



He left UCLA in 1941, and joined the U.S. Army as an officer at the onset of World War II. He was eventually court-martialed with reduced charges as a result of his refusal to move to the back of a public bus while traveling from an Army base. Discharged and excused from his so-called “crimes,” he began his life in professional sports. After finding that there was not much money in basketball coaching, he remembered a man in the Army who had pitched for the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Baseball League, and who had told him that baseball was a good way of life with good money. Jackie wrote the Monarchs asking for a job. They sent him a letter that was, in essence, a contract to join them. Thus Jackie Robinson began his golden sports career and historic legacy.



Essay on the Play

MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING

by Matthew Kopka

MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING has an extraordinary premise: it places four of the century's most important African American figures in a hotel room on a rainy spring day in 1947, where they engage in a high-stakes battle over issues of lasting consequence.

The men are: **Joe Louis**, still boxing's heavyweight champion at 32, but overweight, exhausted and beset by money worries; aging tap dance legend **Bill "Bojangles" Robinson**, one of the black community's most beloved figures but a man now in serious decline; the gifted actor and singer **Paul Robeson**; and **Jackie Robinson**, the man who would integrate Major League baseball.

All four—beautifully drawn in L.A. Theatre Works' production of Ed Schmidt's play—were men of depth and complexity, both triumphant and tragic figures. Each stands, as the play begins, in the midst of an acute, ongoing crisis.

Their meeting has been called by another compelling figure—Brooklyn Dodger president and general manager **Branch Rickey**, the white businessman who engineered Robinson's entree to the Major Leagues.

History has portrayed Rickey, played with enthusiasm here by Edward Asner, as a hero. But Schmidt takes another look, not just at Rickey but at the mechanisms that brought Robinson into white baseball. In doing so, the playwright raises questions that have too seldom been asked — how patronizing were Rickey's actions? At what cost, to other black players and to the African American community as a whole, did integration come?



Integration was the only just, perhaps the only possible, course for baseball. But in the black community, at least in the short run, the move would have negative repercussions. The Negro Leagues—organized into two divisions like white baseball, each with its own ballparks, concessions and employees—had thrived in the shadow of white baseball for decades. Each league produced its own stars, championships, even baseball cards.

Now thousands of black players would be out of a job, and owners of black teams—including "Bojangles" Robinson, who owned part of New York's Black Yankees—would not be compensated for their lost employees. In the meantime, even white club owners who had opposed integration would profit from it, as ballparks filled with fans who came to watch the new players.



Rickey meant well, but he was also a businessman. After a careful search, he had found in Robinson his ticket to increased attendance, and—as it turned out — a Major League championship. There had been greater black baseball players, but in Jackie Robinson, Rickey saw the athletic skills and personality essential to the task. Robinson—who had officially integrated baseball the year before as a player for the Minor League Montreal Royals — had been through hell and would see plenty more, as the play makes clear. He would be attacked by opposing players, taunted by racists and targeted with death threats, while suffering physically from the stress that he endured.

Robinson was already 28, old for an athlete embarking on a career, tantalized by the opportunity held out to him by Rickey and also fearful that it would never come. Sterling Macer does a fine job in this production evoking both Robinson's powerful personality and his anxieties.

Rickey, meanwhile, had worked long and hard to engineer Robinson's move. But he faced further obstacles. Some Dodger players had threatened to quit if Robinson joined the team. A carefully planted comment to the press from Dodger manager Leo Durocher—saying the Dodgers couldn't win the pennant unless Robinson joined them—had backfired; the commissioner suspended Durocher for the season.

This is where the play, and the hypothetical meeting that serves as its focus, begins.

||

Anticipating the firestorm that will surround the announcement that he's promoting Robinson, Rickey has determined to gain black community support. He assumes that he has Joe Louis in his pocket. He has sold "Bojangles" (Tommy Hicks) on airy promises that he'll "take care of him." And in a browbeating that borders on abuse, he has made Robinson promise he'll turn the other cheek to whatever racism he encounters for three more years, in return for the move.

But Robeson, here portrayed with elegant hauteur by Carl Lumbly, is the wild card in the deck. An intellectual and Communist in a period when communism still held persuasive power for America's intelligentsia, Robeson can generate opposition to the move, especially among Harlem's political leaders. More astute than Louis or Bojangles, Robeson seeks assurance that black owners will be compensated for lost jobs; he knows that the Kansas City Monarchs, a black league team, received no money when Robinson went to Montreal.

Robeson's refusal to acquiesce to Rickey—and a dawning awareness of how the baseball executive is using them all—leads to a powerful impasse, with the five men generating crosscurrents of hostility in a room that seems to shrink from moment to moment.

An impassioned speech by Robinson notwithstanding, it's the taciturn Louis, played by Charlie Robinson in a most impressive performance, who forces a resolution. The actor pulls off quite a feat (given the fact that we can't see him!), embodying a suspicious but proud figure dimmed through a long boxing career, struggling to think, to do the right thing in complicated circumstances.

||

If there's a problem with the play, it lies in the uneasy relation between its framing device — involving a humorous bellhop who does errands for the five men — and the drama's more serious concerns. But what's satisfying about **MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING** is the way its intensity grows from the issues; it's a gripping, accessible and — for all that — intellectual play.

Schmidt has dared to look beneath the surface of a story we've taken for granted, exposing uses that whites have sometimes found for integration, and differences in perception about how to achieve justice between members of the African American community — a community too often painted for us in monolithic terms. In doing so, he deepens our understanding of the ongoing struggle, and of those engaged in it.

**1996, when this version of Schmidt's play was recorded, marked the fiftieth anniversary of Robinson's entry into Major League baseball.*

An Interview with Ed Schmidt

BY MATTHEW KOPKA



Ed Schmidt's plays have been produced all over the U.S., including the Chicago Theatre Company; the Ironbound Theatre, Newark; The West Bank Cafe; and the Belmont Italian-American Playhouse in New York City. Seven of his one-act plays have been performed at Camp Dudley in Westport, New York.

MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING premiered at the George Street Playhouse in 1989 and had its West Coast premiere at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego in May 1992.

Q: The first thing many people are going to want to know is: did such a meeting ever take place?

A I was reading a rather unreliable book about Joe Louis, and became intrigued by mention of a meeting he had with Rickey. I started researching and finally realized that the meeting never took place. It was a phony story, but it was a great idea for a play! A lot of people don't know that the Negro Leagues were destroyed by the integration of white baseball. The best black players left for the majors. Black fans stopped attending the Negro Leagues because they had no one to root for.

Q: Did you have some personal connection to the play's issues?

A Like many boys in America, I grew up interested in sports. I've always been interested in boxing, particularly. When I was fourteen or fifteen, I read a book about the Negro Leagues that opened my eyes. I was also very familiar with Paul Robeson. Bojangles was the character I was least familiar with — there's only one biography of him out there.

A few of those guys [the Negro League players] are still around. When the play premiered in 1989 there were still two dozen or so former black leaguers in the New York area. We got six of them to come to the Newark premiere.

Q: The fact that there was opposition to integrating baseball in the black community might surprise some people. Was there considerable debate?

A: Even at the time, it was not universally accepted as the right thing to do and Rickey was not universally accepted as a great man, especially among blacks. A few of the black newspapers — in Pittsburgh and New York — carried running debates in their letters to the editor sections. In reading some of those accounts while I was researching the play, it became clear to me that this was a more complex decision than most of us have been led to believe — than most of white America was led to believe at the time. I knew I was coming at the 1940s from the perspective of the late 80s — it's something that's not always easy to do and not always fair. Robeson was strongly opposed to integration if it didn't happen on the black players' and owners' terms. Essentially, the objections expressed are Robeson's ideas.

Q: Robeson is a fascinating figure, both historically and in the play. But it's Joe Louis, and the transformation he undergoes in the course of the play, who is perhaps most impressive.

A: He is perhaps the character, of the five men, who interests me the most. That was also the one role I worried about most on radio. On stage I'd always thought he made a powerful character, because he stands in the corner and sort of smolders the whole time. In some of the productions, directors have used him in very interesting ways in the staging.

Q: What's your other work like?

A: None of my other work is like this play. Usually each play grows out of some structural experiment. In the case of **MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING** the task — as I saw it — was to tell a story in real time, adhering to the [classic structural] unities completely. I like to think, although it's not evident in this play at all, that I come out of a tradition that's inspired by Thornton Wilder more than anyone — I think he's perhaps the greatest American playwright — particularly when it comes to play structure. I think I've written better plays than **MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING** — they're just not as commercial. One is about a day in a small town in upstate New York; another is about building a skyscraper in New York City. I've also [written] translations of two Moliere plays.

Comments on Jackie Robinson

BY KEITH D. MILLER, PH.D.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

During a meeting with Branch Rickey, Jackie Robinson accepted the chance to become the first African American to play Major League baseball in modern times. Rickey asked Robinson not to fight back when people used abuse and violence against him. Robinson agreed and chose to “turn the other cheek.” In 1947, his first year with the Brooklyn Dodgers, some fans in city after city yelled the ugliest names imaginable at him. Pitchers threw the ball at his head more often than they threw it at anyone else. Some players threatened to quit instead of playing with him. Some opponents gashed him with their shoe spikes.

Despite enormous pressure, day after day and month after month, Robinson refused to strike back. He did not even yell back. Instead he behaved with love and nonviolence toward his racist tormentors.

Thousands of African American spectators saw and heard white hecklers jeering at Robinson, their idol. But, like Robinson, they refused to retaliate. Instead they behaved nonviolently. They simply cheered whenever Robinson stole a base or hit a home run, using the skill he gained from playing in the Negro Leagues. At Robinson’s games, blacks and whites had no fistfights inside the stadiums.

The nonviolence of Robinson and black spectators in 1947 helped set the tone for the nonviolent civil rights movement, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955. There, Rosa Parks broke the law when she refused to give up her bus seat to a white man. When she was arrested, JoAnn Robinson and her Women's Political Council organized a bus boycott. Martin Luther King, Jr. was selected as its leader. When white terrorists bombed King’s front porch when his wife and baby were inside, King talked to angry supporters who had gathered in front of his home. Some of them were hungry for revenge. In his Sermon on the Porch, King urged them to love their enemies, to put up their weapons, and to go home.

For years King and other civil rights leaders continued to practice nonviolence despite the violence used against them. So did their followers. Blacks refused to beat up those who were beating them up.

In 1963, after retiring from baseball, Robinson supported King's nonviolent movement in Birmingham, Alabama. This protest may have been King's most important campaign of all. Robinson urged African Americans there to follow King and be nonviolent, even when the police used large attack dogs and powerful fire hoses against them. Listening to Robinson and King, blacks continued to protest peacefully. This Birmingham movement provoked President Kennedy to propose the most important civil rights law of this century – the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Through his baseball career and his later, nonviolent leadership, Jackie Robinson inspired many white Americans to accept black people as equals. That was a giant achievement.



The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. chats with Robinson before a press conference in New York, September 19, 1962.

Cast of Characters

CHARACTERS

ACTORS IN THE L.A. THEATRE WORKS
RADIO THEATRE PRODUCTION

Clancy Hope (Elder)DAVID DOWNING

Clancy HopeRUGG WILLIAMS

A Bellhop at Hotel Roosevelt Midtown Manhattan, New York.



Branch RickeyEDWARD ASNER

The President and General Manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, advocate of breaking the “color line” in professional sports.



Jackie RobinsonSTERLING MACER

Infielder for the Montreal Royals, selected as the first African American to integrate the Major League Baseball organization.



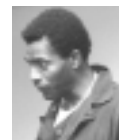
Joe LouisCHARLIE ROBINSON

1946 Heavyweight Champion of the World.



Paul RobesonCARL LUMBLY

Renowned artist, singer, actor, political activist.



Bill “Bojangles” RobinsonTOMMY HICKS

Called the “King of Tap Dance,” a famous entertainer and part owner of a baseball team in the Negro Leagues.



Suggested Vocabulary

Rr

adjourn
assertion
bigotry
commitment
compromise
confidence
creed
democracy
dignity
dissension
dynamic
endorsement
gloating
guarantee
humiliation
impeccable
inception
injustice
integration
magnitude
maneuver
manipulation
modest
noble
obligation
opposition
perfunctorily
pleasantries
plummeted
preference
resistance
"Uncle Tom"
unanimous
valor

S

y

Aa

Core Curriculum Support

ACTIVITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
CRITICAL THINKING, WRITING, LISTENING AND READING



WRITING AND READING EXERCISES

Objectives:

To stimulate interest in writing.

To increase vocabulary development.

To increase ability to organize and express ideas in writing.

1. At the beginning of the story, Mr. Rickey hurls insults and racial slurs at Robinson to see if he has the fortitude to withstand the attacks he will receive in public. Do you think that you could be called names and not respond? Give examples of what you would have done if you had had a similar experience.
2. When he meets with Jackie Robinson in the Roosevelt Hotel room, Mr. Rickey is full of advice. He tells Robinson, “the only way to meet resistance is with nonresistance” and “patience is a virtue.” Describe how this advice may apply to something in your own life.
3. Jackie Robinson is famous for breaking the “color barrier” in baseball at a time when people of different races were strictly segregated and the policy was enforced by law. In what ways do you think relationships between races have changed or stayed the same since the era of 1947? Be specific.
4. Many of the African American men written about in MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING are heroes. What are some of their common characteristics? Is there anyone in your life you consider to be a hero? Describe.
5. There is a tremendous amount of emotion in being “the first.” Is there anything you are thinking of doing that would make you “the first” in your family? (Example: being the first one to go to college.) Interview a family member who was the first person to accomplish something new for the family.
6. What is the point of Mr. Rickey calling a meeting? Why does he think it is necessary in his effort to promote Jackie Robinson to the Brooklyn Dodgers? Does he accomplish his goal? Comment.
7. Mr. Rickey is risking his reputation and job because of something he believes in. How do you think one man came to feel so strongly about changing baseball and the general racist policies of his day? Describe a belief that you have that would make you take some risk in your life. Be specific.

8. What are Paul Robeson's objections to Jackie Robinson joining the Dodgers? Do Robeson's demands and attitude have merit in your opinion? Describe.
9. Mr. Rickey wants "slow, orderly, long-term change" in race relations. Do you agree or disagree with this approach? Why, why not?
10. Robeson is suspicious of white bosses having control over African American athletes and artists. What do you think of this concern? Research how many African Americans today are in management positions in national team sport organizations.
11. At the center of the fictional meeting in this play is a great struggle. What are the basic issues in this struggle? Do any of the arguments among those present remind you of a struggle in your own life? Describe.
12. The play takes place in the 1940's, and the African Americans present speak from their own point of view of freedom from racism. In your lifetime, what progress have you seen in race relations?
13. Research the basic life of African Americans in America in the 1940's, including the differences between the North and the South. The play takes place in New York City. What were some of the characteristics of African American life particular to the community of Harlem?
14. Choose a character from the play and write him a letter telling him what you think about his point of view at the "meeting." Give him some advice.
15. Why does Robeson insist on calling Mr. Rickey by his first name, Branch?
16. Baseball is called "the national past-time." Interview someone who loves the game and find out what the game means to them and why they think the game has been so popular.
17. What does Mr. Rickey like about Jackie Robinson? What are the characteristics that make Mr. Rickey choose Robinson to integrate the Major Leagues? Why is he so concerned about Robinson's behavior in his personal life?
18. Write two short biographies; one about Joe Louis, "Heavyweight Champion of the World," and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson who was a Negro League owner and known as "The King of Tap Dance."
19. Would you define Jackie Robinson as a hero? Defend your answer with specific examples drawn from the play.



Core Curriculum Support



FOCUSING EXERCISES: LISTENING

Objectives:

- To improve listening skills.*
- To improve comprehension.*

The Role of Paul Robeson

Paul Robeson – graduate of the Columbia University School of Law, athlete, singer, actor and social activist – was a towering figure in every respect with a physical and moral power beyond the reach of most people. Being such an exceptional human being made the ravages of racism, injustice and oppression even more tragic and destructive to his quest for universal freedom and justice. His legend as an entertainer lives on in such recorded performances as his role in OTHELLO and in his rendition of the song “Ol’ Man River” in SHOWBOAT. In 1946, when MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING takes place, Paul Robeson was in his fifties and already a veteran of social and racial struggles for equality for all people.

1. Robeson wants Mr. Rickey and the owners of the Dodgers to pay the Negro League Owners for the recruitment of Jackie Robinson. Do you think this is a fair request? Why, why not? Keep in mind that it was in the Negro Leagues that Robinson learned how to play professional baseball.
2. Most of those present at the meeting are ready to give Mr. Rickey what he wants as long as Robinson is accepted into the Major Leagues. What are the reasons Robeson does not want to give Mr. Rickey his vote? What do Robeson’s arguments and attitude tell you about him? Be specific.
3. Research the history of baseball’s Negro Leagues. Having listened to Robeson’s views in the play, what do you think would be his reaction when the Leagues closed down?
4. What are Robeson’s goals at the meeting? What are Rickey’s goals? In what ways are they similar, different? Give examples.
5. All his life Robeson was outspoken, and at times he was called a traitor. He even had his passport taken away from him for many years, ruining his opportunity to travel and thus his international career. Research and write a report about Robeson’s life and what you learn about him that relates to the “meeting” in the play.
6. Study some of the philosophy of Paul Robeson. What did he want and why did the U.S. government punish him for his beliefs?

Activities

UNIT I:

FACTS ABOUT THE PLAY'S CONTENT



Plot

1. What is the situation? The complication?
2. How is the plot developed?
3. What is the climax?
4. Is the ending effective?
5. Discuss one or two interesting incidents used in the plot development.

Setting

1. How does the author use time, place and flashback to further the plot?

Characters

1. Are the characters developed in depth?
2. Do the characters seem real? Why? Why not?
3. Do your attitudes towards the characters change?
4. What is the playwright's attitude towards his characters?

UNIT II:

CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS



1. What is the author's theme or purpose?
2. Can you recognize the different characters by what they say and how they say it? Give examples.
3. Does the dialogue sound "real?" Describe.
4. What is the mood/tone of the play?
5. How does this play compare/contrast with other plays you have seen/heard?

Teacher's Guidelines for Further Study

UNIT I:

<p>THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: RACE AT THE CLOSE OF THE 20TH CENTURY</p>
--

It was the courage and strength of individuals like Jackie Robinson that led to the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960's, when the nation took a turn toward addressing the racial divide and its consequences for our society.

1. The 1960's brought many changes. Discuss the main issues of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and what areas of life it changed in America.
2. Define "affirmative action." Assign a research project to the class creating two teams, one in favor and one opposed. Organize a classroom debate of the pros and cons of affirmative action as an outcome of the students' research.
3. Have the students discuss a relationship they or someone in their family has had with a person from a different race or culture. What, if any, impact did the relationship have on previously held beliefs about people who are different from themselves?
4. To stimulate the idea of positions taken toward people based on color, create two different homework assignments based on the color of students' eyes (light or dark). Make one group receive more work and have a shorter period of time to complete the assignment. Discuss the effects of this activity as it relates to discrimination, prejudice and feelings of frustration and self-esteem.
5. Present issues of racial prejudice in our communities today as a destructive force for the entire society. What is lost? How does it affect the spirit of American culture? What implications does it have for the coming world of the 21st century?
6. Have each student find someone who participated in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. Ask them to interview the subject in order to write a description of their experience and the impact they think the Movement had on their life.

Teacher's Guidelines for Further Study

UNIT II:

THE IMPACT OF SLAVERY AND ITS ABOLITION ON THE CULTURE OF AMERICA

Imagine a world where the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. were practiced, "Judge a person by the content of his character, not the color of his skin." The fact that Jackie Robinson's moment of integrating Major League baseball continues to resonate with such force is an indication that we, as a culture, recognize the significance of color and racial prejudice's decaying impact on American communities.

1. Divide the class into teams to create and research various topics relating to the following: The Middle Passage of slaves traveling from the African continent to America or the process of implementing slavery once the African prisoners arrived.
2. Explore the abolition of slavery during the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln. What rights were African Americans given? What economic support did the government guarantee? What kind of ideas at that time promoted an integrated society and equality among the races?
3. Define "Jim Crow" laws and their history. When was the vote effectively taken away from African American citizens in the South? What were other restrictions placed on African Americans? How did these laws, in many ways, reinstate slavery at the end of the 19th century?
4. When Jackie Robinson broke "the color line" in professional sports in the 1940's, the relationship of African Americans to the majority white population was affected. Looking at the legacy of slavery, why did Robinson's actions have such an impact?

Bibliography

MR. RICKEY CALLS A MEETING, by Ed Schmidt is available in manuscript from L.A. Theatre Works. To receive a copy, send \$5.00 (shipping & handling included) to: L.A. Theatre Works: 681 Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291.

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BASEBALL: A FILM BY KEN BURNS; video documenting 150 years of baseball, 18 hours on 9 video cassettes; available on PBSonline: <http://www.pbs.org>

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I NEVER HAD IT MADE (1972); Robinson, Jackie (as told to Alfred Duchett); Hopewell, NS: Ecco, 1995.

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JOE LOUIS: THE GREAT BLACK HOPE; Bak, Richard; Taylor Publishing Company; 1995.

SUMMER OF '49 (reissue edition); Halberstam, David; Avon, 1997.



Resources on the Internet



<http://www.negro-league.columbus.oh.us/>

- biographies on Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson

<http://www.agroam.org/history/Robinson/>

- the web page of Afro-America's Black History Museum
- biographies on Rickey and Robinson
- information on the Robinson family
- background on the Negro Leagues
- information on Robinson in the Minor Leagues
- information on race issues during the games

<http://www.dodgers.com/dodgers97/jackietl.html>

- time-line of Robinson's life from birth to legacy with pictures
- career statistics

<http://www.upapubs.com/guides/robeson.html>

- the web site of University Publications of America, from New York Public Library
- extensive biography of Paul Robeson

<http://www.cs.uchicago.edu/cpsr/robeson/links/course.syllabus.html>

- guide for extensive study on Paul Robeson including bibliography

<http://www.kron.com/specials/blackhistory/robeson.html>

- photos and short biography of Paul Robeson
- links to biographies of other African American historical figures

<http://www.cmgww.com/sports/louis/louis/html>

- photos, brief career time-line, biography of Joe Louis

<http://detnews.com/history/louis/louis.html>

- extensive biography of Joe Louis

<http://www.aetv.com/viewers/biography/bojangles.html>

- biography of Bill "Bojangles" Robinson

<http://www.splcenter.com/teachingtolerance>

- web site of the Southern Poverty Law Center
- classroom resources: videos and booklets available for teaching about the Civil Rights Movement.
- mailing address: Teaching Tolerance, P.O. Box 548, Montgomery, AL 36101-0548