

# BREAKING BARRIERS

BASEBALL, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Chasing  
Dreams

BASEBALL & BECOMING AMERICAN

## FIRST BASE

EVERYBODY'S PLAYING IT

Hank Greenberg was one of the few opposing players to publicly welcome Jackie Robinson to the majors in 1947, and when they accidentally collided at first base he told Robinson: "Don't let them get to you. You're doing fine. Just keep it up." Robinson never forgot that advice.

The famous song, "*Take Me Out to the Ball Game*," is about a girl named Katie Casey who loved baseball so much that she asked her boyfriend to "take [her] out to a ball game" instead of to a show.

In what year was this song written? \_\_\_\_\_

Read the lyrics of the song. Focus on the lesser known verses: **Which line stands out to you?**

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Learn about Hank Greenberg and find his Most Valuable Player Award. **What was the importance of this award to the Jewish community?**

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Katie Casey was baseball mad. Had the fever and had it bad...

On a Saturday her young beau Called to see if she'd like to go To see a show, but Miss Kate said "No, I'll tell you what you can do:"

"Take me out to the ball game..."

Katie Casey saw all the games, Knew the players by their first names.

Told the umpire he was wrong, All along, Good and strong.

When the score was just two to two, Katie Casey knew what to do, Just to cheer up the boys she knew, She made the gang sing this song:

"Take me out to the ball game..."

## SECOND BASE

BARRIERS IN ACTION

Find the poster that says "*Syd Pollocks Cuban Stars*" **Describe what you see**

Black teams often used Cuba as part of their names. **Why do you think they chose to do so?**

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Look around and find: **Until what year were African Americans excluded from the major leagues and could play professionally only in the Negro Leagues?** \_\_\_\_\_

\* *Negroes* was the term that referred to African Americans before the 1960s.

Find **one** artifact that demonstrates ideas about race, ethnicity, or gender and describe it:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# THIRD BASE BEYOND THE BARRIERS?

Choose and explore the story of **one** of the following barrier breakers:

Find Justine Siegal's Cleveland Indians jersey, 2011

**What were some of Siegal's achievements?**

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Look at the container with dirt from Cooperstown Dreams Park. **What historic moment does it celebrate beyond the victory?**

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Find Hank Aaron's Milwaukee Braves jersey, 1965.

Aaron was the last major leaguer to have started out in the Negro Leagues.

**What "unbreakable" record did Aaron surpass?**

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**Why was this victory important?**

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Find Roberto Clemente's Pittsburgh Pirates jersey, 1966

**How did Clemente become an icon to Spanish-speaking Americans?**

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**Why do you think he was referred to as a hero and "a man of the people"?**

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## HOME

"I believe in the human race. I believe in the warm heart. I believe in man's integrity. I believe in the goodness of a free society. And I believe that the society can remain good only as long as we are willing to fight for it. (Jackie Robinson, 1952)

Find the T-shirt that says "*A League of Our Own*" from the girls' softball team in Riverdale, New York. How does this team carry on Jackie Robinson's and Hank Greenberg's legacies?

Roberto Clemente once said:

*"If you have an opportunity to make things better and you don't, then you are wasting your time on this earth."*

Think about an example from your personal life that shows how you made or considered making things better.

## THE MUSEUM'S CORE EXHIBITION:

Jackie Robinson marched around the bases on major league baseball fields before Martin Luther King Jr. marched in Alabama and on the Washington mall. A few weeks before MLK was killed in 1968, he told Don Newcombe\*, "*You'll never know how easy you and Jackie .... made it for me to do my job by what you did on the baseball field.*"

**What was Jackie Robinson's role in the struggle to end segregation and achieve civil rights for African Americans?**

\* Don Newcombe was a Major League Baseball player. He won the Rookie of the Year, Most Valuable Player and Cy Young awards in his career. In 1949, he became the first black pitcher to start a World Series game.