Dear Teacher,

The following tools are designed to help support and enrich lessons and worksheets found in the Breaking Barriers poster/teaching guide:

1) Suggested Answers for Lesson Discussion Questions
2) Academic and Domain-Specific Vocabulary Lists
3) Writing Prompts
4) Paired-Text Reading Suggestions and Writing Prompts
5) Grades 4–8 Standards Chart

For online versions of the lessons and worksheets, visit: scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lessons.

1 Suggested Answers for Lesson Discussion Questions

Suggested answers are provided in italics.

Lesson 1: “What Are Barriers?”

scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson1

Grades 4–5:
• Based on the first paragraph, why do you think Sharon Robinson wrote this article? Sharon Robinson wrote the article to tell the story of how her father, Jackie Robinson, overcame the color barrier and created opportunities for future African-American players.
• What is the main idea of the article? Jackie Robinson overcame barriers to be able to play in Major League Baseball. Provide details from the article to support your answer. Robinson gained Branch Rickey’s confidence. Robinson overcame the racism of the fans and other players.
• How did the color barrier prevent black baseball players from playing in Major League Baseball before 1947? Baseball was segregated. Until 1947, black- and brown-skinned players were in the Negro Leagues, while whites played in the Majors.
• What did the scouts tell Branch Rickey to convince him Jackie Robinson could be successful in the Major Leagues? They told him about Jackie Robinson hitting .387 with the Kansas City Monarchs. They told Rickey that Robinson had perfected his skills in stealing bases and had been selected for the Negro League All-Star Game. The scouts also told Rickey of Robinson’s college career at UCLA where he lettered in four sports.
• Why did Mr. Rickey describe to Jackie Robinson the rough conditions he would have to face? Branch Rickey described the rough conditions to see how Jackie Robinson would respond under pressure.
• The article says that “Rickey hoped my father would have the strength of character to fight back with his bat and not his fist.” What does this mean? Rickey hoped that Jackie Robinson would be able to stay calm when he experienced racism and would not fight back physically. Instead he wanted Robinson to fight back by playing well.
• How did Jackie Robinson respond to the racism he faced in baseball? Robinson fought back against the racism with perfectly timed bunts, hard line drives, and stolen bases.

Grades 6–8
• Based on the first paragraph, why do you think Sharon Robinson wrote this article? Sharon Robinson wrote the article to tell the story of how her father broke the color barrier and created opportunities for future players.
• What is the main idea of the article? Jackie Robinson overcame barriers to be able to play in Major League Baseball.

Provide details from the article to support your answer. Robinson gained Branch Rickey’s confidence. Robinson overcame the racism of the fans and other players.
• How did the color barrier prevent black baseball players from playing in Major League Baseball before 1947? Baseball was segregated. Until 1947, black- and brown-skinned players were in the Negro Leagues, while whites played in the Majors.
• Why were Jackie Robinson’s college statistics at UCLA and his performance in the Negro League All-Star Game important information for Branch Rickey? The evidence of Robinson’s past performance told Rickey how good a player Robinson was. It gave Rickey an idea of how well he’d do in the Major Leagues.
• Why was it important to Mr. Rickey that Jackie Robinson had strength of character? It was important for Robinson to have strength of character so that he would fight back against racism with his bat instead of his fists.
• What evidence in the article suggests that Jackie Robinson succeeded in breaking barriers in Major League Baseball? He played well his first year, defending himself against the racism with exceptional play on the field. He went on to play for 10 seasons, earning Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player awards.

Lesson 2: “Values and Barriers”

scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson2

Grades 4–5 and Grades 6–8:
• Explain the meaning of your assigned value in your own words. (Answers will vary.)
• Why is this an important value for people to have? (Answers will vary, but students should understand that the value helps people face barriers.)
• How could this value help people face and overcome a barrier? Provide an example. (Answers will vary depending on the barrier.)

2 Academic and Domain-Specific Vocabulary Lists

The following vocabulary words can be previewed with students prior to using the reproducibles in Lessons 1 and 2. (Dictionary entries below are sourced from the Scholastic Children’s Dictionary, unless otherwise noted.)

Lesson 1: “What Are Barriers?”

scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson1

Grades 4–5 and 6–8:
CIVIL RIGHTS
• co-lor bar-ri-er (kuhl-ur ba-ree-ur) noun
Unspoken social code of racial segregation or discrimination, especially in sports, education, public service, and the like. In 1947, African-American Jackie Robinson broke baseball’s color barrier. (Source: Word Explorer Children’s Dictionary)
• leg-a-cy (leg-uh-see) noun
Something that has been handed down from one generation to another.
• race (rayss) noun
One of the major groups into which human beings can be divided. People of the same race share the same physical characteristics, such as skin color, which are passed on from generation to generation.
• rac-ist (ray-sist) adjective, noun
Someone who is racist thinks that a particular race is better than others or treats people unfairly or cruelly because of their race.
VALUES AND BARRIERS

- **values** (val-yoos) noun
  People’s values are their beliefs and ideas about what is most important in their lives.

Lesson 2: “Values and Barriers”

Grades 4–5 and 6–8:

VALUES AND BARRIERS

- **barrier** (ba-ree-ur) noun
  Anything that gets in the way of action or progress. (Source: Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary)

- **citizen** (sit-uh-zuhn-ship) noun
  The qualities that a person is expected to have as a responsible member of a community. (Source: Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary)

- **commitment** (kuh-mit-ment) noun
  To promise to do something or support it.

- **course** (kur-ij) noun
  Bravery or fearlessness.

- **determination** (di-tur-min-a-shun) noun
  If you have determination, you have made a firm decision to do it.

- **excellence** (ex-suh-lans) noun
  The condition of being very good or outstanding. (Source: Word Explorer Children’s Dictionary)

- **influence** (in-floo-uhnss) noun
  The power or invisible action of a thing or person that causes some kind of effect on another. (Source: Word Explorer Children’s Dictionary)

- **integrity** (in-teg-ruh-tee) noun
  If someone has integrity, the person is honest and sticks to his or her principles.

- **justice** (juhss-tiss) noun
  Fair and impartial behavior or treatment.

- **obstacle** (ob-stuh-kuh) noun
  Something that gets in your way or prevents you from doing something.

- **perseverance** (pur-sis-tens) noun
  To keep on doing something in spite of obstacles or warnings.

- **promise** (prom-iss) noun
  A pledge given by someone that he or she will do something.

- **team-work** (teem-work) noun
  The working together of a group of people to produce a desired result. (Source: Word Explorer Children’s Dictionary)

OTHER

- **commemorate** (kom-uhn) adjective
  Shared by two or more people or things.

- **cultivate** (kuhlt-uh-vate) verb
  To develop by studying.

- **internal** (in-tur-nuh) adjective
  Happening or existing inside someone or something.

- **willing** (wil-ling) adjective
  Wanting or agreeing to do something. (Source: Word Explorer Children’s Dictionary)
3 Writing Prompts

To extend each lesson after students have read the associated reproducible, assign students to do a quick three-minute “free-write” of a sentence or two for each writing prompt below. Possible answers are provided in *italics*.

**Lesson 1: “What Are Barriers?”**
[link](https://www.scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson1)

**Grades 4–5:**
- What does the word “barrier” mean? A barrier is a problem or obstacle that stops you from moving forward.
- Give some examples of physical and abstract barriers and explain how they stop people from moving forward. *Examples of physical barriers are a fence, a disability, and an opponent, which can physically block people from their goals. Examples of abstract barriers are fear, inexperience, and lack of skills, which can block people from taking the actions needed to achieve their goals.*
- How did the “color barrier” segregate black baseball players from white ballplayers? The color barrier kept black players from playing with white players. It kept them from playing in the Major Leagues.
- Provide examples of actions Jackie Robinson took to overcome the barrier of racism. Jackie Robinson overcame the barrier of racism to play in Major League Baseball. He ignored shouted insults and more from angry fans and opponents. He fought back with perfectly timed bunts, hard line drives, and stolen bases.

**Grades 6–8:**
- What does the word “barrier” mean? A barrier is a problem or obstacle that stops you from moving forward.
- Explain whether the “color barrier” was a physical or an abstract barrier. The “color barrier” was an abstract barrier because it can’t be seen, but can be felt. The “color barrier” was not a physical object but an idea or belief.
- Explain how the “color barrier” affected black baseball players. The “color barrier” prevented black baseball players from being hired to play with white players in the Major Leagues.
- Describe characteristics Branch Rickey saw in Jackie Robinson that led him to believe he would be successful in Major League Baseball. Branch Rickey saw that Jackie Robinson had the physical skills to succeed in Major League Baseball, the courage to play against racism, and the strength not to retaliate with his fist.

**Lesson 2: “Values and Barriers”**
[link](https://www.scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson2)

Note: Answers will vary.

**Grades 4–5:**
- Explain the meaning of your assigned value and provide an example.
- Look again at the quote on the poster. Explain how your assigned value might improve the lives of other people.
- Review the quotes from the different ballplayers on the handout. Explain how a value of Jackie Robinson’s has helped one of them.
- Explain how your assigned value would help you face a barrier.

**Grades 6–8:**
- Explain the meaning of your assigned value and provide an example.
- Look again at the quote on the poster. Explain how your assigned value might improve the lives of other people.
- Review the quotes from the different ballplayers on the handout. Explain how another value, besides your assigned one, has helped one of them.
- Pick two values, other than your assigned one, and explain how each would help you face a barrier.

**Lesson 3: “Essay Organizer”**
[link](https://www.scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson3)

Note: These writing prompts also can be found in Step 2 of Lesson 3. Answers will vary.

**Grades 4–5 and 6–8:**
- What was the barrier you faced?
- What are some basic details about the barrier? (For example, When did you face the barrier? Who was involved in the situation? Where did it occur?)
- Which of Jackie Robinson’s nine values did you use to overcome the barrier?
- How did you use the value to face or overcome the barrier? (Write a separate sentence for each value, if you used more than one.)
- How was your barrier like barriers that Jackie Robinson faced? How was it different?
- What was the outcome of using your value(s)?

4 Paired-Text Reading Suggestions and Writing Prompts

**Grades 4–5:**

**HISTORICAL NONFICTION: RUBY BRIDGES**
- **Materials:** Choose from a variety of resources about Ruby Bridges collected here: [link](https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/unit/ruby-bridges-everything-you-need).
- **Writing Prompt:** In 1960, when Ruby Bridges was only 6 years old, she walked into William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans under the escort of her mother and armed U.S. Marshals. Angry mobs of people had formed outside her school protesting the school integration and wanted to stop her from attending. Read about the life of Ruby Bridges. Then write a paragraph identifying which of Jackie Robinson’s values are reflected in Ruby’s story.

**HISTORICAL FICTION: CLOTEE**
- **Materials:** The novel *A Picture of Freedom: The Diary of Clotee, a Slave Girl, Belmont Plantation, Virginia, 1859*; [link](https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/unit/dear-america/19-emily-too-clotee-

- **Writing Prompt:** Read the story of Clotee, a 12-year-old slave living in Virginia. She carries with her a forbidden skill; she has learned how to read. Before the Civil War, in most southern states, it was illegal to teach a slave how to read and any slaves who learned would be beaten. Write an essay determining how Clotee responds to various challenges she faces and in the process practices one or more of Jackie Robinson’s values.

**Grades 6–8:**

**PRIMARY SOURCE: JACKIE ROBINSON**
- **Writing Prompt:** Read Jackie Robinson’s 1961 letter to President John F. Kennedy (available at [link](https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/jackie-robinson/images/letter-1961-01.jpg)) congratulating him on his recent election and encouraging him to aggressively pursue his civil rights agenda. Then write a paragraph explaining Jackie Robinson’s purpose for writing the letter and matching specific statements in the letter to any of Jackie Robinson’s values.
# Breaking Barriers: scholastic.com/breakingbarriers

**Common Core State Standards: Grades 4–8**

| Lesson 1: “What Are Barriers?”—scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson1 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Grade 4**                 | **Reading: Informational Text Craft and Structure** | **Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use** | **Writing: Text Types and Purposes** | **Writing: Range of Writing** | **Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge** | **Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration** |
|                            | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.5    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.10   | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1  | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.4  |

| Lesson 2: “Values and Barriers”—scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson2 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Grade 4**                 | **Reading: Informational Text Craft and Structure** | **Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use** | **Writing: Text Types and Purposes** | **Writing: Range of Writing** | **Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge** | **Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration** |
|                            | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.4  |
|                            | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.4    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4  |

| Lesson 3: “Essay Organizer”—scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/lesson3 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Grade 4**                 | **Reading: Informational Text Craft and Structure** | **Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use** | **Writing: Text Types and Purposes** | **Writing: Range of Writing** | **Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge** | **Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration** |
|                            | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3    | CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.10   |

* Source: Common Core State Standards: www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy