



Language Arts, Social Studies & Character Education

FEATURING

▶ **Lessons, Activity Sheets,
and Digital Interactives**

▶ **2019 Breaking Barriers
Essay Contest**

Motivate your students to
write about their barriers

**NEW ▶ Assessment Tools/
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MLB.com/BREAKINGBARRIERS

About Breaking Barriers



2018 Grades 4-8 Grand Prize Winner Selihom Kidane of Charlotte, NC, with Sharon Robinson and MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred

Welcome, Teachers! 2019 marks Jackie Robinson's centennial celebration. We hope you will help commemorate this milestone with **Breaking Barriers: In Sports, In Life**. This program brings classrooms the story of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in baseball, and also extends my father's legacy of change to students today.

Created by Major League Baseball and developed with Scholastic, **Breaking Barriers** teaches students the values my father exhibited in his life and how to use these to face and overcome their own barriers. At the heart of the program is the **Breaking Barriers Essay Contest**, which gives diverse students of all backgrounds the opportunity to write about their own barriers, along with a chance to win valuable prizes.

Teachers have been an incredible partner of **Breaking Barriers** since its inception in 1997. We thank you for your support—and for encouraging your students to tell their stories. I am amazed and inspired by their grit and optimism, as well as tremendous courage, as they move forward in spite of their barriers.

I hope your class takes part in **Breaking Barriers!**

Sincerely,

Sharon Robinson

Sharon Robinson

Educational Consultant, MLB,
and author, sharonrobinsonink.com



The 2019 Essay Contest Grades 4-9

2 GRAND PRIZE WINNERS

- **Grades 4-6 Grand Prize:**
Trip to the **2019 MLB All-Star Game**
- **Grades 7-9 Grand Prize:**
Trip to a game of the **2019 MLB World Series**

10 NATIONAL WINNERS

- Student and teacher laptops

Deadline: March 14, 2019

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Void where prohibited.

See the back cover for entry info and abbreviated rules.

AWESOME
OPPORTUNITY!

Assessment Tools

Up to **100 Teachers** Will
Receive **\$100 Gift Cards!**

\$100

Before and after the lesson, have students complete assessments. Submit your results for a chance to receive a \$100 gift card, courtesy of the MLB-MLBPA Youth Development Foundation. Up to 100 teachers will be randomly selected!

Visit scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/assessment to get started and for details!*

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION



Lessons Grades 4-8

LESSON 1 Learning About Barriers

Activity 1: About My Father—Activity 1A (grades 4-5) or 1B (grades 6-8)

Time: 45 minutes

Lesson Objective: Students will understand what the concept of a barrier means, and how Jackie Robinson faced and overcame barriers in his life.

LESSON STEPS

1. Start by asking students what a *barrier* is. Guide them to define it as: *A challenge or obstacle that makes it difficult for you to move forward.* Discuss that some barriers can be seen, such as a fence, disability, or event, while others cannot, such as fear, inexperience, or lack of skills.
2. Ask the class to think of different barriers that people face and how these barriers make it difficult for people to move forward. Create a list on the board. Ask: *What are some ways that people overcome their barriers?*
3. Divide the class into small groups and distribute Activity 1A (grades 4-5) or 1B (grades 6-8): About My Father. Have volunteers read passages from the story. Then have groups discuss the story, using **text evidence** to support responses to the following questions.

Grades 4-5:

- Based on the first paragraph, why do you think Sharon Robinson wrote this article?
- What is the main idea of the article?
- How did the color barrier prevent black baseball players from playing in Major League Baseball before 1947?
- What did the scouts tell Branch Rickey to convince him that Jackie Robinson could be successful?
- Why did Mr. Rickey describe to Jackie Robinson the rough conditions he would have to face?
- 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?
- How did Jackie Robinson respond to the racism he faced in baseball?

Grades 6-8:

- Based on the first paragraph, why do you think Sharon Robinson wrote this article?
- What is the main idea of the article?
- How did the color barrier prevent black baseball players from playing in Major League Baseball before 1947?
- Why were Jackie Robinson's college statistics at UCLA and his accomplishments with the Kansas City Monarchs important information for Branch Rickey?
- Why was it important to Mr. Rickey that Jackie Robinson had strength of character?
- What evidence in the article suggests that Jackie Robinson (continued)

*Breaking Barriers Student Assessment Teacher Giveaway: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. The Breaking Barriers Student Assessment teacher giveaway is open to teachers, 18 years of age or older, who (i) are legal residents of, and currently reside in, the U.S., D.C., Puerto Rico, and Canada (excluding Quebec), (ii) currently teach the Breaking Barriers lessons and administer the Breaking Barriers quizzes in their classrooms of grades 4-9; and (iii) submit those quizzes to Scholastic. To enter, a teacher must confirm that his/her students have completed assessment quizzes and he/she has submitted those quizzes to Scholastic as detailed in the Official Rules. The deadline to enter the giveaway is March 21, 2019. Void where prohibited. Teacher may enter the giveaway by email, online, or by mail. Up to one hundred (100) recipients, from all eligible entrants, will each receive a \$100 gift card. Based on a random drawing on or about April 16, 2019. For complete details and Official Rules, visit scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/assessment. Sponsor: Scholastic Inc., 557 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

succeeded in breaking barriers in Major League Baseball?

4. Ask groups to share their answers.

5. Referring back to About My Father, instruct students to write a paragraph about what made Jackie Robinson a good candidate to break the color barrier.

6. Then, from the list created in Step 2, ask students to choose one of the barriers (or assign one barrier to each student). Instruct students to write a couple of sentences about how Jackie Robinson's character traits might be helpful in facing this barrier.

7. Divide students into small groups to share their paragraphs and sentences.

8. Move on to Lesson 2: How Values Help Us Face Barriers to teach students about how Jackie Robinson used values to face challenges and barriers.

EXTENSION

• Two years after Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier, he and three others (Roy Campanella, Don Newcombe, and Larry Doby) became the first African American players selected for an MLB All-Star Game. How is this a result of Jackie Robinson's earlier achievement? (Answers might include: *Breaking barriers can open doors for others to follow.*)

LESSON 2 How Values Help Us Face Barriers

Activity 2: Values and Barriers

Additional Materials: Classroom poster

Time: 45 minutes

Lesson Objective: Through reading and class discussion, students will understand what values are and how they are important in facing barriers.

LESSON STEPS

1. Ask students what the word *values* means. Guide them to define *values* as: *Beliefs that are important to you and that help to guide your life.*

2. Display Reproducible 2: Values and Barriers. Have students read the story about George Springer. Ask:

- *What barriers did Springer face as a child, and how did he overcome them?*
- *Why is it important for students to read his story?*

3. Divide students into nine small groups and assign each group a value from the reproducible. Have students respond to the following questions, making text inferences in their responses:

- *Explain the meaning of your assigned value in your own words.*
- *Why is this value important for people to have?*
- *What is an example of how this value can help people face and overcome a barrier?*

4. After students finish their discussions, ask groups to share their answers with the class.

5. Have students reflect on their own barriers, and how they have used Jackie Robinson's values to face those barriers, in preparation for writing essays. Move on to Lesson 3: Essay Organizer: Writing About Barriers. Encourage students to enter their essays in the **Breaking Barriers Essay Contest**.

EXTENSIONS

• Discuss the concept of *character*, which can be defined as the features and traits of an individual that reflect the sort of person he or she is. How do *values* reflect a person's *character*? How do a person's *actions* display his or her values and character? What does it mean when a person is described



WATCH THE VIDEOS

Visit scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/videos for film clips teaching extensions from *Jackie Robinson*, a film by Ken Burns & Sarah Burns & David McMahon

as having "strength of character"?

• Have students research and discuss modern examples of individuals who have broken barriers, as well as the values they relied upon. (Examples might include historical figures or someone in their local community.)

• Encourage students to interview family members and friends to discuss barriers they have faced, as well as values they used to face and overcome them.

LESSON 3 Essay Organizer: Writing About Barriers

Activity 3: Breaking Barriers Essay Organizer

Time: 45 minutes

Lesson Objective: Students will follow steps to prepare to write an essay about using values to overcome barriers.

LESSON STEPS

1. To reinforce concepts of barriers and values, as well as the history of Jackie Robinson, refer to previous lessons and reproducibles.

2. Distribute Reproducible 3: Breaking Barriers Essay Organizer. As a class, review the steps of the essay-writing process.

Step 1: Choose a topic. Ask students to identify a barrier they've faced and a value they've used to overcome the barrier. Remind students to be as specific as possible. Example: Saying you're afraid or too young is too general. Narrow the topic to "fear of failing" or "too young to be in Little League." Likewise, saying you used "courage" or "integrity" is too general. Discuss specifics of the value(s) used.

Step 2: Write your main ideas. Assign students to do a quick three-minute "freewrite" of a sentence or two for each of the writing prompts below:

- *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 similar to the barriers that Jackie Robinson faced? How was it different?*
- *What was the outcome of using your value(s)?*

Step 3: Create an outline. Explain to students that outlines help them organize their essays. Tell them that they can move items around or take them out as they create their outlines. Their goal should be to arrange their ideas in a logical way. Remind students that each main idea needs details to support it.

Step 4: Write topic sentences. Explain that in this step they will write topic sentences based on their outlines. Generally, each topic sentence begins a new paragraph. Supporting sentences follow and provide information to support the topic sentence.

3. Tell students that when they have completed their essays, they can submit their work to the **Breaking Barriers Essay Contest**. Distribute copies of the contest reproducible or direct students to scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/kids.

More resources at scholastic.com/breakingbarriers

- Additional Tools for Grades 4–8 • Grade 9 Lessons
- Spanish Program & Contest

About My Father

By Sharon Robinson

Author of *The Hero Two Doors Down* and *Promises to Keep*



Jackie and Rachel Robinson and their three children (left to right), 1956: David, Sharon, and Jackie Jr.

April 15 marks the anniversary of Jackie Robinson's breaking of the color barrier in Major League Baseball. A student once asked me: "What is the color barrier?" The color barrier refers to the time in U.S. history when black- and brown-skinned ballplayers were kept out of the Majors. In 1947, my father, Jackie Robinson, broke through that barrier. He made it easier for others to follow.

Fifty years later, the education program *Breaking Barriers: In Sports, In Life* was created to help diverse students of all backgrounds understand Jackie Robinson's accomplishments. By learning about his life, you'll come to understand the values that made my father successful on the field and that guided him as a parent. I hope you'll also discover strengths in your own character to help you overcome barriers in your life. Here is his story:

American baseball became popular during the Civil War. Briefly in the late 1800s, two black players, Bud Fowler and Moses Fleetwood Walker, played alongside white players. But by 1890, Major League Baseball, like most of the U.S., was "segregated." Black- and brown-skinned players were in the Negro Leagues. Whites played in the Majors.

In 1945, Branch Rickey wanted to break baseball's color barrier.

Rickey was the president and general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. He sent scouts to check out the Negro League players—many were well-known and highly

“Rickey hoped my father would have the strength of character to fight back with his bat and not his fist.”

skilled. Players such as Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson topped the list provided by Mr. Rickey's scouts. But they agreed on Jack Roosevelt Robinson.

The scouts told Mr. Rickey that during his season with the Negro League team the Kansas City Monarchs, Robinson played shortstop. He had a very high batting average of .387, honed his skill at stealing bases, and was chosen for the league's All-Star Game.

They presented his college statistics next. While at UCLA, he was the leading basketball scorer in his conference. He was also the national champion in the long jump, an All-American halfback in football, and a varsity baseball shortstop. In fact, he was the first athlete at UCLA to letter in four sports in a single year.

In a now-famous meeting, Mr. Rickey explained the rough conditions Robinson would likely face

in the Majors. Racist fans would shout angry insults. A spiteful opponent might spike him with metal cleats. Rickey hoped my father would have the strength of character to fight back with his bat and not his fist. He agreed to this plan. Two months later, he signed with the Montreal Royals, the Dodgers Minor League team.

Rickey was right: Jackie Robinson faced amazing odds. He fought back with perfectly timed bunts, hard line drives, and stolen bases. On April 15, 1947, he stepped onto the grass of Ebbets Field as a member of the

Brooklyn Dodgers. He went on to play 10 seasons and earned such awards as Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player.

It took 13 seasons before every Major League Baseball team had at least one black player. Today, things have changed. Major League Baseball players come from around the world. They break barriers of culture, language, race, identity, and religion. Like you, they meet challenges with the same set of values that helped my father succeed on and off the field. ♦

Jackie Robinson sliding into home, 1949



About My Father

By Sharon Robinson

Author of *The Hero Two Doors Down* and *Promises to Keep*



Jackie and Rachel Robinson and their three children (left to right), 1956: David, Sharon, and Jackie Jr.

April 15 marks the anniversary of Jackie Robinson's breaking of the color barrier in Major League Baseball. A student once asked me: "What is the color barrier?" The color barrier signifies the time in American history when black- and brown-skinned ballplayers were kept out of the Majors. In 1947, my father, Jackie Robinson, broke through that barrier and opened the door for others to follow.

Fifty years later, the education program *Breaking Barriers: In Sports, In Life* was created to help diverse students of all backgrounds understand Jackie Robinson's accomplishments. By learning about his life, you'll come to understand the values that made my father successful on the field and that guided him as a parent. I hope you'll also discover strengths in your own character to help you overcome barriers in your life. Here is his story:

American baseball became popular during the Civil War. Briefly in the late 1800s, two black players, Bud Fowler and Moses Fleetwood Walker, played alongside white players. But by 1890, Major League Baseball, like most of America, was "segregated." Until 1947, black- and brown-skinned players were in the Negro Leagues, while whites played in the Majors.

In 1945, Branch Rickey, president and general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, stepped

forward to break baseball's color barrier. He studied the field, using scouts to explore the pool of players. There were many Negro League players who were well-

“Rickey was testing whether my father would have the strength of character to fight back with his bat rather than his fist.”

known and proven professional baseball players. Players such as Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson certainly headed the list provided by Mr. Rickey's scouts, but they agreed on Jack Roosevelt Robinson.

The scouts told Mr. Rickey that during his season with the Negro League team the Kansas City Monarchs, Jackie Robinson played shortstop. He hit .387, perfected his skill at stealing bases, and was selected for the league's All-Star Game.

They presented his college statistics next. Rickey learned that while at UCLA, Robinson was the leading basketball scorer in his conference, the national champion in the long jump, an All-American halfback in football, and a varsity baseball shortstop. In fact, he was the first athlete at UCLA to letter in four sports in a single year.

In a now-famous meeting, Mr. Rickey painted the stressful

conditions Robinson would likely face in the Majors. Rickey role-played a racist fan shouting angry insults. A spiteful opponent might spike him with metal cleats. Rickey was testing whether my father would have the strength of character to fight back with his bat rather than his fist. He convinced Rickey that he would. Two months later, he signed with the Montreal Royals, the Dodgers Minor League team.

As predicted, Jackie Robinson played baseball against amazing odds. He fought back with perfectly timed bunts, hard line drives, and

stolen bases. On April 15, 1947, he stepped onto the grass of Ebbets Field as a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers. He went on to play 10 seasons, earning such awards as Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player.

It took 13 long seasons before every Major League Baseball team had at least one black player on its roster. Today, Major League Baseball players come from around the world and continue to break barriers of culture, language, race, identity, and religion. Like you, they face barriers and meet challenges with the same set of values that helped my father succeed on and off the field. ♦

Jackie Robinson sliding into home, 1949



Values and Barriers



George Springer,
Houston Astros

Read how Astros superstar **George Springer** conquered a stutter to find his voice.

Center fielder and power hitter George Springer definitely makes baseball look easy (he was named the 2017 World Series Most Valuable Player!). Despite his athletic skills, the Houston Astros player had to overcome a major barrier as a child. He had a severe stutter that made him so self-conscious, he was afraid to speak in class. Today he's committed to helping kids who stutter by talking openly about his own experiences.

How did having a stutter as a kid make you feel?

When I was at school, having a stutter meant that I didn't want to participate in class. It was tough because I felt I knew the answers, but I just didn't want to participate.

When did you start to overcome your stutter?

I transferred from a large high school to a smaller school where I was forced to be active and wasn't able to hide behind a class of 30 or 35 kids. I had to participate and say the answers, no matter what. On top of it, I was fortunate enough to be around people who didn't think anything of it. They judged me for who I was—not for what made me different.

“If you work toward a common goal no matter what...that is what sports is about and what life is about.”

Why is Jackie Robinson an important role model for you?

Jackie Robinson is the model for courage, strength...I could go on. He endured pain and suffering but was able to overcome it and engage in a time when you weren't encouraged to do that. He not only broke the color barrier but he started a movement in America to get things going in the right direction and make everyone equal.

Which of Jackie Robinson's values do you use as a professional baseball player, or in other areas of your life?

Persistence defines me. If you work toward a common goal no matter what, getting through things, obstacles—whatever it may be—that is what sports is about and what life is about. ♦

KEY TERMS

> **VALUE** A belief that is important to you and helps to guide your life

> **BARRIER** A challenge or obstacle that makes it difficult for you to move forward

JACKIE ROBINSON'S NINE VALUES



CITIZENSHIP

Making a contribution that improves the lives of others

COMMITMENT

Making a promise and following through on it

COURAGE

Doing what you know is the right thing even when it is hard to do

DETERMINATION

Staying focused on a plan even though the path to its end may be difficult

EXCELLENCE

Doing the best that you possibly can

INTEGRITY

Sticking to your values, regardless of what others think you should do

JUSTICE

Treating all people fairly, no matter who they are

PERSISTENCE

Working toward a goal and continuing to move forward even though you face obstacles or barriers

TEAMWORK

Working with other people toward a common goal

Cut out your own Jackie Robinson's Nine Values bookmark.



Breaking Barriers Essay Organizer



In baseball, you have to follow bases as you run. Likewise, when you write an essay, each step is important to make sure what you write is effective. Follow these four steps to make sure you're off to a good start.

Start Here

1 CHOOSE YOUR TOPIC

Brainstorm some ideas of barriers in your life. Choose one that you overcame, or are overcoming, by using one of Jackie Robinson's Nine Values.

HOME
PLATE

4 WRITE YOUR TOPIC SENTENCES

Use the details from your outline to help you. Try writing practice sentences to get to the topic sentence you want. Now you're ready to **begin writing your essay!**

FIRST
BASE

THIRD
BASE

2 WRITE OUT YOUR MAIN IDEAS

Make sure they relate to your topic.

SECOND
BASE

3 CREATE AN OUTLINE

Remember that each main idea needs details to support it. Use the outline to help keep you on track as you write your essay.



Enter the 2019 Contest! Each year, April 15 marks the anniversary of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in baseball in 1947. Honoring this important event, the Breaking Barriers Essay Contest is a chance for students in grades 4–9 to share their personal stories and how they use Jackie Robinson's Nine Values to face their own barriers.

For information on how to submit your essay, ask your teacher or visit scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/kids.

Jackie Robinson's Nine Values

Citizenship • Commitment • Courage • Determination • Excellence • Integrity • Justice • Persistence • Teamwork



2019 Breaking Barriers Essay Contest



Write About a Barrier You Have Faced DEADLINE: MARCH 14, 2019

Each year, April 15 marks the anniversary of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier in baseball in 1947. Honoring this important event, the **Breaking Barriers Essay Contest** is a chance for diverse students of all backgrounds in grades 4–9 to share their personal stories about how they use Jackie Robinson's Nine Values to face their own barriers.

How to Enter/Eligibility Requirements

1. Write an essay about a barrier that you have faced. Explain how you used one or more of Jackie Robinson's Nine Values (listed below) to face your barrier.

- Citizenship
- Commitment
- Courage
- Determination
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Justice
- Persistence
- Teamwork

2. Include the following information on your essay:

- your name
- school name
- your grade
- school city and state
- teacher's name

3. Submit your essay in one of several ways:

Mail

Breaking Barriers Contest
Scholastic Inc.
P.O. Box 713
New York, NY
10013-0713

Online

Grades 4–8: Give your entry to your teacher to enter online
Grade 9: Enter at scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/kids/grade9

Email

Teachers (grades 4–8) and grade 9 students may email entries to breakingbarriers@scholastic.com

• Entries must be postmarked (mail) or submitted (online/email) by **March 14, 2019**.

• Essays must be factual and based on your real-life experiences. Fictional stories will be disqualified.

• Word count requirements:

Grades 4–6: 200 to 750 words **Grades 7–9:** 500 to 1,400 words

Essays will be evaluated according to these criteria:

- How well does the essay express the student's barrier?
- How well does the essay express how one or more of the values—*citizenship, commitment, courage, determination, excellence, integrity, justice, persistence, and teamwork*—are used to face and/or overcome the barrier?
- How well is the essay organized to express what the writer wants to say?
- How effective is the essay in expressing the writer's point of view?
- How well does the essay incorporate an example of Jackie Robinson's values?

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Void where prohibited. All students who are legal residents of, and currently reside in, the U.S., D.C., Puerto Rico, and Canada (excluding Quebec) and who are currently enrolled in grades 4–9 are eligible to enter, except for those who have family members employed by Major League Baseball Properties, Inc., Scholastic Inc., and other related companies (see the Official Rules for a complete listing). **Entries accepted in English or Spanish.** Visit scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/officialrules for complete Official Rules and restrictions. All prospective winners and their respective parents/legal guardians will be required to sign, notarize, and return an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability within ten (10) days of date of notification or an alternate winner may be selected. In the event of prize unavailability, a prize of equal or greater value will be awarded as determined by the sole discretion of MLB. No cash substitutions for prizes. Prizes are nontransferable. ERV of Prizes: Grand Prize (\$7,659.70); MVP (\$3,359.70).

10 National Winners

Two (2) Grand Prize Winners

- **Grades 4–6:** Trip to the 2019 MLB All-Star Game
- **Grades 7–9:** Trip to a game of the 2019 MLB World Series
- Student and teacher laptops
- Class visit from Sharon Robinson, daughter of Jackie Robinson

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Eight (8) MVP Winners

- Student and teacher laptops

.....

All 10 winners also receive a class set of books by Sharon Robinson and a class set of T-shirts.

For Spanish, visit scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/kids

BREAK YOUR BARRIERS

WITH JACKIE'S VALUES

Jackie Robinson,
Brooklyn Dodgers

- CITIZENSHIP
- COMMITMENT
- COURAGE
- DETERMINATION
- EXCELLENCE
- INTEGRITY
- JUSTICE
- PERSISTENCE
- TEAMWORK



2019 ESSAY CONTEST

Write about a barrier you have faced. Explain how you used one or more of Jackie Robinson's nine values to face your barrier.

Ask your teacher or visit
[scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/kids](https://www.scholastic.com/breakingbarriers/kids)
for entry information.

Grades 4–9 • Great prizes • Deadline: March 14, 2019

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Void where prohibited.



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For more information on Breaking Barriers, visit
[MLB.com/BREAKINGBARRIERS](https://www.mlb.com/breakingbarriers)