
DINOSAUR BOB AND HIS ADVENTURES WITH THE FAMILY LAZARDO

Author: William Joyce

Publisher: HarperCollins

THEME:

All across America, spring means the return of something we all love—baseball.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

The feature book is about a family that goes on a family vacation and finds a dinosaur they name Bob. The family brings Bob back home where he becomes the talk of the town when it is discovered that he plays baseball.

LeVar and viewers join the Oakland Athletics during spring training in Arizona. Professionals give LeVar tips for improving his skill in baseball, and then viewers are off to the stadium to watch fans and the game.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

The more players practice the skills of baseball, such as batting, catching and throwing the ball, fielding, etc., the better they become at playing the game. Discuss other activities in which practice improves performance.

When Dinosaur Bob first came home with the Lazardos, everyone was pleased with such a wonderful pet. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having a pet like Dinosaur Bob in one's home.

Invite students to imagine Dinosaur Bob playing other sports or games besides baseball. What would be the advantages of having him as a member of the team?

Dinosaur Bob was named after Scotty's great uncle Bob. Ask students if they have ever named a pet after a real person and why they chose that name. Have students find out why their parents chose their names. Were any of them named after family members?

CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Invite a baseball player (high school or college) into the classroom to demonstrate aspects of the game and offer tips for improving performance. Move the demonstration to the gym or outside so that students can try out the expert's tips.

Revisit segments of the video program and allow students to practice some of the tips that players from the Oakland A's give LeVar.

Have students conduct a survey of favorite ballpark snacks (within the classroom or involving other classrooms for a larger survey). Make a graph of the data collected.

Have students write a newspaper story of the baseball game in the story. Look at examples of sports articles and discuss the types of information that appear first and the details that are included. While some students are writing the sports article, others might plan and perform a radio play-by-play of the game. Still others might be TV sports reporters who cover the game and interview the Lazardos, other team members, the mayor of Pimlico Hills, and other townspeople.

Brainstorm a list of the baseball words that are used in the program. Add other baseball vocabulary familiar to students to the list. (This list might even include names of professional baseball teams and players.) Have students make a baseball dictionary, in which they define and illustrate the terms.

Invite students to write and illustrate additional adventures for Dinosaur Bob and the Lazardo family. Bind these stories into individual books or make a chapter book of their adventures.

When Dinosaur Bob arrived home with the Lazardos, the newspaper headline read "Lengthy Lizard Lands With Lazardos." Have students create other alliterative phrases. Begin with phrases that fit the story, such as "Bob Bats Best" or "Family Finds Friend," and then move to longer phrases ("Pimlico Pirates' Prehistoric Pal") and other stories or situations as students become familiar with alliteration.

A baseball playing field is called a "diamond." Have students look at the shape of the field and describe it. What shape name would they call it? Discuss how a diamond shape is different from a square or a rectangle. Brainstorm a list of things that have a diamond shape.

Use a baseball bat as an alternative unit of measurement and pose some estimation problems for students. For example, have them estimate the length of the classroom or hallway in baseball bats, or have them find items at school that are about the same length as a bat. After they have estimated, have them take actual measurements to verify their estimates.

One of the review books for this program is the classic story poem, "Casey at the Bat." Several artists have illustrated picture book versions of this poem. Obtain some of these books and discuss the different interpretations of the poem based on the illustrations. Students will likely notice that some are humorous while others are serious; and some are historical, while others are more contemporary.

RELATED THEMES:

dinosaurs
sports
pets

RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #6 — Digging Up Dinosaurs
Program #65 — Sports Pages

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

William Joyce gives the credit for the eccentric characterizations and unconventional situations in his books to his slightly offbeat family and early devotion to TV programs and movies that “gave me worlds filled with heroes, monsters, and adventures too good to be true.” He is the author/illustrator of *George Shrinks* and the illustrator of *Shoes* by Elizabeth Winthrop, both *Reading Rainbow* review books.

BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:

CASEY AT THE BAT
by Ernest Lawrence Thayer, illus. by Ken Bachaus (Raintree/Steck-Vaughn)

OLD TURTLE’S BASEBALL STORIES
by Leonard Kessler (William Morrow)

RONALD MORGAN GOES TO BAT
by Patricia Reilly Giff, illus. by Susanna Natti (Viking)

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

MY DAD’S BASEBALL
by Ron Cohen (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

FRANK AND ERNEST PLAY BALL
by Alexandra Day (Scholastic)

TEAMMATES
by Peter Golenbock, illus. by Paul Bacon (Harcourt Brace)

THE WORLD OF WILLIAM JOYCE: SCRAPBOOK
by William Joyce, photos by Philip Gould (HarperCollins)

BATS ABOUT BASEBALL
by Jean Little & Claire McKay, illus. by Kim LaFave (Viking)

AT THE CRACK OF THE BAT
by Lillian Morrison, illus. by Steve Cieslawski (Hyperion)

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME
by Jack Norworth, illus. by Alec Gillman (Four Winds)

HOW GEORGIE RADBOURN SAVED BASEBALL
by David Shannon (Scholastic/Blue Sky)

THE FIELD BEYOND THE OUTFIELD
by Mark Teague (Scholastic)

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BAT AND BALL FACTORY
by Peggy Thomson, illus. by Gloria Kamen (Albert Whitman)

PLAYING RIGHT FIELD
by Willy Welch, illus. by Marc Simont (Scholastic)

A GAME OF CATCH
by Richard Wilbur, illus. by Barry Moser (Harcourt Brace)

**NOTES....****READING RAINBOW TEACHER’S GUIDE**

Program #60 — Dinosaur Bob and his Adventruers with the Family Lazardo