



Picture Books for Baseball Lovers by Alene Vienneau

Do you have a boy or girl who loves baseball? Here's a list of picture books and elementary titles that might hit the sweet spot when it comes to getting your baseball-loving kids to read during the spring and summer.

Story Books

***Little Teammate* by Alan Williams (ages 2 to 7)**

Foster a love of playing the game with this gentle picture book of a young child and his dad and his first baseball game.

***Clorinda Plays Baseball* by Robert Kinerk (ages 3 to 7)**

You'll find classic Clorinda antics here, featuring rhyming text and colorful illustrations by Steven Kellogg.

***Elly and the Smelly Sneaker: A Riches to Rags Story* by Leslie Gorin (ages 3 to 7)**

In this anti-Cinderella tale, Elly is pampered and spoiled, yet all she wants to do is trade in her glass slippers for baseball cleats. When she finally gets her wish, how long will her Fairy Godfather allow her to play?

***I Got It!* by David Wiesner (ages 3 to 7)**

Wiesner is famous for his wordless (or nearly wordless) books with amazing illustrations that tell a rich story. This story of a boy who is sent to the outfield when he joins a pick-up game is full of humor. It's up to the reader to see the action and add the sound effects!

***Goodnight Baseball* by Michael Dahl (ages 4 to 7)**

Rhyming text is perfect for bedtime stories with a nod near the end to *Goodnight Moon*. This story celebrates the tradition of spending a day at a major league game.

***Max* by Rachel Isadora (ages 4 to 8)**

Max watches his sister's ballet lesson before he can go to his baseball game and realizes that ballet is a perfect warm-up before he plays ball.

***Dino Baseball* by Lisa Wheeler (ages 5 to 9)**

Another addition to the Dino Sports series, the Green Sox herbivores face off against the Rib-Eye Reds carnivores.

Historical Books

***Jackie Robinson* by Emma Haldy (ages 3 to 6)**

Part of the My Itty Bitty Bio series, this is a beginning reader with black and white photos, simple sentences, and large print text, told in first person as if Jackie Robinson is telling the story.

***Baseball Bats for Christmas* by Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak (ages 4 to 8)**

The award-winning Inuit storyteller Kusugak recounts the time a bush pilot delivering supplies to their village in the middle of the Arctic Circle drops Christmas trees. But when the village kids get desperate to play baseball, they repurpose the trees in a creative way.

***The Kid from Diamond Street: The Extraordinary Story of Baseball Legend Edith Houghton* by Audrey Vernick (ages 4 to 8)**

1922 was the year that Edith Houghton turned ten, and joined a semi-pro team made up of teenage girls. “The Kid” became famous and made the newspapers for her amazing talent and ability to keep up with players twice her age.

***A Picture Book of Jackie Robinson* by David Adler (ages 4 to 8)**

This book is an engaging way for kids to learn about Jackie Robinson, the first African American player in the major league.

***The United States v. Jackie Robinson* by Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen (ages 4 to 8)**

Before Jackie Robinson was a major league baseball star, he was in the Army during World War II. This picture book chronicles an incident in which Jackie Robinson stood up to illegal segregation during his time as a soldier.

***Waiting for Pumpsie* by Barry Wittenstein (ages 5 to 8)**

In 1959, Ted Williams’ teammate, Pumpsie Green, was the first African-American player on the Red Sox, the last MLB team to integrate. Read Pumpsie’s story from the point of view of a young fan, who finally gets to see a ballplayer who looks like him.

***Anybody's Game: Kathryn Johnston, the First Girl to Play Little League Baseball* by Heather Lang (ages 5 to 9)**

It was 1950, and girls did *not* play baseball. Until Kathryn Johnston, a better player than most of the boys in her town, snipped off her braids and tried out for Little League!

***No Easy Way: The Story of Ted Williams and the Last .400 Season* by Fred Bowen (ages 5 to 9)**

This book documents 1941, the year when Ted Williams batted .400 for the entire season. You'll love the vintage, detailed illustrations.

***The Spy Who Played Baseball* by Carrie Jones (ages 5 to 9)**

Moe Berg was a major league baseball player . . . and a spy for the U.S. government during World War II.

***Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream* by Crystal Hubbard (ages 5 to 10)**

In the 1930s, little Marcenia Lyle loved baseball and dreamed of being a professional ballplayer. Read how she earns a place at a baseball summer camp which starts her on the path to follow her dream.

***The Funniest Man in Baseball: The True Story of Max Patkin* by Audrey Vernick (ages 6 to 9)**

A chronicle of how Max Patkin bounced back from injuries to become the classic "clown-coach" that entertained teams and fans in the early part of the 20th century.

***Yogi: the Life, Loves, and Language of Yogi Berra* by Barb Rosenstock (ages 7 to 10)**

"You can observe a lot by watching." "Ninety percent of the game is half mental." You can tell a Yogi Berra quote a mile away. Yogi loved baseball, but baseball's coaches, fans, and teammates didn't always love him back. His story is a model of determination in the face of obstacles.

***Calling His Shot: Babe Ruth's Legendary Home Run* by Brandon Terrell (ages 8 to 14)**

This graphic novel recounts Game 3 in the historic 1932 World Series including the controversy surrounding Babe Ruth's iconic home run.

STEM Books

***My First Book of Baseball* by Beth Bugler and Mark Bechtel (ages 3 to 6)**

Using cartoons and photos of current ballplayers, this book teaches the basics of baseball: how the game is played and all the vocabulary a young player will need to know.

***Baseball* by Julie Murray (ages 4 to 7)**

Full color photography featuring kids, large print text, and simple vocabulary make this book a great way to help younger children to learn how to play.

***Baseball* by Mari Schuh (ages 4 to 7)**

A Spot Sports series book, young sports fans will enjoy the use of full color photography, large text, and simple vocabulary to teach basic baseball terms in a beginning reader book.

***Let's Play Baseball* by Susan Blackaby (ages 5 to 8)**

This is the perfect book to help your kids get ready for their first baseball practice with helpful diagrams and definitions plus relatable photographs of young children taking the field.

***Baseball: Then to Wow!* by the Editors of Sports Illustrated Kids (ages 6 to 14)**

This book is a historical compendium of baseball players, equipment, strategy, rules, hotdogs, baseball cards and video games. Kids will see the game from its beginnings and observe how technology and culture have shaped the game.

***STEM in Baseball* by Marne Ventura (ages 8 to 12)**

Learn how players, coaches, managers, and equipment innovators use science, technology, engineering, and math to compete at the highest level in baseball. If your child likes this title, be sure to check out the whole STEM in Sports series.

***Make Me the Best Baseball Player* by Todd Kortenmeier (ages 8 to 12)**

This very practical book gives career history and stats for the best modern players in six baseball positions, lists four training tips to help young players compete, and finally describes one step-by-step drill for each position so that young players can improve.

***What Does a Catcher Do?* by Paul Challen (ages 8 to 12)**

In the Baseball Smarts series, these books include full color photography, large print text, to introduce young readers to each position in baseball. The series includes volumes on Infielder, Outfielder, and Pitcher.

***Wacky Baseball Trivia: Fun Facts for Every Fan* by Matt Chandler (ages 9 to 14)**

Kids that delight in little known facts are sure to enjoy this laugh-out-loud book of goofy baseball stories.

Early and Elementary Readers

***Ballpark Mysteries Series* by David A. Kelly (ages 6 to 9)**

In this multi-volume set of readers, cousins Mike and Kate solve mysteries in major baseball parks across the United States.

***Mice At Bat*, Kelly Oeschli (ages 4 to 8)**

The Mighty Mice are holding their own until their opponents bring out their pinch hitter, Big Jax. Little does the intimidating rat know that the mice have a secret weapon of their own.

***A Big Day for Baseball* by Mary Pope Osborne (ages 6 to 9)**

Magical baseball caps whisk Jack and Annie back in time to Jackie Robinson's first day as #42, playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers, in the beloved Magic Treehouse series.

Middle School Chapter books

***Step Up to the Plate, Maria Singh* by Uma Krishnaswami (ages 9 to 12)**

In 1945 Maria Singh is 9 years old and joins her school's first ever girls' softball team. Because her parents are from India and Mexico, her family experiences prejudice and discriminatory laws as they try to hold onto the family farm.

***42 Is Not Just a Number: The Odyssey of Jackie Robinson, American Hero* by Doreen Rappaport (ages 8 to 12)**

This absorbing biography tells the story of Jackie Robinson, from his childhood through his time in the United States Army, stint in the Negro League and his entrance into Major League Baseball.