

Title: Mighty Jackie: The Strike-out Queen

Bibliographic Info: by Marissa Moss. Illustrated by C.F. Payne. Published by Simon & Schuster ISBN 0689863292

Synopsis: From the time Jackie Mitchell was eight years old, her father told her she could be good at whatever she worked at. Jackie worked hard at baseball. Jackie could outplay anyone in her neighborhood. She was even better than boys! It was unthinkable that a seventeen-year-old girl could pitch against great players like Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. The New York Yankees stopped in Tennessee for an exhibition game in 1931 against the Chattanooga Lookouts, and on that day, April 2, Jackie Mitchell made baseball history. This book should inspire ballplayers of all ages.

Themes: Baseball, Historic Events, Gender Roles.

Author information: Marissa was given her first illustrating job when she was a high school student. Her most famous character to date is probably, Amelia, and her notebook series. Marissa has several “Journal” type works that delve into history. She also has two other books about women with unconventional occupations: Brave Harriet (the first woman to fly across the English Channel), and True Heart (a woman who loads freight on a train at the turn of the century, and later becomes an engineer). Moss has three sons, Simon, Elias, and Asa. Her husband is an art history professor and she says she has been writing stories and drawing pictures to go with them for as long as she can remember. Visit her homepage at www.marissamoss.com.

Activities:

Baseball game of course: Make cards with questions fitting the standard (whether it be vocabulary words, phonemic sounds, etc.) and divide the class into two teams. The first player draws a card. If the answer is correct they advance to a base, if incorrect the team receives a strike. When the team receives three strikes, the next team is up to “bat” and play continues. The other obvious idea is to make Journals from the characters point of view. There is also the Gender role issue and the time line of what was happening in 1931. Make a baseball trading card with your personal information, statistics, and what you are best at. Then share the cards with your classmates.

Discussion questions:

How are you and Jackie alike? How are you different?

Would a young girl striking out a famous man baseball player be amazing today? Why or Why not?

What other stories and characters does the story of Jackie make you think of?