Casey at the Bat
by Ernest Lawrence Thayer

6th Grade
A Comprehensive CCSS-Aligned Unit

Short Story of the Month
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Use</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Activities, Difficulty Levels, and <strong>Common Core Alignment</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Components/Google Classroom Guide</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Guide, Rationale, Lesson Plans, and Procedures: EVERYTHING</td>
<td>6-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1: Figurative Language Review Quick Notes</td>
<td>12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4: Close Read Teacher Guide w/Question &amp; Answer Script</td>
<td>14-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 5: Basic Comprehension Quiz (Recall Facts and Details) w Key</strong></td>
<td>23-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 6: Plot Pyramid Organizer w/Key</td>
<td>25-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 7: Poetry Sounds &amp; Rhyme Quick Notes</td>
<td>27-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 8: Poetry Rhyme Scheme INB Lesson</td>
<td>29-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 10: Annotation Guide (Casey) Sound Devices w/Annotation Key</td>
<td>32-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 11: Evaluate Sound Devices in Poetry w/Key</td>
<td>35-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 12: Theme Development &amp; Text Evidence in Casey w/Key</td>
<td>37-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 13: Theme Development in Fable – Compare/Contrast to Casey w/Key</td>
<td>39-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 14: Text Evidence Match-Up Activity w/Key</td>
<td>41-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 15: Elements of Poetry Quiz w/Key</strong></td>
<td>43-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 16: Comprehension Skills Test w/Key</td>
<td>45-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 17: Compare &amp; Contrast Movie Short w/Key</td>
<td>51-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 19: Analyze Paired Poem: “That’s the Way Baseball Go” w/Key</td>
<td>55-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 20: Essential Question w/Key</td>
<td>57-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEKS Alignment</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Activities, Difficulty Levels, and Common Core Alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Difficulty Level</th>
<th>Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1: Figurative Language Review Quick Notes**</td>
<td><strong>Easy</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2: Figurative Language Annotating Practice***</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3: Journal Prompt/Discussion*</td>
<td><em>Easy</em>*</td>
<td>SL.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4: Close Read Teacher Guide w/Script***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5, RL.6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 5: Comprehension Quiz</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 6: Plot Pyramid Analysis**</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 7: Poetry Sounds &amp; Rhyme Quick Notes**</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 8: Poetry Rhyme Scheme INB Lesson***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 9: Poetry Sound &amp; Rhyme Practice**</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 10: Annotation Guide (Casey) Sound Devices**</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 11: Evaluate Sound Devices in Poetry***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 12: Theme Dev &amp; Text Evidence in Casey***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.5, RL.6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 13: Theme Dev in Fable – Compare to Poem***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.5, RL.6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 14: Text Evidence Match-Up Activity***</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 15: Elements of Poetry Quiz***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 16: Comprehension Skills Test</strong></td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.3, 6.4, 6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 17: Compare &amp; Contrast Movie Short**</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.7, RL.6.5, RL.6.2, RL.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 18: Discussion Qs Sequel – Casey Bats Again</td>
<td><em>Easy</em>*</td>
<td>SL.6.1, RL.6.5, RL.6.2, RL.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 19: Analyze “That’s the Way Baseball Go”**</td>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.1, RL.6.4, RL.6.5, RL.6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 20: Essential Question***</td>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>RL.6.9, RL.6.1, RL.6.5, RL.6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Short Story of the Month

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Instructions for Google Classroom Digital Components

All student activities are available in digital format compatible with Google Classroom. They are available in two formats: Google Slides and Google Forms.

Google Slides
First, I have made all student pages (excluding assessments) in Google Slides format. Students can simply add text boxes to any area they wish to type on. To access the Google Slides for *Casey at the Bat*, copy and paste the link below into your browser. only available in full resource

Google Forms
I have made the assessments available in Google Forms. Here, they are self-grading, and I have set them all up with answer keys so they are ready to go for you. You’ll need to find these two files in your download folder to use Google Forms. The first file contains the links to the Forms, and the second file is explicit instructions for use. Look inside the Google Forms folder.
Teaching Guide, Rationale, Lesson Plans, and Procedures

I have also discussed here how I use each activity and included hints and links to help you, too. I went ahead and mapped out the days for you. Feel free to take or leave what you like. Even if you don’t plan to follow this schedule, I still recommend reading through this section to get the most out of these activities.

These lessons and activities were designed to meet the needs of sixth graders during the second half of the school year when students have already been introduced to most major concepts like plot, conflict, character traits and characterization, theme, mood, tone, etc.

Day 1

1. **Activity 1: 25 minutes**
   Mini-lesson on Figurative Language with Quick Notes – review by having your students fill out these pages if they don’t already have something to review in their notebooks.

2. **Activity 2: 30 minutes**
   Annotate Figurative Language – Here’s a story for your students to practice annotating before they look for these things in poetry.

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Short Story of the Month

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Day 2

1. **Activity 3: 10 minutes**

2. **Activity 4: 60 minutes**
   Close Read/Annotate Casey at the Bat
   I’ve included multiple layout formats of this poem as well as the options for using them and which pages to print out for your students depending on the option you choose. See the first three pages of this activity for those explicit instructions.

   **I have found that this poem has minor differences depending on the source, so for the sake of the activities here I recommend that you use the included version.**

   For the FIRST close read and annotation of this poem, you’ll be focusing ONLY on comprehension and interpreting figurative language. You’ll come back and annotate sound devices in Activity 10. I have gone through and literally made you a script for teaching this poem that includes questions (blue) and answers you should expect (red) and my remarks to you are in black. I’ve also included within this guide a plot summary for each stanza and a written purpose (from a plot development perspective, RL.6.5) for each stanza. See complete instructions within this activity.

   **Narrative Summary** – Students use bottom box to write a brief bulleted plot summary and on top of the tab write the purpose of each stanza. Ask this question: What does the author accomplish in this stanza, from a narrative perspective? Major common core skill right here.
Day 3

1. **Activity 5: 20 minutes**
   **Comprehension Quiz** – Basic Comprehension (Recall Facts)
   This quiz checks for basic comprehension and recall of the story. There are no higher order thinking questions on this quiz, no inferring, no analyzing, no drawing conclusions, etc. so I do not recommend that students use a copy of the story for this quiz unless they need that as a testing accommodation.
   Answer key included, not shown.

2. **Activity 6: 30 minutes**
   Second Read: Plot Development
   Read the poem again and diagram the plot with the plot pyramid. This one is super important for students to realize that a narrative poem really does have all of these elements and therefore can be plotted and analyzed from a plot perspective just like a short story can.

Day 4

1. **Activity 7: 20 minutes**
   Sound Devices + Rhymes Quick Notes Lesson
   Review these important poetry concepts with this combination Quick Notes lesson. If you did the Rikki-tikki-tavi story unit, you may have already done these as two separate lessons. Either way, it’s a good review.

2. **Activity 8: 15 minutes**
   Rhyme Scheme Quick Notes – simple but important – discuss or review how rhyme schemes are identified and annotated in this unit.

3. **Activity 9: 25 minutes**
   Excellent Poetry Sound & Rhymes Practice, specifically preparing them for the annotating we’ll be doing and the types of questions they’ll be seeing. Don’t skip this one, especially if you’re going to give the Elements of Poetry Quiz for Casey at the Bat at the end of this unit. If you’re looking for more poetry practice or activities similar to these, check out my Poetry Worksheets & Tests Printables on TpT.
Day 5

1. **Activity 10: 35 minutes**
   Third read – Close reading/annotation guide for sound devices. See my annotated poem for a “key” – Start by annotating the first four stanzas with your students. Follow my guide and key. Then, give your students the provided checklist and put them in groups or partners and have them do the rest themselves.

2. **Activity 11: 25 minutes**
   Evaluate Sound Devices in Poetry – Keep your students in pairs or groups for this activity, because it’s super hard and two heads are better than one. Students will evaluate the effect of the sound devices on poetry. Big Common Core stuff here, so don’t skip it. Regroup and discuss.

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Day 6

1. **Activity 12: 30 minutes**
   Theme Development + Text Evidence in Casey – Here students evaluate text evidence and then use that to answer essay question writing prompt requiring text evidence. Discuss this with students ahead of time, then allow them to express what you’ve discussed appropriately in writing. Good test practice exercise.

2. **Activity 13: 30 minutes**
   Here, students read fable (The Hare & the Tortoise) with the same theme (lesson on arrogance) and evaluate how it is developed in the fable. Another biggie for Common Core RL.6.9.
Day 7

1. **Activity 14: 25 minutes**
   Text Evidence Match-Up Activity – This method is a great way to warm students up for those text evidence questions on standardized test – they can practice the method of reading several pieces of evidence and determining which ones meet the criteria they’re looking for. Key included, not shown.

2. **Activity 15: 35 minutes**
   Poetry Elements Quiz – This one is also over “Casey at the Bat,” but I really wanted to assess students’ understanding of poetry elements, so instead of making an extra-long test, I made this one separate. Students should have a copy of the poem in front of them for the quiz. Everything on the quiz has been covered in this unit, as is usual for Comprehension Skills Tests. Key included, not shown.

Day 8

1. **Activity 16: Comprehension Skills Test**
   Comprehension Analysis Test
   This comprehension test is designed to be taken with access to the story. You may choose to give your students a non-annotated version of the story. Allowing use of the version a student annotated may be a testing accommodation. I always let my students use the story here because I want to know if they can analyze a story, not memorize or recall details from it (we did that for the basic quiz).
   Answer key included but not shown here.
Day 9

1. Activity 17: 30-50 minutes
   View the Casey at the Bat Disney Short and compare it to the poem – major CCSS stuff here with RL.6.7 and questions are aligned to standard.
   Casey at the Bat Disney Short on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erfSed2MUsA
   Backup Download Link: https://goo.gl/2HVg2j

2. Activity 18: 20-30 minutes
   Casey Bats Again
   Always preview video first – Students analyze this sequel with questions for discussion in groups or whole class:
   What do you think the sequel will be about?
   Why do you think they repeated the end of the poem at the beginning of the sequel?
   Did Casey learn his lesson about not being arrogant?
   Explain.
   Think about rhythm/rhyme/structure. Does the sequel remain consistent with the poem?
   How was the end predictable?
   Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aq9ur0VfVn0
   Backup Download Link: https://goo.gl/UgdjML

Day 10

1. Activity 19: 35 minutes
   That’s the Way Baseball Go Lyrics: https://goo.gl/hN3t7g
   Paired Poem – SO I just LOVE this paired text. This song was written by fans after the Texas Rangers lost the World Series. The bad grammar is an intentional nod to their coach. Read more here: http://www.espn.com/espn/page2/index/_/id/6850759
   That’s the Way Baseball Go song: https://goo.gl/FB6cZu

2. Activity 20: 35 minutes
   Essential Question. Tie it all together. The big SHE-BANG. Boom-shakalaka. Hard stuff. Good luck. This one gives students the opportunity to synthesize information from various sources, consider deeply, and answer a really hard question. I include this activity with each unit, but this one is a little bit more personal for each student and I’d be more flexible with acceptable answers on this one, too.
How to Ready Tab Templates for Annotating In Notebook

Here are three options, along with which pages you’ll need to print from the “Casey Text” PDF file in the download folder.

Option 1 – (Recommended) Interactive Notebook

Glue the poetry lyrics on the left hand side and the blank boxes for writing summaries on the right hand facing side. Then, glue the tabs on top so that they swing open to the outside, not the inside, as shown. Note that you do not have to cut out each individual tab – they are pre-spaced for you, so you can cut around the group of 4 or 5 and glue them all at once as shown below.

For this option, you’ll need to print one copy per student of pages 3-7 from the Casey Text PDF file. Note that pre-filled templates are included at the end if you need them, and you can save some paper by printing only one of page 7 for two students to share, as students only need one of the columns of tabs.

Print pages 3-7 as shown.
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Close Reading Question & Answer Flow

Here’s how this section will work. If I’m talking to you, I’ll leave the text black. For the question and answer flow, the questions (and everything you’ll say aloud to your students) will be in blue and the answers you’ll expect in red. You’ll see the text annotations on the left and the summary to write in on the right. As you read each stanza, encourage students to underline words and phrases they do not understand or that are unclear so that you can discuss/clarify/analyze them. I recommend having already glued templates to the notebook pages before you begin. Follow the directions that precede this guide.

Stanza 1
Read the stanza aloud to your students. Then ask them-
Describe the setting of this poem. It’s a baseball game in Mudville, and it’s the final inning.
What is the score? 4-2.
Is Mudville winning or losing? Losing. How do you know? “The outlook wasn’t brilliant.”
Let’s look at line 3… it says “Cooney died at first”… what does that mean? Did a player die on first base?
No, that would be a huge deal if that happened!
So, this is figurative language! What does it mean?
It must mean that Cooney didn’t make it to first base, so the team got an out.
What about Burrows? He did the same, so the team has two outs. Only one left!
So what type of figurative language is this? It’s a hyperbole, because he doesn’t actually die, that’s an exaggeration.
Here I’ll highlight the figurative language in yellow, and then make a key somewhere on the page by writing the word hyperbole in pencil/pen and highlighting it with yellow. See the key in the instructions that precede this page. I won’t go over the key again.
Let’s look at line 4… a sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game. This is a figurative way of saying.. what exactly? That the crowd was bummed out. They thought they were about to lose the game!
This sentence helps set the mood for the first stanza. What is the mood? apprehensive, nervous, tense, gloomy, pessimistic, SOMBER
So now let’s look at this poem from a narrative perspective. Pretend this is a short story since a narrative poem tells a story… what does the author accomplish in stanza 1? Stanza 1 includes the exposition, the basic situation, and it sets the scene and mood.
You’ll want to write in the summary of this first stanza under the tab, and then write the purpose of this first stanza on top of the tab.

*Having a hard time reading the annotations here? I’ve included the high resolution scan files in its own folder in the download folder. Look for the folder named Annotation Scans.*
Stanza 2
Before you read stanza 2: OK... I need someone who follows or knows baseball to recap the situation for me and explain why it’s so serious. It’s the last inning, so the team’s last chance to score, and they need two points. They only get three outs, and they have two outs already because “Cooney died at first and Burrows did the same,” so somehow the team has to get at least two scores to tie the game, without getting one out, because if they get another out, the game is over.
Did many fans leave? No. How do you know? A straggling few is not a consistent flow of people leaving. What about the people who remain? They’re clinging to hope. What are they hoping for? They’re hoping that Casey gets a chance to bat.
Now back to narrative mode. What does the author do in this stanza? He introduces Casey, the hero. The crowd is hoping that their hero will have a chance to bat. What might this foreshadow? This may foreshadow that Casey will have a chance to bat, and it will be a big event in the story.

Stanza 3
Read this stanza aloud to your students. What’s keeping Casey from getting to bat? Two players are up before him – Flynn and Jimmy Blake.
Let’s look carefully at line 10. Are you familiar with the words former and latter? What do they mean? Former is the first of two things or people; latter is the second of two things or people. How does the author describe how awful these players are? He uses figurative language! What type? metaphors. There are two metaphors here, so highlight them in blue.
Now back to narrative mode. What does the author do in this stanza? He introduces a complication: Casey, the best player, probably won’t get a chance to bat because of the batting order.
Let’s look at line 11. Tell me about the crowd. They sat silently. How does the author say this? He uses personification – a deathlike silence sat.
Comprehension Quiz
Choose the best answer.

1. When the poem begins, it is ____________.
   a. the first inning
   b. halftime
   c. the third inning
   d. the last inning

2. After two players struck out, Flynn and Blake surprised the crowd by…
   a. hitting foul balls.
   b. making it on base.
   c. both hitting home runs.
   d. betting on Casey.

3. How did the crowd react when Casey advanced to the bat?
   a. booing
   b. spitting
   c. cheering
   d. sneering

4. How did Casey respond to the crowd?
   a. he lightly doffed his hat
   b. he cursed loudly
   c. he spit on home plate
   d. he smiled brightly

5. What did Casey do on the first pitch?
   a. swing and miss
   b. swing and hit
   c. hit a home run
   d. nothing

6. What did Casey do on the second pitch?
   a. swing and miss
   b. swing and hit
   c. hit a home run
   d. nothing

7. After the second pitch, the crowd became angry with ____________.
   a. the pitcher
   b. Casey
   c. the umpire
   d. the catcher

8. What did Casey do on the third pitch?
   a. swing and miss
   b. swing and hit
   c. hit a home run
   d. nothing
A. Annotate Sound Devices in Poetry

After annotating the first four stanzas with your teacher, follow these instructions to annotate the rest of the poem. Check each item off as you do it.

1. Continue to look for consonance with the /s/ sound in these stanzas and underline those words in brown:
   _____ 6, _____8, _____10

2. Stanza 5:
   a. _____ Find two examples of onomatopoeia. (Underline in orange.)
   b. _____ Find an example of assonance in three consecutive words in line 20. (Highlight vowels in pink.)

3. _____ Stanzas 6 and 7: Look for several words that contain assonance with the long /i/ sound. (Highlight these words in pink.)

4. _____ Stanza 7: Find examples of alliteration in each of the four lines of this stanza. (They do not all involve the same letters.) (Underline the words in purple.)

5. _____ Stanza 8: Annotate the end rhymes and rhyme scheme in this stanza just as you did for the first stanza.

6. Stanza 9:
   1. _____ In line 34, find and highlight any hard /t/ sounds in words.
   2. _____ In line 36, underline in blue five words that contain alliteration.

7. _____ Stanza 10: Annotate the end rhymes. Look for a difference here.

8. Stanza 11:
   1. _____ Find examples of assonance here with the /au/, /aw/ sound and highlight those vowels in pink.
   2. _____ Annotate for the /s/ consonance here, but only for line 43.

9. _____ Stanza 12: Annotate the consonance for a sound other than /s/ in line 46. (Highlight the letter in green). There are three words.

10. _____ Stanza 13: What word is repeated throughout the stanza? Circle it in purple.
Text Evidence Activity

First, read through the pieces of text evidence in the table below. Then, read the statements 1-5. For each item, find the appropriate piece of text evidence and color it the requested color.

1. Find evidence that creates tension and builds suspense. Color it pink.
2. Find evidence that characterizes Casey as over-confident. Color it yellow.
3. Find two pieces of evidence that the crowd was very emotionally involved in the game. Color them green.
4. Find two pieces of text evidence that shows that the crowd believes Casey is the best player on the team. Color them blue.
5. Find two pieces of evidence that include events that surprised the crowd. Color them purple.

---

A And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air, And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty-grandeur there.

B But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all, And the much despised Blakey "tore the cover off the ball."

C Then from the gladdened multitude went up a joyous yell – It rumbled in the mountaintops, it rattled in the dell;

D They thought, "If only Casey could but get a whack, at that, We’d put up even money now, with Casey at the bat.

E And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go, And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey’s blow.

F From the benches, filled with people, there went up a muffled roar, Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.

G And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout, But there is no joy in Mudville – Mighty Casey has struck out.

H Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt; Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
6. Which line of the poem shows that the crowd believed in Casey's ability?
   a. "We'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat."
   b. Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt;
   c. And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.
   d. all of these

7. Which of these statements is a theme of "Casey at the Bat"?
   a. Every game has a winner and a loser; some you win, some you lose.
   b. The team with the most talent always wins.
   c. If your team is losing a game, it's a good idea to leave early.
   d. all of these

8. Read this excerpt from the poem:
   There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place;
   There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile lit Casey's face.
   The author's repeated use of the /s/ sound is ________________.
   a. alliteration
   b. onomatopoeia
   c. consonance
   d. assonance

9. Reread the excerpt in the previous question. What effect does this sound device have on the poem when it is read aloud?
   a. It makes each syllable sound harsh.
   b. It helps the words and lines flow together smoothly.
   c. It creates a peaceful mood.
   d. It adds humor.

10. Why did the author likely write this poem?
    a. To entertain baseball fans and those who love the sport.
    b. To encourage people to go to baseball games.
    c. To describe what winning a big game feels like.
    d. To explain to people how to play baseball.
2. Which version offered more detail about the actions of Cooney and Burrows in the game?
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

3. Which statements below describe key differences between the written version and movie short version of the poem? Circle all that apply.

a. The ladies especially enjoy watching Casey play in the movie version, but the written version does not mention this.

b. The written version includes more detail than the movie version.

c. The movie version drags out some scenes, adding details that are not included in the poem.

d. Cooney and Burrows are described as poor players in the movie but not the poem.

e. The written version has a happy ending, while the movie version has a sad ending.

f. The reader has to visualize the story in the written version, but he does not have to visualize it while watching the movie.

g. The movie version is word-for-word the same as the written version.
Paired Text: That’s the Way Baseball Go

Read “That’s the Way Baseball Go” and answer the questions.

1. What is the rhyme scheme of the first two stanzas? ABCB

2. What is the rhyme scheme of the third stanza? ABCCDDAB

3. Find the end rhymes in the first stanza and write them here: shoulder, clover

   Are these partial rhymes or complete rhymes? partial

4. Find the end rhymes in the second stanza and write them here: rain, game

   Are these partial rhymes or complete rhymes? partial

5. Find assonance in the first stanza and write the words below (there are 5 words):

   throwing, over, shoulder, most, clover

6. Find assonance in the second stanza and write the words below (there are 5 words):

   days, days, rain, play, game

7. Read the first stanza of the poem. What do the references to horseshoes and four-leafed clovers imply about winning in baseball?

   Horseshoes and four-leafed clovers are symbols of luck. They imply that luck plays a role in winning in baseball, not just skill.

8. Weather is mentioned multiple times in these lyrics. Line 5 reads: “Some days bring sunshine.” Sunshine is a metaphor for what? winning

9. In the next line, what is the metaphor, and what does it mean? “Some days bring rain” rain is a metaphor for losing, meaning some days you lose

10. These lyrics were actually written by baseball fans. Which scenario is most likely true?

    a. Fans wrote these lyrics after their team won the championship that year.

    b. Fans wrote these lyrics after their team lost the championship game.

    Explain your choice: these lyrics seem sad, almost like they’re consoling fans, so they were probably written by fans after suffering a hard loss
1. What lessons can we learn from “Casey at the Bat”?  

2. Think about the “Casey Bats Again” sequel movie short created by Disney. What **life** lesson does Casey learn?  

3. “That’s the Way Baseball Go” was written by baseball fans for baseball fans. What is the purpose of this song?  

EQ: What life lessons can be learned through playing (and watching) sports?
### Short Story of the Month

"Casey at the Bat" by Ernest Lawrence Thayer

**Activities, Difficulty Levels, and TEKS Alignment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Activities &amp; Standards</th>
<th>Difficulty Level: <em>Easy<strong>Moderate</strong></em>Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1: Figurative Language Review Quick Notes**</td>
<td>ELAR.4(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2: Figurative Language Annotating Practice***</td>
<td>ELAR.4(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3: Journal Prompt/Discussion*</td>
<td>ELAR.26(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4: Close Read Teacher Guide w/Script***</td>
<td>ELAR.6(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 5: Comprehension Quiz</strong>*</td>
<td>ELAR.6(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 6: Plot Pyramid Analysis**</td>
<td>ELAR.6(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 7: Poetry Sounds &amp; Rhyme Quick Notes**</td>
<td>ELAR.8(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 8: Poetry Rhyme Scheme INB Lesson***</td>
<td>ELAR.8(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 9: Poetry Sound &amp; Rhyme Practice**</td>
<td>ELAR.8(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 10: Annotation Guide (Casey) Sound Devices**</td>
<td>ELAR.8(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 11: Evaluate Sound Devices in Poetry***</td>
<td>ELAR.8(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 12: Theme Dev &amp; Text Evidence in Casey***</td>
<td>ELAR.3(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 13: Theme Dev in Fable – Compare to Poem***</td>
<td>ELAR.3(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 14: Text Evidence Match-Up Activity***</td>
<td>ELAR.3(A), ELAR.6(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 15: Elements of Poetry Quiz</strong>*</td>
<td>ELAR.4(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 16: Comprehension Skills Test</strong></td>
<td>ELAR.6(A), ELAR.3(A), 4(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 17: Compare &amp; Contrast Movie Short**</td>
<td>ELAR.5(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 18: Discussion Qs Sequel – Casey Bats Again</td>
<td>ELAR.5(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 19: Analyze “That’s the Way Baseball Go”**</td>
<td>ELAR.8(A), ELAR.4(A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 20: Essential Question***</td>
<td>ELAR.5(A), 9(A), 10(A)(D)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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