Lesson: Cardboard History  
Grades: 3-6 (Adaptable for older and younger students)  
Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies/History/Math/Technology/Physical Education/Art  
Estimated Time of Completion: Seven to nine 50-minute class sessions

I. Summary
Do you have what it takes to be a serious collector? Do you have what it takes to experience the joys that come with collecting? Students might find their answers in this lesson. A collection of any kind requires time and effort, but the payoff is great! After an initial learning period, a collector becomes knowledgeable and passionate about a personal interest. Ever-present scandals, mysteries and events that surround a collection often first entice a collector. Once you decide to start collecting, you have to choose your area of interest. Collectors can collect anything, from stamps to coins, books, autographs, cards, sports memorabilia, Pez containers, toys, or a myriad of other choice of collectibles. Next, it’s time to read and research! Then search, research, read, trade, buy, and collect!

This lesson builds on students’ interests in both sports and collections, and uses a literature connection. The lesson begins with a PBS clip featuring sports memorabilia. A trade book, *Honus and Me* by Dan Gutman, is then used to lure students to baseball’s past and history. This book is the first in his series of baseball card adventures using time travel to visit with featured sports figures found on baseball cards. The lesson continues with researching and recording historical information on cards with sports figures and leads to a class “card sharing session” that is a disguise for teaching students some history facts. All the while, students will be practicing language arts and research skills while enjoying the biographies of sports figures. The lesson ends with student-authored creative stories based on one of their discovered history facts. Modeling Gutman’s style, the students will mix fiction with fact. Adaptable to grade level or subject area, this lesson screams “play ball”!

II. Objectives
- Students will draw conclusions, make predictions and practice making economically responsible decisions.
- Students will acquire knowledge, clarify thinking, record information, synthesize information and enhance historical thinking through literature and an examination of baseball card collecting.
- Students will learn the ins and outs of baseball card collecting and treat the cards as artifacts, gaining information that can be instrumental in investigating the past.
• Students will learn to respect and appreciate baseball history.
• Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of philanthropy using sports heroes as an example.
• Students will work with and understand statistics.
• Students will understand problem-solving techniques and strategies.

III. Materials Needed

• PBS websites History Detectives and History Detectives Kids
• Handouts of class sports and history card templates printed on cardstock paper (8381 Avery Standard Postcards 4” x 6”)
• Paper, pencil, crayons, or colored pencils or a graphics computer program (for illustrating sports person)
• Honus and Me by Dan Gutman
• Optional: any of Gutman’s trade books from his Baseball Card Adventure series (Jackie and Me, Babe and Me, Shoeless Joe and Me)
• Optional: Computer with Internet access with a presentation device or available computers for groups of students and Internet access to the streaming video from the PBS websites.
• Reference materials (library or Internet)

IV. Procedure

1. (Class 1) The teacher will show the streaming video, “Collecting Sports Memorabilia” found on the History Detectives site. Use the clip to talk about collections of any type of item. Encourage students to share any personal collections. The teacher will introduce this lesson by using this clip to point out that baseball cards are a type of historical record. Have students brainstorm what historical information baseball cards have to offer.

2. Discuss ways that people leave their imprint on history. Encourage students to review sleuthing techniques from the History Detectives and History Detectives Kids sites. Brainstorm how various sports memorabilia could be used to provide insight into history. Ask students to comment on who they think Honus Wagner is. Have students research Honus at this site: Baseball: The Players http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/baseball/players/page2.html. Have students look at the official Honus Wagner website. Have students look at the date and think about historical events that paralleled his life (around 1910). Have them think about going back in time to visit with this man. Ask how many students collect baseball cards and provide time for students to comment about their collections. Explain to students that the Honus Wagner baseball card is one of the most valuable baseball cards in the world. Have students guess how much it’s worth. Have students brainstorm why it is worth so much. (With older students, one student could receive extra credit by giving a presentation on baseball card history or baseball collecting http://www.diamondfans.com/howto-collect.html). Ask students to brainstorm: Could any card ever be worth more than money? Have them think about a situation where
they might find this baseball card in another’s person’s trash. To who would the card and its money value belong? Have students think about philanthropy and sports figures. Ask students to comment about the social roles that baseball players fill. Should they be role models for students?

3. (Class 2-3) Have students independently read baseball card adventure book *Honus and Me*, or tell or read the story aloud in class. This choice will depend on the age, skill level, and maturity of the students. The teacher should point out that this book is the first of a series of books. The series is about a young boy, Stosh, who uses baseball cards to travel back in time to meet the past great players. All the books mix fact with fiction. The books would especially interest those that like to collect baseball cards. Discuss the imaginary part of the book about time travel. Have students imagine that they could travel through time. Ask students which event that they would most like to visit and to whom they would choose to talk. Have students again think about philanthropy and sports figures. How does the book portray Honus, the ball player? Is he a man of character?

4. (Class 4-6) Tell students that many people collect sports memorabilia. Have each student think of their favorite sports figure. Explain to students that they are about to become history buffs and collectors. The students are about to collect bits of history. Explain that the first step in becoming any type of collector is to become knowledgeable about their field of interest. Explain to students that they will work in groups of three to four students to research and learn about their favorite sports, related notable people of this field, and some history of this era. Each group will collect this information and record it on a sports card.

5. Have students (either independently or in a group) work to create a sports card of a favorite sports person using the supplied template [download sportstemplate]. Have students research and make sports cards portraying famous players. Explain to students that at least one card must feature a player from history. (You may want students to complete two cards –one portraying a past and one portraying a present sports figure). Share the rubric that will be used for obtaining a grade for their oral presentation.

Some suggested resources for student research and enjoyment:

**Links to sports and famous sports people:**
- Kids Sports Links http://www.northvalley.net/kids/sports.shtml
- Football Legends http://www.springlake-earth.org/Siren/01dec99/History/
- Famoussportsfigures.html
- Baseball Hall of Famers http://www.baseballhalloffame.org/hofers_and_honorees/
- Sports Illustrated for Kids http://www.sikids.com/
- Baseball Almanac http://www.baseball-almanac.com/
- NCAA Basketball for Kids http://www.ncaa.org/bbp/basketball_marketing/kids_club/
- Student Sports http://studentsports.rivals.com/
- Baseball Think Factory http://www.baseballthinkfactory.com/

**Links to the literature *Honus and Me* and other fun links to complement the book:**
- Honus and Me, Dan Gutman –HarperTeacherhttp://www.harperchildrens.com/
Resources for sports memorabilia:
Collecting Baseball Cards http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/roadshow/appraiseit/game80/
Collecting Baseball Memorabilia http://www.go-star.com/antiquing/baseball.htm
A Brief History of Baseball Cards http://www.cycleback.com/1800s/briefhistory.htm
A Guide to the Most Valuable Baseball Cards http://toyscollectibles.allinfo-about.com/features/$baseballcards.htm

6. (Class 7) Have groups of students give an oral report about their choices. Have them share the history of that time period with the other students. Each student (or spokesperson from the group) will give a presentation of the card and its information.

7. Explain to the students that when finished with their oral presentation, they will trade their card to the teacher for a grade (not money). The worth of each card will be based on how complete it is. It must neatly demonstrate the following:

1. A picture, drawn or pasted
2. Name, team, player description, stats, date, location, and team
3. Historical events from the time period.

8. (Class 8) Have each student write a creative story modeling Gutman’s style. Have students choose a sports figure and combine fact with fiction to create a time travel story. If time permits, allow students to share their stories with each other. Students should use one of the cards’ content as a guide for their story.

V. Classroom Rubric for Creative Writing

Homerun! Student’s writing is focused and demonstrates a purpose. Organization of writing is clear and sequenced. There is effective use of transitional devices. The student’s vocabulary demonstrates command of the English language. Sentence structure is varied, and few, if any, errors occur in mechanics, usage, punctuation and spelling. The writing is creative, original and entertaining.

Base Hit! Student’s writing is mostly focused and demonstrates a purpose. Organization of writing is mostly clear and sequenced. There is some effective use of transitional devices. The student’s vocabulary demonstrates command of the English language. Sentence structure is varied, and a few errors occur in mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling. The writing is somewhat creative, original, and entertaining.

Foul Ball! The writing may include some unrelated ideas. An organizational pattern is not evident. Word choice is poor with no variation in sentence structure. The writing contains several errors involving mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.
Classroom Rubric for Assessment for Oral Presentation

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<th>Out</th>
<th>1st Base</th>
<th>2nd Base</th>
<th>3rd Base</th>
<th>Home Run</th>
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<tr>
<td>Card</td>
<td>Is incomplete or lacks legibility.</td>
<td>Has either picture or information on history and player. Lacks adequate or accurate information.</td>
<td>Has picture and some information on both history and player. Somewhat neat, informative, and accurate information.</td>
<td>Has picture and all information on both history and player. Mostly neat, informative, and accurate information.</td>
<td>Has picture and all information on both history and player. Neat, informative, and accurate information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation Delivery and Content</td>
<td>Presentation is less than 1 minute, doesn’t address the topic, and is not complete or accurate information.</td>
<td>Presentation is not quite loud enough, lacks clarity, or isn’t accurate. Speaker occasionally maintains good posture and eye contact. Speaker may sway from the topic.</td>
<td>Presentation is not quite loud enough, lacks clarity, or isn’t accurate. Speaker occasionally maintains good posture and eye contact. Speaker speaks to the topic of the information on the card.</td>
<td>Presentation is somewhat loud, easily understood, entertaining, accurate or original. Speaker mostly maintains good posture and eye contact. Speaker speaks to the topic of the information on the card.</td>
<td>Presentation is loud, easily understood, entertaining, accurate and original. Speaker maintains good posture and eye contact. Speaker speaks to the topic of the information on the card.</td>
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<td>Demonstration of teamwork</td>
<td>Student has not worked in team and may have hindered or distracted the group.</td>
<td>Student has worked in the team as not to hinder the group.</td>
<td>Student has worked in the team as a helpful member of the group.</td>
<td>Student has worked in the team as a productive member of the group.</td>
<td>Student has worked in the team as an instrumental member of the group.</td>
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<td>Sources</td>
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VI. Extensions and Adaptations

- Encourage students to continue with their research. Students can research any sport and/or any sports figure to learn more about history.

- Have students read Gutman’s “Jackie and Me” in February for Black History Month and compare and contrast sports of past and present.

- Make timelines of sports to overlay on other events of the time.

- Have students brainstorm a list of their opinion of the 10 most popular American professional sports. Have students discuss how their lists are similar or different from each other.

- Have students take their own pulse following running a mile. Have students record and plot this class data. You will use this data to draw conclusions and determine student potential for different sports (swimming, cycling and running). Graph the
• Have students create word problems from sports statistics. Example: If Wagner’s card is worth a $451,000. How long would it take a person to make this amount if they worked 40 hours a week and earned $15.00 an hour?

• Choose some more PBS lessons featuring baseball at this site: http://www.pbskids.org/kenburns/baseball/teachers/pbslessons.htm

Adaptations for older students

• Use the book “Honus and Me” as a springboard for class debates. Consider topics such as the following:
  o Should children be encouraged to compete as athletes at the national and international levels?
  o Should Stosh have kept the baseball card?
  o Should sports figures make the kind of money that they are paid?
  o Was Wagner wrong not to want a baseball card connected to tobacco?
  o Should students with poor grades be allowed to participate in school athletic competition?

• Make a T chart like Stosh does in the book. Have students answer questions in the same style. Place “Pro” on one side of the “T” and “Con” on the other. Adapt questions to the students’ maturity levels. Example: Have younger students complete this chart for questions similar to “Why should I do my homework?” Have older students complete the chart for questions similar to “Should research for cloning continue?”

• As a concluding activity, have the older students write a play from the book “Honus and Me.” Have them act it out at the local elementary school to entice younger students to read. (If working with younger students, have students create a class booklet of their favorite sports figures.)

Adaptations for younger students

• Have students create a class booklet of their favorite sports figures.

• Have a “Show and Share” day that will allow each student to share their hobby or collection with the class.

VII. Standards
Standards are from McREL

Writing

• Standard 1.7 Writes expository compositions (e.g., synthesizes and organizes information from first- and second-hand sources, including books, magazines, computer data banks, and the community; uses a variety of techniques to develop the main idea [names, describes, or differentiates parts; compares or contrasts; examines the history of a subject; cites an anecdote to provide an example;
illustrates through a scenario; provides interesting facts about the subject; distinguishes relative importance of facts, data, and ideas; uses appropriate technical terms and notations)

- **Standard 1.11** Writes reflective compositions (e.g., uses personal experience as a basis for reflection on some aspect of life, draws abstract comparisons between specific incidents and abstract concepts, maintains a balance between describing incidents and relating them to more general abstract ideas that illustrate personal beliefs, moves from specific examples to generalizations about life)

- **Standard 4.1** Uses appropriate research methodology (e.g., formulates questions and refines topics, develops a plan for research; organizes what is known about a topic; uses appropriate research methods, such as questionnaires, experiments, field studies; collects information to narrow and develop a topic and support a thesis)

**Reading**

- **Standard 3.1** Establishes and adjusts purposes for reading (e.g., to understand, interpret, enjoy, solve problems, predict outcomes, answer a specific question, form an opinion, skim for facts; to discover models for own writing)

**History**

- **Standard 2.2** Understands historical perspective
  Understands that specific individuals had a great impact on history

- **Standard 2.3** Understands historical perspective
  Understands that specific ideas had an impact on history

**Math:**

- **Standard 1.4**: Uses a variety of strategies in the problem-solving process
  Formulates a problem, determines information required to solve the problem, chooses methods for obtaining this information, and sets limits for acceptable solutions

- **Standard 3.1**: Uses basic and advanced procedures while performing the processes of computation: adds, subtracts, multiplies, and divides integers, and rational numbers

**Technology**

- **Standard 1.3**: Knows the characteristics and uses of computer hardware and operating systems
  Connects via modem to other computer users via the internet, and on-line service, or bulletin board system

**Physical Education**

- **Standard 3**: Understands the benefits and costs associated with participation in physical activity.

- **Standard 5**: Understands the social and personal responsibility associated with participation in physical activity.

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