

STAPLE HERE

Cover Photo: A Portland University outfielder prepares to field a groundball at a baseball game, March 2009.
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Level C

Summer Sports

Bats & Balls

written by Charles Fisher



SummerReads™ 

Bats & Balls

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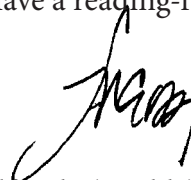
Dear Student,

I am a teacher who has studied how children learn to read well. What I have learned has been used to write SummerReads and programs like QuickReads® and Ready Readers.

The best way to be ready for the new school year is to read every day of the summer. You can choose to read a chapter or a book from SummerReads. But be sure to read it at least three times on the same day. Here's how to use SummerReads:

1. Start by reading it yourself. Mark the words that you don't know.
2. Next, ask someone to read with you. Get that person to help you with any words you don't know. You can even go to the computer to www.textproject.org and hear a recording of the books.
3. Last, you're going to read by yourself to answer the questions at the end of the book. You can go to the computer to find the answers.

Have a reading-filled summer!



Elfrieda (Freddy) Hiebert, Ph.D.

Inventor of the TExT model

Bats & Balls**Introduction****Bats and Balls**

There are many games that use bats and balls. In the United States, playing ball usually means playing baseball. That's because baseball was first played in the United States. Two other games, T-ball and softball, are very much like baseball. All three games are usually played in summer or early fall. That's because they all need a big, flat, and open space for hitting balls and running around bases. This is hard to do in the snow!

Baseball is a team game, so you need to have two teams to play a proper game. You may not have enough people to make two teams. But, if you have a friend, a bat, and a ball, you can learn to pitch, hit, and catch the ball even in your yard or a small park.

Bats & Balls

T-Ball



Just like baseball, T-ball has two teams of players. Each team has a turn where their players get to hit the ball with a bat. While one team hits the ball, the other team is in the field. Their job is to stop hitters from scoring runs.

T-ball is different from baseball in at least one way. In baseball, the pitcher throws the ball to the player who tries to hit the ball with a bat. In T-ball, the ball is not pitched. Instead, the ball is placed on a tee at home plate. This tee is what gives the game the name T-ball.

It takes a lot of practice for pitchers to get the ball in the right place. Learning to hit a moving ball also takes a lot of practice. With the ball sitting on top of the tee, children have a good chance of hitting the ball.

Once a ball is hit from the tee, the game of T-ball is like baseball. The hitter tries to run to first base. The team in the field tries to catch the ball and stop the hitter from scoring a run.

T-ball helps children learn the skills of hitting, running, fielding and throwing. These are the very skills that will help them play baseball when they are older.

Bats & Balls

Baseball



Baseball can be exciting to play or watch. But playing or watching baseball also means that you have to be ready to wait and pay attention. A minute of exciting action can be followed by long periods of little action. For the team at bat, only the batter and batters who have gotten on base are on

the field. The rest of the team waits for their turn to bat. For the team in the field, most of the action is between the pitcher and the catcher. But the other players in the field need to pay attention. Once a ball is hit, they have to act quickly.

The center of attention is a baseball. It is two pieces of white leather. These two pieces of leather are stitched together with waxed red thread. There are exactly 108 stitches on every baseball. Both the bat and the ball are very hard. Fielders wear padded gloves to protect their hands. Batters wear helmets to protect their heads.

Each team has nine turns to bat. Each set of turns is called an inning. If the score is tied at the end of nine innings, the teams play another inning. If the score is still tied, they play yet another inning. A baseball game can go on for a very long time!

Bats & Balls

Softball



You probably guessed from the name why this game is called softball! It uses a softer ball than baseball. The ball may be softer but it is still hard enough to hurt your hands or head. That's why softball players use gloves to protect their hands and batting helmets to protect their heads.

Photo: Softball game in progress among U.S. Navy petty officers at Ward Field, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, February 2007.
Taken by James E. Foehl. Released into the public domain by the U.S. Navy.

Many rules of softball are the same as those of baseball. But one big difference is the pitching. In baseball, the pitcher can throw overhand. The pitcher throws from a mound that is higher than the rest of the field. In softball, the pitcher can only throw underhand and there is no mound.

There are two kinds of softball. One is called fast pitch and the other slow pitch. In fast pitch softball, the pitcher throws as fast as he or she can. In slow pitch softball, the pitcher has to lob the ball to the batter.

In America, about 40 million people play softball each summer. It's never too early to start playing ball. Big bats and balls made of soft materials are easy to find. These make learning to hit, catch, and throw safe for children. You don't need a whole team to learn the skills of baseball, softball, or T-ball. You and a friend can learn to throw, catch, and hit the ball together. Let's play ball this summer!

Bats & Balls**Rate your thinking and reading**

✓ Put a check each time you read one of the chapters of the book.

★ Give yourself a star for Sharing if you told someone about something you learned from reading the chapter.

✚ Give yourself a + if you can tell that your reading is getting smoother.

	1st Read	2nd Read	3rd Read	Sharing	Smoother
Introduction					
T-Ball					
Baseball					
Softball					

Comprehension questions**T-Ball**

1. True or false? The T in T-ball stands for teenager because teenagers play T-ball.

☐ true ☐ false

2. Which of the following is true about T-ball?

- ☐ Batters hit a ball that is pitched
☐ Batters hit a ball sitting on the ground
☐ Batters hit a ball sitting on a batting tee
☐ Batters hit a ball that is rolled to the batter

Baseball

3. True or false? Every player on both teams is on the field at all times.

☐ true ☐ false

4. A baseball game normally ends after nine innings. What happens if the score is tied?

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Softball

5. True or false? Softball players use protective gloves and batting helmets like they do in baseball.

☐ true ☐ false

6. Place a check on the ball and bat game with the following features:

- Uses a smaller but harder ball ☐ baseball ☐ softball
 Has a pitcher's mound ☐ baseball ☐ softball
 Has two versions, slow and fast pitch ... ☐ baseball ☐ softball
 The pitcher pitches overhand ☐ baseball ☐ softball