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# Reading Baseball

*Barbara Gregorich and Christopher Jennison*

*Illustrated by Doug Klauba*



 GOOD YEAR BOOKS

## **Dedication**

For Fred Schuld: teacher, baseball fan, friend. BG

For my brother Nick, the top of his class. CJ



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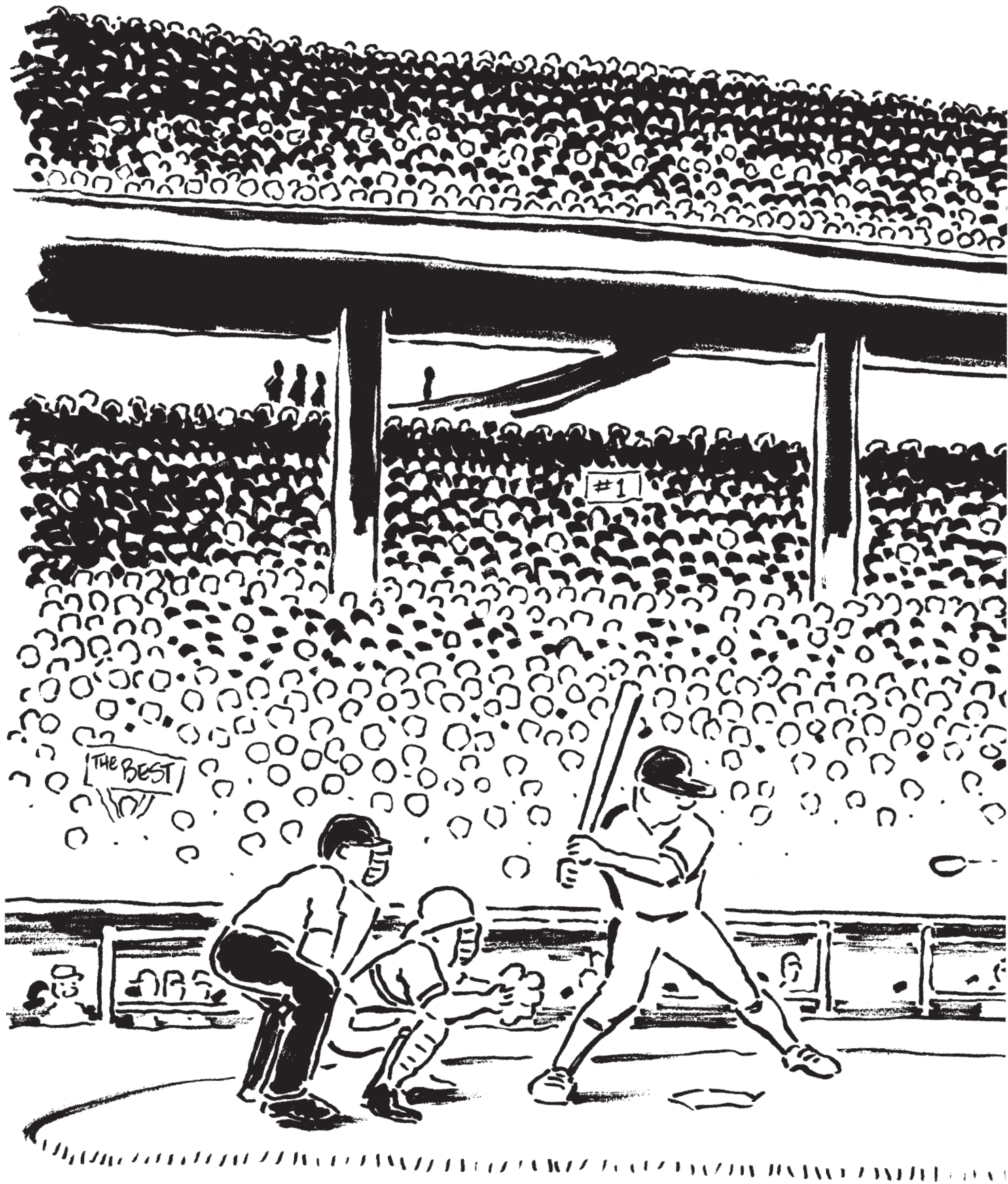
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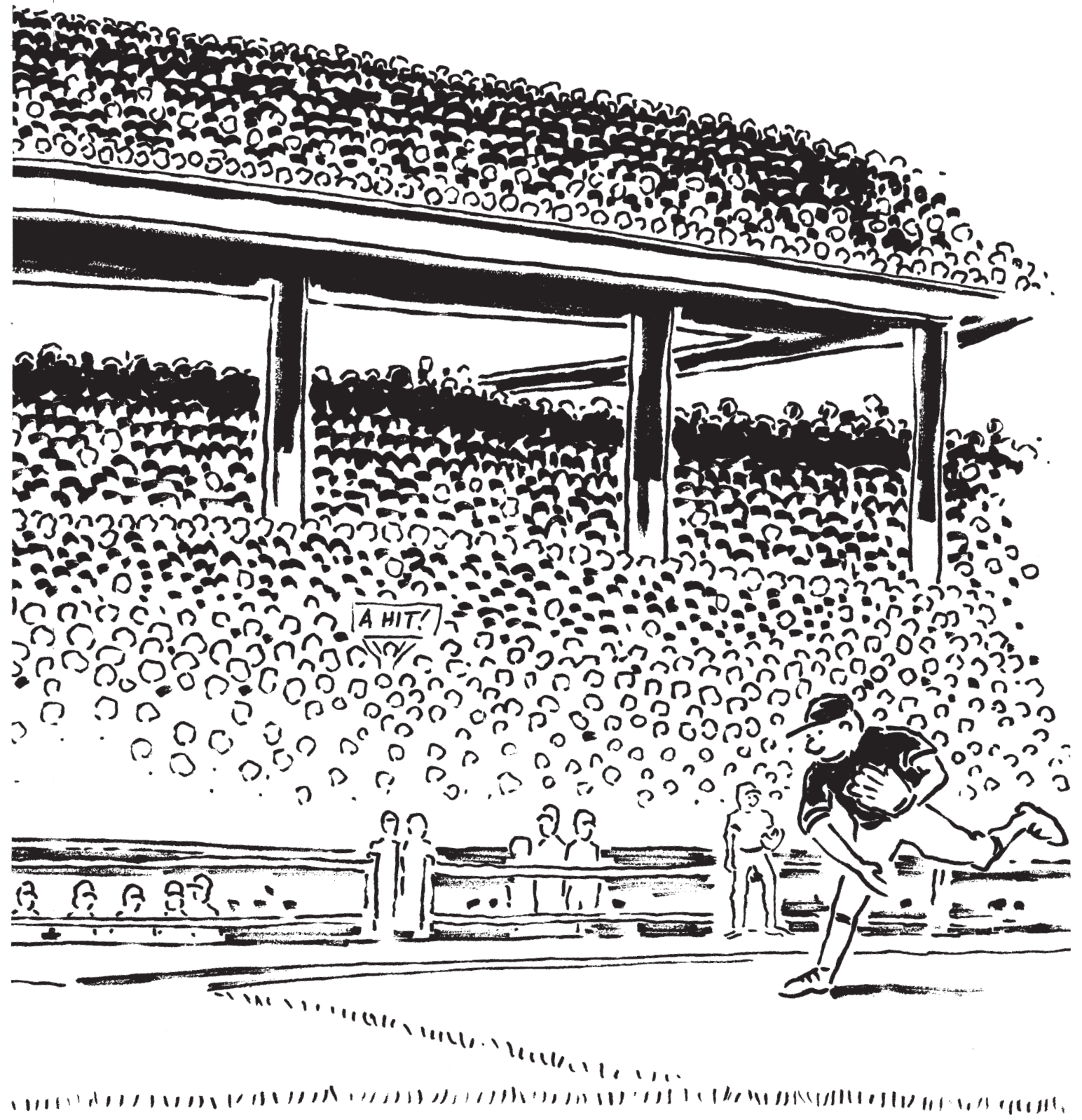


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# ACTIVITIES

# ROBERTO CLEMENTE

“Do not worry,” Roberto Clemente told his teammates at the start of the 1971 World Series. “I will carry the team.” Clemente was speaking to the young and inexperienced members of the Pittsburgh Pirates who had World Series jitters. He was telling them that he, a veteran with seventeen years of play and the 1960 World Series victory behind him, would take responsibility. This allowed his teammates to relax.

Clemente kept his word, and his young teammates relaxed enough to win the 1971 World Series against the Baltimore Orioles, four games to three. Roberto hit homers in the sixth and seventh games, batting a tremendous .414 and fielding spectacularly. He was chosen the World Series Most Valuable Player.

A native of Puerto Rico, Clemente was a selfless and heroic ballplayer who also happened to be a selfless and heroic man. On December 31, 1972, those who did not already know this learned the truth when they heard the devastating news of his death. On New Year’s Eve, as millions celebrated, Roberto Clemente was flying critically needed food and medical supplies to Nicaragua, which had just been hit by a shattering earthquake. His plane crashed, and the world lost a hero.

According to the rules of the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, a player must be retired from baseball or dead for at least five years before he becomes eligible for election to the Hall. In 1973, the Hall waived these requirements for Clemente and inducted its first Latino player.

“Don’t worry,” veteran Willie Stargell told his young Pirate teammates at the start of the 1979 World Series. “I’ll carry the team.” Stargell did, setting a Series record for extra-base hits and leading the Pirates to a World Series victory over (once again) the Baltimore Orioles.

Roberto Clemente set an example his teammates—and the world—would never forget.





NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# ACTIVITIES

A *fact* is something that has happened or can be proved true. An *opinion* is a belief or attitude. Read each statement below. Write *F* if it states a fact; write *O* if it states an opinion.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Clemente batted .414 in the 1971 World Series.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Roberto Clemente was a selfless and heroic man.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Willie Stargell probably learned a lot from Clemente.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. The rules of the Baseball Hall of Fame state that a player must be retired from baseball or dead for at least five years before he becomes eligible for election to the Hall.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. The Pittsburgh Pirates won the World Series in 1960, 1971, and 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Clemente died when his plane crashed.

7. The title of this article is a "fact" title. Write a new title that is an "opinion" title.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Write two sentences that express your opinion of Roberto Clemente.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# AS HE SEES THEM

An umpire is supposed to call each pitch and each play and each situation as he sees it. "Call 'em as he sees 'em" means that an umpire must be absolutely honest and aboveboard. Long ago, an umpire in the Negro Leagues in Texas made sure that he "saw 'em" from the best possible angle.

If a runner was going to slide, the umpire ran alongside him and slid at the same time! Then, lying on the ground, the umpire made his call so that the fans could see it. If he raised his hand, the runner was safe. If he raised his foot, the runner was out. Sometimes a runner would over-slide, then try to scramble back to the bag before the baseman tagged him. In such cases, the umpire would raise first a foot, then a hand, then a foot

(or vice versa), correcting his call as the situation changed. Imagine what fun the crowd had watching the umpire do a belly flop and then thrash his hands and feet around.

This Texas Negro Leagues umpire was quite an entertainer in other ways, too. Instead of yelling, "Y'er out!" to indicate that the batter was out, he would shout, "Batter *dis-ap-point*-ed!" If the batter earned a base on balls, the umpire would announce, "Reward for patience is yours, mister." Or sometimes he would say, "Pitcher in the wrong alley for the fourth time."

One thing is certain: fans must have enjoyed seeing this umpire as much as they enjoyed seeing the players.



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# ACTIVITIES

Read each set of sentences. Number the sentences 1, 2, 3 in the order the events would happen.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ Umpire shouts, "Pitcher in the wrong alley for the fourth time."  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pitcher throws ball three.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pitcher throws last pitch to this batter.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ Runner breaks from first base to steal second base.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Umpire rushes from plate to second base.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Runner and umpire slide.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ Umpire judges pitch to be third strike.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Umpire says, "Batter *dis-ap-point*-ed!"  
\_\_\_\_\_ Umpire announces, "Play ball!"
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ Umpire, lying on the ground, raises his hand.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Runner, still in motion, overshoots the bag and umpire raises foot.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Runner slides into second base before he is tagged.

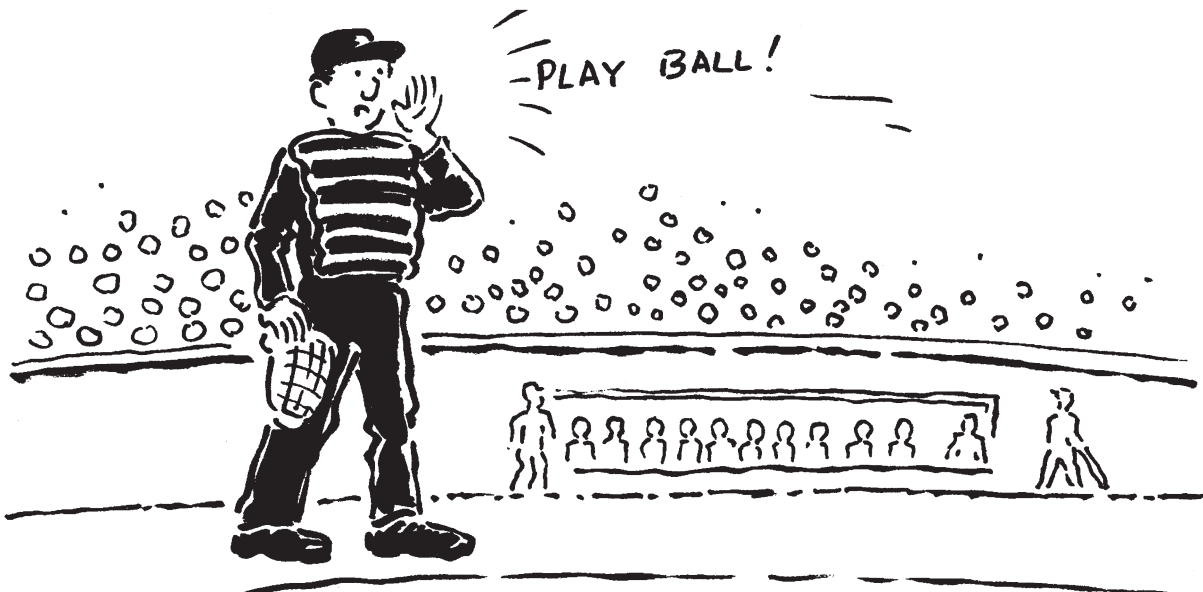
E. Write a new title for this article. The new title should hint at the order in which things happen. \_\_\_\_\_

F. Imagine that you are an umpire. Write your own calls for each situation:

Batter swings and misses, third strike. \_\_\_\_\_

Batter is hit by pitch, gets to go to first base. \_\_\_\_\_

Runner tries to steal home, is tagged out. \_\_\_\_\_



# Take Me Out to the Ball Game

In 1908 Jack Norworth wrote the words to "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" in fifteen minutes while riding on public transportation. His friend Albert Von Tilzer composed the music.

Nelly Kelly loved baseball games,  
Knew the players, knew all their names,  
You could see her there ev'ry day,  
Shout "Hurray," when they'd play.  
Her boy friend by the name of Joe  
Said, "To Coney Isle, dear, let's go,"  
Then Nelly started to fret and pout,  
And to him I heard her shout.

*"Take me out to the ball game,  
Take me out with the crowd,  
Buy me some peanuts and  
Cracker Jack,  
I don't care if I never get back.*

*Let me root root root for the  
home team,  
If they don't win it's a shame,  
For it's one two three strikes, you're out  
At the old ball game."*

Nelly Kelly was sure some fan,  
She would root just like any man,  
Told the umpire he was wrong,  
All along, good and strong.  
When the score was just two to two,  
Nelly Kelly knew what to do,  
Just to cheer up the boys she knew,  
She made the gang sing this song.

(REPEAT CHORUS)

—Jack Norworth



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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# ACTIVITIES

Answer each question below.

1. Where does Nelly Kelly's boyfriend want to go?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How is this a clue that Nelly Kelly lives in New York City? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The words to a popular song are called *lyrics*, and the person who writes them is called a *lyricist*. The lyricist of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" is

\_\_\_\_\_.

4. The chorus of this song begins with the line, \_\_\_\_\_.

5. The words of the chorus are spoken by \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Poets and songwriters sometimes want to shorten a word by one syllable so that the number of syllables in certain lines is the same. A poet might write *whate'er* (what ER) instead of *whatever* (what EV er) because the shortened word has two syllables instead of three. Such a shortened word is called an *elision*. What is the elision in the first stanza of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game"?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Back in 1908, the full word for which Norworth wrote an elision must have been pronounced with \_\_\_\_\_ syllables. Today, we pronounce it with \_\_\_\_\_ syllables.

8. In two sentences, explain why you like or dislike this song. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

