

Character Education Classroom Activities

Current events in southwestern Ohio and current events in national league baseball are covering the same topic: Joe Nuxhall, former Cincinnati Reds pitcher and recently retired co-announcer for the Cincinnati Reds. A baseball legend to one generation, he has been the voice of the Reds to another. Recently, John Erardi, staff writer for the Cincinnati Enquirer spoke with Joe about his career and some of the pressures of being a pitcher. Joe Nuxhall refers to those pressures as lessons he learned about life. After reading about those lessons <http://reds.enquirer.com/2004/10/02/red1joe.html> use some of the following teaching ideas with your class.

Elementary Language Arts and Social Studies Activities

“Rounding third and heading for home” has been the stock closing comment for Cincinnati Reds’ broadcaster Joe Nuxhall for many years. The expression is a metaphor: an analogy, a comparison. When Joe said this at the end of each game, what do you think he meant? How might you use the expression? What part of your day is like “rounding third and heading for home”? How might this expression refer to your education? How many ways can you end the thought, “Rounding third and heading for home is like”

Students reading the article might also look for similar experiences in their own life or in the study of literary characters. In the article Joe talks about valuable lessons he learned about controlling his temper. He distinguishes between uncontrollable and competitive temper. Encourage students to discuss how a temper can be good or bad. Explore literary characters who may have suffered consequences for their bad temper. Explore other alternatives these fictional characters might have had other than the choices they made. Don’t overlook historical figures who may have chosen unwisely, resulting in some of history’s most recorded moments.

Finally, Joe relates to Enquirer staff writer, John Erardi, a quote about golf, “it doesn’t test character, it reveals it.” Have students write about a time their own character was tested and what it revealed to them about themselves.

FYI

Joe Nuxhall and Cincinnati Reds’ 1st baseman Sean Casey have collaborated on a character education program that includes: a discussion poster, brochure, teaching strategies, trading cards and an informational guide/handbook with numerous activities and resources for character education in your school and community. SOITA is assisting in the distribution of these materials to area schools during the 2004-5 school year.