

# **A Thematic Curriculum Guide**

**with Cross-Curricular Connections**

**for the study of**

## ***Bunt!***

**a novel by Bill Baynes**



*Created by Jackie Crabtree*



# Foreword



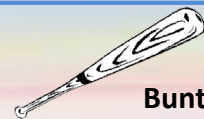
The story of the young baseball hero in the novel *Bunt!* is in many ways a mirror of the journey that all young people – especially those from disadvantaged circumstances -- must make. Beneath this action-packed story is a strong message about facing adversity. That theme is the thread that unites the activities in this guide. The activities are aligned with the Common Core ELA Standards and can be used flexibly for a variety of purposes that might include summer reading, free choice book reports, summer school, and Saturday classes. A Web Quest which integrates internet research with cross-curricular study of nonfiction articles is also included.

--- Jackie Crabtree

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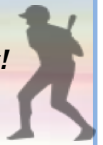


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# Unit Overview: Overcoming Adversity to Beat the Odds

*Bunt!*



## Overarching Question

What is adversity and how do we overcome it?

**Kid Friendly Version:** How do we make something of our lives when the odds are against us?

## Enduring Understanding

The way we respond to adversity shapes who we become.

### Essential/Guiding Questions

- In a world where we are bombarded with conflicting and often negative ideas of who we are and what we should be, how do we develop our own uniqueness and self-worth?
- How can we recognize and overcome our own limitations?
- How can we manage relationships with others whose beliefs and values are in conflict with our own?
- How does adversity shape who we become?

### Significant Concepts

- We can develop our own uniqueness and self-worth by believing in ourselves, finding positive goals to achieve, working hard, and never giving up.
- Accepting help and support from others is necessary in overcoming adversity.
- Standing up to peer pressure and negative influences helps us be true to ourselves.
- Give and take, respect, and compromise are needed to manage conflict in relationships.
- Adversity can motivate us to develop character qualities and skills that otherwise would lie dormant and unrealized.

## Culminating Assessment

### Essay Response:

If Bennie Bruno's life in the novel *Bunt!* had been easy with no hardship or struggle, would his unique qualities and skills ever have emerged? The ancient Roman poet, Horace offers his opinion in this statement: "Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant." Do you agree? Write an essay in which you defend, challenge, or qualify his assertion as it applies to the effect adversity had in shaping Bennie's life. Support your position with solid reasoning, examples from the novel, and observations from your own experience.

### For Alternate Assessment Options See:

- *Writing About the Theme of Adversity*, pp. 18-19
- *Creative Project Ideas*, p. 20
- *Cross-Curricular Web Quest*, p. 31 (Interdisciplinary Essay Prompt)



# English Language Arts

## Common Core Standards & Activities



Teachers may wish to correlate the Common Core State Standards\* given below with the standards developed by their individual states.

English Language Arts	Activity Title
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood</i></li><li>• <i>Clash of Personalities on the Playing Field</i></li></ul>
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., with multiple or conflicting motives) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Questions for Study and Discussion</i></li><li>• <i>The Central Conflict: Bennie vs. Coach</i></li><li>• <i>The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood</i></li><li>• <i>Clash of Personalities on the Playing Field</i></li><li>• <i>Childhood Allies and Adversaries</i></li></ul>
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Questions for Study and Discussion</i></li><li>• <i>Figuratively Speaking</i></li><li>• <i>Identifying Mood</i></li></ul>
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Questions for Study and Discussion</i></li><li>• <i>The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood</i></li><li>• <i>Narrator's Voice: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View</i></li></ul>
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Writing About the Theme of Adversity</i></li></ul>
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Figuratively Speaking</i> (Writing Task)</li><li>• <i>Narrator's Voice: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View</i> (Writing Task)</li></ul>
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, groups, teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All activities offer opportunities for collaborative discussion.</li></ul>

\*Common Core State Standards Initiative. "Implementing the Common Core State Standards." *Common Core State Standards Initiative*. 2012. <<http://www.corestandards.org>>. 24 January 2014.



Prereading

# What We Know About Baseball

***Bunt!***



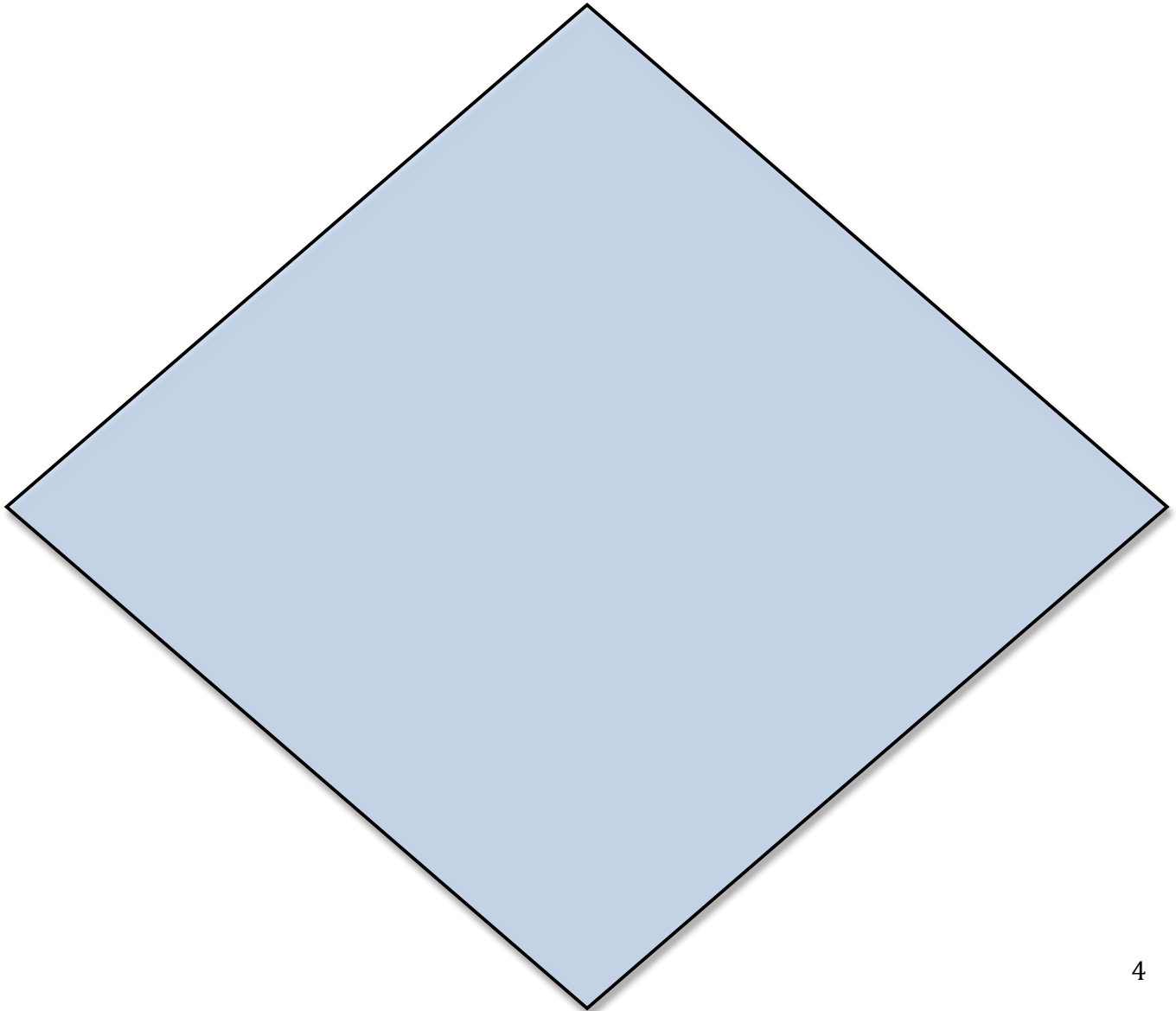
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL9-10.1





Using only your present knowledge, complete the tasks below. You may work alone or with a partner.

1. Add terms to the diagram below to show everything you know about the parts of a baseball playing field and player positions.
2. Explain what the title *Bunt!* means: \_\_\_\_\_

After completing your written responses, share your ideas with the class and make needed changes or additions.



<b>Prereading</b> 	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Four Corners</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL9-10.1</p>	<b>Bunt!</b> 
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<b>KEY:</b>	<b>SA:</b> Strongly Agree	<b>A:</b> Agree	<b>D:</b> Disagree	<b>SD:</b> Strongly Disagree
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The following statements represent different perspectives that readers might have toward the choices made by characters in the novel *Bunt!* Before you begin reading, let's see where you stand on these issues. Working alone, choose the responses that you agree with. Be ready to support your position in discussion. As we read the novel, we will see how these perspectives impact the characters' lives.

1. We should be loyal to our family no matter what.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

2. Anyone can accomplish his or her dreams with hard work and perseverance.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

3. The rich have everything given to them on a silver platter; the poor have to work for everything they get.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

4. Great athletes are born that way.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

5. Succeeding in school academics is not necessary for success in life.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

6. We should never challenge the authority of a parent or coach.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

7. It takes teamwork to win.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

8. Giving in to others is a sign of weakness.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

9. Governing powers and elected officials have the right to enforce laws and rules they consider appropriate, regardless of individual dissent.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

10. People control their own happiness and self-fulfillment.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

11. Our most valuable learning is gained outside of a classroom.

SA                      A                      D                      SD

12. It is important to have an equal balance of work and pleasure in our lives.

SA                      A                      D                      SD





## Questions for Study and Discussion

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.5

*Bunt!*



*As we share our responses to the following questions in group discussion, be prepared to provide page references for the textual evidence that supports your inferences.*

### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **Pages 1-4**

**Irony of situation** occurs when the opposite of what is expected occurs. Explain how Coach's first experience with Bennie is ironic.

#### **Pages 5-9**

A **flashback** is an earlier event that is inserted into the normal chronological order of a narrative. Identify the flashback that occurs in pages 5-9. What is happening? Where and when does it happen? Why do you think the author included the flashback here rather than at the beginning?

#### **Pages 9-15**

How are Skip's and Coach's personalities different? Do you think Coach has the qualities of a good coach? Explain.

#### **Pages 15-17**

From Coach's perspective, what skills does Bennie need to learn? What is Bennie's perspective on his skills as a hitter? Whom do you agree with? Why?

#### **Pages 17-19**

How does Johnnie's perspective differ from the advice given by Bennie's other teammates? How successful is Bennie with the new batting style?

#### **Pages 19-21**

In the first game played after Coach goes on personal leave, why does Bennie return to his old way of hitting? What is the result?

### **CHAPTER 2**

#### **Pages 23-26**

An **idiom** is a common expression that has a figurative meaning different from its literal or exact meaning. When Coach returns and finds that "the genie is out of the bottle", how is that expression appropriate for the changes occurring within the team?

#### **Pages 26-28**

Why doesn't Coach think Bennie's hitting spree will last? **Foreshadowing** is a literary technique that suggests or hints at a future consequence. What do the last 2 lines on page 28 foreshadow for Coach? If you were in Coach's shoes, what would you do?

#### **Pages 29-33**

Name some activities that Bennie does as part of his exercise and warm up routine. How does his fitness as an athlete compare with Johnny, the best player on the Bears?

#### **Pages 34-37**

Describe some flaws that Coach sees in Bennie's performance on the field.

#### **Pages 37-40**

How does Johnnie influence Bennie positively? What connection does Bennie see between magic and baseball?

**Pages 40-44*****Questions for Study and Discussion Continued***

Describe the style of Bennie Ball which the Bears become known for. What is the effect on Bennie's team and the fans? Would you enjoy watching a game played this way? Why?

**CHAPTER 3****Pages 45-46**

What is the significance of these two early memories from Bennie's life?

**Pages 46-49**

How is Bennie noticeably different from the other children on his little league team?

Explain what Bennie's relationship with his family is.

**Pages 49-52**

Describe the community where Bennie lives. Does this seem like a good place to grow up? Why?

**Pages 52-53**

What feelings is Bennie releasing when he pitches the ball against the library wall?

**Pages 53-54**

What are Bennie's teachers concerned about?

**Pages 54-55**

Why do you think Ray, the school janitor, takes the time to play ball with Bennie?

**Pages 55-56**

How does Sarah Ann's relationship with Bennie change?

**Pages 56-58**

Explain the similarity that Ray sees between himself and Bennie.

**Pages 58-59**

When Bennie receives the gift of a baseball glove, what event dims his excitement?

**Pages 59-63 (3 sections)**

What two things does Ray do for Bennie that help to nurture his love for baseball?

**CHAPTER 4****Pages 65-67**

Contrast Ken Sato's neighborhood with Bennie's. What do Ken and Bennie have in common?

**Pages 68-73 (2 sections)**

How do other kids in Ken and Bennie's neighborhoods react to their friendship?

**Pages 73-76**

Ken debates whether he should keep Bennie as a friend. What are some the pluses and minuses?

**Pages 76-78**

Describe what life is like for Bennie at home.

**Pages 78-85**

How do Ken and his family treat Bennie? Give evidence to support your answer.

**CHAPTER 5****Pages 87-95**

Do you agree with the team's rebellion against the coach's signals? Why?

**Pages 95-99**

How does the team rebellion affect the performance of the team? Explain.

**Pages 99-105**

What brings an end to the revolt? What two events make it hard to finish the season in 1<sup>st</sup> place?

**Pages 106-107**

***Questions for Study and Discussion Continued***

How do the Bears end the regular season?

**CHAPTER 6**

**Pages 109-112**

Where and when does this flashback take place? How old is Bennie?

**Pages 112-115**

Who is Unk? What's special about him?

**Pages 115-118**

Describe one of the Tokyo baseball drills that Unk teaches the boys. How will it help the boys become better hitters?

**Pages 119-122**

Why do you think Bennie is so "amped" after the pick-up game at City College?

**Pages 122-125**

Explain what the leg-warmer exercise is. What is its purpose?

**Pages 126-129**

What do the games of Pepper and Toss Up help the boys learn?

**CHAPTER 7**

**Pages 131-133**

Describe Bennie's relationship with his family now that he's a freshman in high school.

**Pages 134-139**

How valuable are Ken and Bennie to the varsity team at school?

**Pages 139-144**

In what ways does Bennie benefit from working at the Giants' games?

**Pages 145-148**

What crisis develops in Bennie's home life? How does Oliver help him out? One day Bennie realizes that he is on the verge of a batting style that's radically different. How is it unique?

**Pages 148-152**

How does Bennie's effort to master his own hitting style create complications on his school team?

**CHAPTER 8**

**Pages 153-159**

After a sleepless night for all of them, Skip tells Bennie and Coach that they need to talk. What do you think he wants to talk about?

**Pages 159-166, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Innings**

At the start of the game, how would you describe the mood of the team and coach?

**Pages 166-170, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Innings**

Describe the new strategy that coach is trying out with the players.

**Pages 171-175, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Innings**

If you could choose one factor that is keeping the Quakes in the lead, what would it be? Explain.

**Pages 175-178, 8<sup>th</sup> Inning**

What chain of events results in a tie game at the end of the 8th?

**Pages 179-189, 9<sup>th</sup> Inning**

How does Bennie help win the game in the 9<sup>th</sup>? What thoughts might be going through Bennie's mind when he tells Ken, "This belongs to you," and throws the ball to Ken at the end of the game?

## Chapters 1 & 2:

**Bunt!**



# Personalities on the Playing Field

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1, RL9-10.3

**Personality traits** include attitudes, values, and ways of behaving. **Motives** are what a character wants -- why the character does what he does. As you read about Bennie, Coach, Skip, and Johnnie, identify unique personality traits and motives of each in the chart below. In the center write traits and motives that they share. Be prepared to share your findings in group discussion.

### Bennie Bruno

He is . . .

He wants . . .

Pages Where I Found Textual Evidence:

### Skip, the Team Manager

He is . . .

He wants . . .

Pages Where I Found Textual Evidence:

Shared Traits and Motives:

Pages Where I Found Textual Evidence:

### Coach Jackson

He is . . .

He wants . . .

Pages Where I Found Textual Evidence:

### Johnnie Jett

He is . . .

He wants . . .

Pages Where I Found Textual Evidence:

Chapters 1,2, 5 &amp; 8 Cause-Effect:

*Bunt!*

# The Central Conflict: Bennie vs. Coach

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3

CAUSE	EFFECT (what happened as a result)
<b>Event 1</b> ----- Bennie Bruno eagerly displays his weird style of smallball in his first game on the Sierra Bears.	<b>CHAPTER 1</b> ----- Coach Jackson feels . . .  because . . .
<b>Event 2</b> ----- Coach reworks Bennie's hitting style.	Bennie . . .
<b>Event 3</b> ----- Coach is called out of town.	<b>CHAPTER 2</b> ----- While Coach is out of town . . .
<b>Event 4</b> ----- Inspired by Bennie, the team starts to win games and draw crowds.	Coach thinks. . .  Skip, the team manager wants . . .
<b>Event 5</b> ----- The players rebel against Coach. No longer following his signals, they make errors and lose games.	<b>CHAPTER 5</b> ----- Skip decides to . . .
<b>Event 6</b> ----- The team ends the season with more losses. Fights break out between Bennie and the other players.	Coach tells Bennie to . . .
<b>Event 7</b> ----- Skip calls a team meeting to suggest a strategy for winning the playoff.	<b>CHAPTER 8</b> ----- Bennie agrees to . . .  Coach agrees to . . .
<b>Event 8</b> ----- During the game Bennie and Coach follow through on Skip's strategy.	As a result, . . .



## Chapters 3 &amp; 4

# The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1, RL9-10.3, RL9-10.5

**Bunt!**

In chapters 3 and 4 the author uses **flashback** to tell the story of Bennie's early life. Some of his ups and downs are described below. Fill in the missing textual evidence or inferences.

Excerpt	Textual Evidence	Inference (This shows that . . . )
<b>Ch. 3</b> <b>(Early Years)</b>  1.		Starting at a very early age Bennie develops a passion for baseball. Playing baseball is more important than anything else.
2.	"He (Bennie) thinks of Mike, slapping his mother. He throws the ball. He thinks of Dad, who called and said he's sorry but but but . . . He's throwing the ball like . . . the wall is his enemy." (52-53)	
3.		Ray, the school custodian, notices and values what Bennie is like as a person. He finds little ways to help him.
<b>Ch. 4</b> <b>(6th Grade)</b>  1.	"There are no sports teams at Bayshore . . . The school is too poor to provide buses for any interleague play." (70)	
2.	Ken's two neighbors do their best to put Bennie in his place . . . "Give 'im your backpack, Kenny," Shu says. "Why should you have to lug it up the hill?" (70)	
3.		Bennie's friend, Ken, and his family make Bennie feel welcome and accepted. Bennie embraces the chance to venture beyond his own neighborhood, experience new things, and learn new baseball skills with Ken.
4.		Even when Bennie is alone he immerses himself in practicing baseball, pushing himself to discover new skills in handling the ball.



# Chapters 6 & 7

## The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1, RL9-10.3, RL9-10.5

**Bunt!**



In chapters 6 and 7 the author uses **flashback** to tell the story of Bennie's early life. Some of his ups and downs are described below. Fill in the missing textual evidence or inferences.

Excerpt	Textual Evidence	Inference (This shows that . . . )
<b>Ch. 6</b> <b>(8<sup>th</sup> Grade)</b>	"But sometimes . . . the ball skips to the side. Bennie tries to figure out what makes the ball act like that. He discovers that it happens when he skids the bat across the ball, sort of a slicing motion . . ." (112)	
2.		Bennie is lucky to have met Unk, whose training exercises are helping Bennie to develop special skills in a fun way.
3.	"Ken enjoys a more balanced lifestyle. He excels in school. Why not? It's easy for him . . . Of course, he has little choice because his father watches him closely." (128)	
<b>Ch. 7</b> <b>(9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>		
1.	" 'Get out of here! Out!' Mike is incensed. 'You don't pay your fair share, you're on the street.' " (145)	
2.		Oliver is a good friend who helps Bennie achieve more in school.
3.	"He (Benny) begins to understand how to make the ball spin. If a pitcher can do it, why not a batter? He discovers how to make the ball jump to the left or right after it hits the ground." (147)	
4.		Bennie's individual way of doing things is getting him into conflict on the field. To make matters worse, he doesn't think he needs to change.



Chapters 3,4,6 & 7

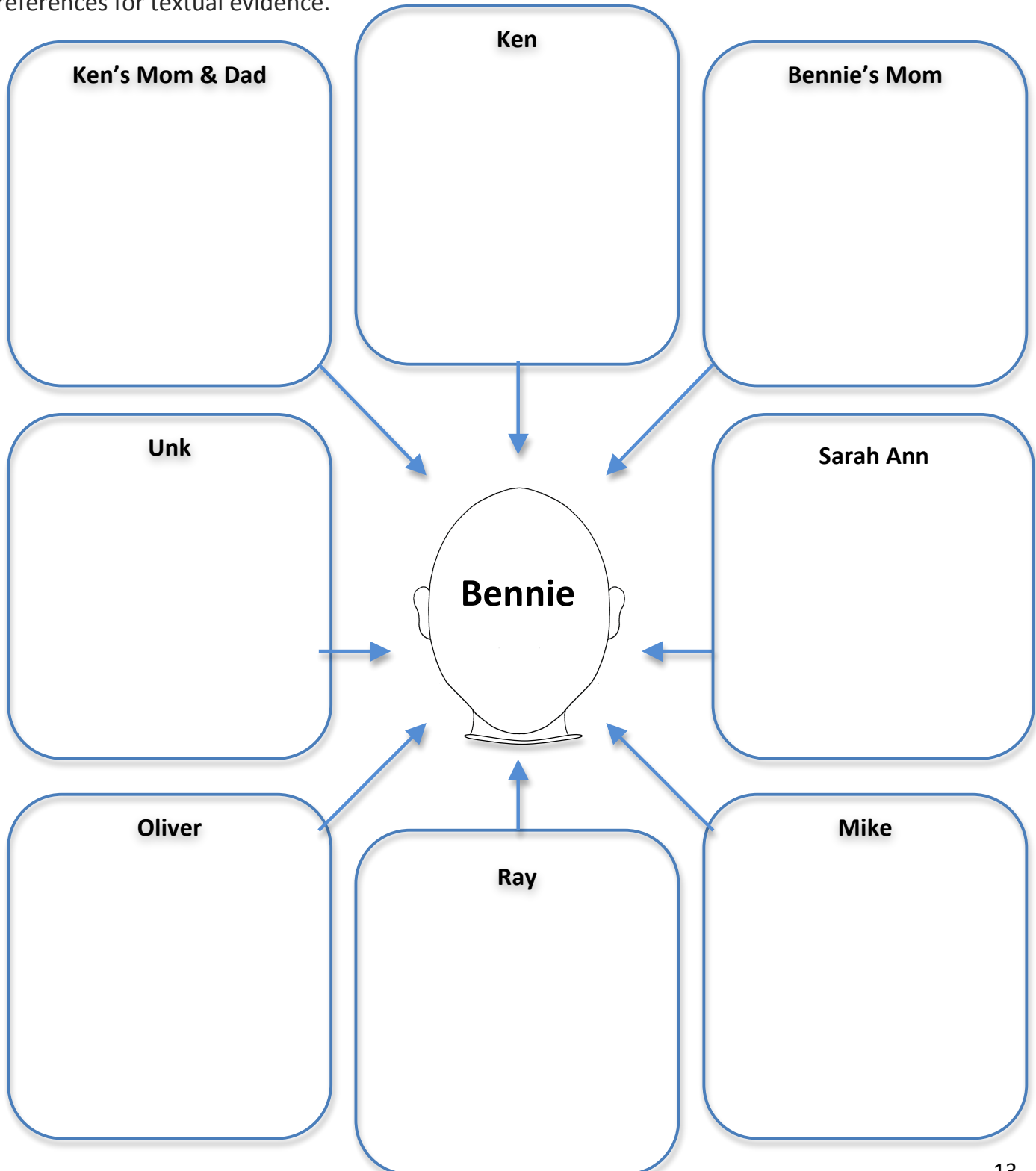
## Childhood Allies & Adversaries

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3

*Bunt!*



In each box below describe that character's relationship with Bennie and how it changes over time, indicating whether that character influences Bennie positively or negatively. Include page references for textual evidence.





# Figuratively Speaking

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4 and W.9-10.3c




Writers use **figurative devices** to express meanings that go beyond the dictionary definitions of the words; they help bring writing to life. Match the underlined portion of each sentence below with the figurative device that it best represents. Some will use more than one figurative device.

<b>hyperbole</b>	<b>simile</b>	<b>metaphor</b>	<b>personification</b>
<i>exaggeration or overstatement</i>	<i>a comparison of two unlike things using like or as</i>	<i>a direct comparison of two unlike things, often using the word "is"</i>	<i>human traits given to an inanimate object or nonliving thing</i>
<b>onomatopoeia</b>	<b>verbal irony</b>	<b>situational irony</b>	<b>alliteration</b>
<i>the use of words for their sound effects</i>	<i>a contrast of what is said and what is actually meant</i>	<i>a situation in which the outcome is the opposite of what is expected</i>	<i>repeated use of the same consonant sound at the beginning of words</i>

## Excerpts from *Bunt!*

1. _____	"Coach digs the rhythms of the warm-up—the balls coming in and going out, <u>the thwack of the bat and the clip of the glove.</u> "
2. _____	After Johnnie Jett, the star player who prides himself on his strong <u>habit of exercise</u> , works out with Bennie, Devin later finds Johnnie <u>"flat on his back taking a snooze"</u> during team warm-ups.
3. _____	"Everybody knows that look. <u>It would freeze lava.</u> "
4. _____	'Then coach has to take a personal leave because his father is sick. <u>"Just what we need,"</u> Skip grumbles . . .'
5. _____	"The Bears are in Chico. <u>Hot as Hades.</u> <u>It's like playing in a sauna.</u> "
6. _____	"Nobody says anything, but when he walks by eyes roll, <u>winks click like little plastic game pieces.</u> "
7. _____	" <u>He's a machine</u> on defense . . . <u>he's got a bullet arm.</u> "
8. _____	"The <u>ball</u> rolls toward third, then <u>bites like a golf ball</u> . . ." "Carlos hits a <u>lazy fly</u> to left for out number two." "He <u>murders mistakes.</u> "


**Your Turn:** On the back of this sheet write a brief story about a time when a situation turned out the opposite of what was expected. The story could be about you, someone you know, or a fictional character. Include three other figurative devices from the chart in your story.



## Narrator's Voice: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.5, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3

**Bunt!**



When the author uses the **3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View**, the narrator is an outsider who reports the events of the story, referring to the characters either by name or by the pronouns “he” and “she”. There are three main types of 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view:

- **3<sup>rd</sup> Person Objective** – the narrator is a neutral, impersonal observer who can only guess at the inner thoughts and feelings of the characters based on their actions and words.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Person Limited** – the narrator is able to look inside the thoughts and feelings of one character as the story is narrated.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Person Omniscient** – the narrator is able to look inside the thoughts and feelings of all the characters as the story is narrated.

**Review the first four pages of Chapter 8 of *Bunt!* Then answer the questions below.**

1. Circle the form of 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrative that the author is using: objective, limited, or omniscient

Explain how you know. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What did you learn about the thoughts and feelings of each character in these pages?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. As the narrative sequence shifted from one character to another, what effect did it have on you emotionally? Do you think this was an effective writing strategy? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Exploring An Alternate Point of View:** Imagine that you are one of these characters in the book: Ray, Bennie’s mother or sister, Mrs. Sato, Coach Cortes, Johnny Jet, Oliver, or Unk. Write about an event that occurs in the novel from that character’s point of view. Narrate the story in 1st person voice, using the pronoun “I”. Include inner thoughts and feelings that your character might have about himself, the event, and the other characters involved. Provide your narrative with a beginning, middle, and end. Use the back of this sheet for your response.



## Identifying Mood

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4

**Bunt!**



**Mood** (sometimes called **atmosphere**) is the feeling or emotion created in a reader by a literary work. Setting, description, events, and tone can all contribute to a story's mood or atmosphere. Carefully read each passage below. Then select the word from the list that best describes the mood or atmosphere conveyed by that passage. *Underline or highlight words in the passage that caused you to make that choice.*

### List of Mood Words

**Morbid** – Suggesting an unhealthy mental state of mind; unnaturally gloomy or extreme

**Jubilant** – Showing great joy, satisfaction, or triumph; rejoicing

**Enraged** – Filled with anger; furious

**Desolate** – Barren, uninhabited, lonely, solitary, abandoned

**Enigmatic** – Perplexing, mysterious

**Sweltering** – Oppressively hot

**Fatalistic** – The acceptance of all things and events as inevitable

**Overwhelmed** – Overcome completely in mind or feeling; overpowered by superior force

**Electrifying** – Thrilling, exciting greatly

**Delectable** – Delightful, enjoyable, pleasurable

1. \_\_\_\_\_ "The big parking lot was empty. The gates were locked. He walked around the perimeter until he got to the outfield. . . Inside the field was much more spacious than Skyline and had a lot more seats, but it was totally deserted. All the doors were locked, so he couldn't get in anywhere." (8)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ "The Bears are in Chico. Hot as Hades. It's like playing in a sauna, even under the lights." (27)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ "Summer mornings. There's nothing like them. Warm. Dappled. The barest breeze." (30)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ "That Sunday afternoon, the team is like a broken record. Eighteen outs in a row to start the game. Two errors at second for Frankie. Bennie watches from the dugout, his ankle heavily taped. Abe Emery gives up five runs in the first two innings. It's a downpour, a drenching from the Storm." (107)
5. \_\_\_\_\_ "They win with big hits. They win with lucky drops. They win with different heroics every game. They win they win they win." (40)
6. \_\_\_\_\_ "About a dozen spectators perch in a horseshoe of seats, looking down on a felt-covered table, covered in light. The magician sits inches from his audience. . . He rolls up his sleeves and proceeds to disappear and re-appear coins and cards in front of the spectators' eyes. The things he does seem impossible, but he does them anyway and Johnnie can't tell how." (39)

**Identifying Mood Continued**

7. \_\_\_\_\_ "He holds his breath. The ball keeps coming like a big egg dropping from the sky. He stands. Everyone around him stands. The ball lands behind him, a few rows back. He twists to watch. It hits fingers and there is an "Ouch!" and the fingers pull back and the crowd says, "Ohhh!" in a drawn-out splash of sound . . ." (46)
8. \_\_\_\_\_ "Sarah Ann is in her black stage. She's wearing black jeans, sneakers, shirt and dangles. Her lips are black and so are the deep shadows above and below her eyes." (56)
9. \_\_\_\_\_ "Then came the war. Then came the limp. Then a life of not getting things done. There were stints as a baker, as a delivery driver, as a park ranger. No more guns. No more parties. Too lame. Too tame for things now." (57)
10. \_\_\_\_\_ "He punches the glove, hitting it hard, hitting it again. He wishes it were Mike. He's staring into the rain. The struts on the towers glisten faintly in the wet night. The day had started so well. He's hating Mike, wishing he'd never met the man. He's punching the glove. Hard." (59)

**Changing Moods**

In each of the passages below substitute new words to create a different mood from the original passage. Be careful not to use the given mood word in the passage!

**1. New Mood: Glamorous**

Sarah Ann is in her \_\_\_\_\_ stage. She's wearing (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Her lips are \_\_\_\_\_ and so are the \_\_\_\_\_ above and  
 below her \_\_\_\_\_."

**2. New Mood: Playful**

Summer mornings. There's nothing like them. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_.

**3. New Mood: Boring**

"The Bears are in (name a town or state) \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_  
 as (a) \_\_\_\_\_. It's like playing in a(n) \_\_\_\_\_, even  
 under the lights."



## Writing About the Theme of Adversity

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1



### Prompt 1 (Exposition)

In the novel *Bunt!*, how does adversity help Bennie Bruno grow as an individual? Plan and write an essay in which you identify three key ways in which he grows and changes for the better. Support your ideas with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, experience, and observations.

### Prompt 2 (Comparison/Contrast)

Although Bennie and Sarah Ann are raised in the same household, they grow increasingly apart as the novel progresses. The way each faces adversity seems to have a profound effect on their growth as individuals. Write an essay in which you describe how each handles adversity differently and what effect this has on their personal development and achievements.

### Prompt 3 (Autobiographical Response)

Describe a circumstance in your life in which you faced adversity, failure, or setback. What actions did you take as a result and what did you learn from this experience?

#### Note:

See page 31 of the Web Quest for an interdisciplinary essay prompt.



## Writing About the Theme of Adversity

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1



### Prompt 4

If Bennie Bruno's life in the novel *Bunt!* had been easy with no hardship or struggle, would his unique qualities and skills ever have emerged? Various opinions on this question are offered in the quotations at the right. Choose one and think about whether you agree or disagree with it. Then write an essay in which you defend, challenge, or qualify<sup>1</sup> its assertion as it applies to the effect adversity had in shaping Bennie's life. Support your position with solid reasoning, examples from the novel, and observations from your own experience. Include appropriate citation of textual evidence<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The writer might wish to assert that in some ways the quote applies to Bennie's situation and in other ways it doesn't.

<sup>2</sup> Cited text should include accurate use of the author's words, quotation marks, use of the ellipsis for omitted words, and page references in parentheses.

### Quotations On Adversity

"Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant".

-- The Roman poet Horace

"The storms of adversity, like those of the ocean, rouse the faculties and excite the invention, prudence, skill and fortitude of the voyager."

-- *Anonymous English Proverb*

"Adversity is a severe instructor . . . He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper."

-- *Edmund Burke*

"For man's greatest actions are performed in minor struggles. Life, misfortune, isolation, abandonment and poverty are battlefields which have their heroes--obscure heroes who are at times greater than illustrious heroes."

-- *Victor Hugo*

"Sweet are the uses of adversity;  
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

-- *William Shakespeare, As You Like It*

"A man of character finds a special attractiveness in difficulty, since it is only by coming to grips with difficulty that he can realize his potentialities."

-- *Charles DeGaulle*



## Creative Project Ideas

*Bunt!*



### Personal Diary

Imagine that you are Bennie and that you have kept a personal diary from your childhood up through the final events of the novel. Compose 10 or more diary entries in chronological order, dating all entries. In first person voice describe Bennie's goals, how he is trying to handle the obstacles he faces, and what he has learned from these experiences. Compose the entries to reflect your understanding of adversity and how we overcome it. Include a cover and title for the diary. The title of the novel and author's name should also be displayed. Creative use of materials is encouraged.

### Character Mobile

Create a mobile with hanging cards that represent Bennie Bruno and at least 3 allies and 3 adversaries from the novel. On each card include the character's name, a significant quote from the book, and a brief description of how that character helps or hinders Bennie. On Bennie's card include a significant quote and explain how Bennie helps and hinders himself. Both sides of the cards can be used. Creative design and arrangement of the cards, as well as meaningful use of color, is encouraged. Include the novel's title and author in a prominent spot.

### Movie Soundtrack

Imagine that the novel is to be made into a movie. You are to design a soundtrack that communicates the book's theme. Record or play for the class 5 songs that match 5 key moments or events in the book. The music can be previously published, original, instrumental, or vocal. For each piece of music include a quotation from the novel and a paragraph which describes how it relates to the adversity Bennie has faced at different times in his life, people and situations which have helped or hindered him, and what he has done to overcome his hardships.

### Comic Strip

Create 10-12 comic strip frames that illustrate key moments from the novel. Include dialog boxes and captions that use textual evidence from the novel. On the back of each frame explain what the scene reveals about the adversity Bennie has faced at different times in his life, people or situations which have helped or hindered him, and his effort to overcome his hardships. Include the novel's title and author in the first frame. Creative use of color and design is encouraged.

### Person of the Year Speech

Using evidence from the novel, write and deliver a speech informing and justifying for the audience your nomination of Bennie for "MVP". Include details that reveal the adversity he has faced throughout his life and on the ball field, people and situations which have helped or hindered him, and how he has worked to overcome adversity and beat the odds. Describe the qualities of character and actions which make him deserving of this high honor.

### Documentary Newscast

Write a news story, produce a video, or stage a live classroom broadcast which documents Bennie's rise to stardom on the Bears. As a reporter, pretend that you have conducted at least four or five interviews with Bennie, characters from his past, and members of the team, family, or public. Prepare statements made by the "interviewees" based on evidence from the novel. Include details that reveal the adversity he has faced throughout his life, people and situations which have helped or hindered him, and how he has been able to overcome his hardships. You may enlist volunteers to play the roles of the characters. Creative costuming is encouraged.



***Bunt!***

# APPENDIX A





### Purpose:

Students will expand their understanding of adversity gained from the novel *Bunt!* by conducting a Web Quest of nonfiction articles and media. The Web Quest will focus on individuals from different cultures, disciplines, and periods of history who have overcome adversity to achieve a significant goal. The activity can be done in Language Arts or in other classes involved with interdisciplinary collaboration, and can be easily tailored to meet specific instructional goals.

### Common Core Standards:

1. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
2. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.7** Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.
3. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

### Activities:

1. Students will research two or more individuals to determine how each experienced and overcame adversity. For each individual, the student will analyze at least three sources, including one print and one media source.
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of their subject through written responses to the focus questions provided on the Web Quest Chart.
3. Students will synthesize their findings by writing an essay in response to the following prompt:

Throughout history humans have sometimes struggled against formidable adversity – social, political, racial and religious injustice, as well as personal limitations and setbacks. Yet many remarkable individuals have emerged from adversity and gone on to accomplish goals that transformed their own lives and/or the lives of others.

Based on your study and personal understanding of individuals who have overcome adversity, write an essay in which you describe the attitudes and strategies which have enabled these individuals to overcome adversity and what they have accomplished in transforming their own lives and/or the lives of others. Use detailed examples from your web research and knowledge gained from your reading of the novel *Bunt!* to demonstrate your understanding of what adversity is and how we overcome it.



**Bunt!**

## Web Quest: Charting the Faces of Adversity



Name of Individual:	Source 1:	Source 2:	Source 3:
What adversity (hardships, setbacks, obstacles, or difficulties) has this individual faced?			
What strategies and attitudes have enabled this individual to overcome adversity?			
What has this individual accomplished or what does this individual hope to accomplish as a result?			
How has this individual's efforts transformed his/her own life and/or the lives of others?			



**Bunt!**

## Web Quest Sources: Overcoming Adversity to Beat the Odds



The following web links were chosen for their suitability in exploring the theme of adversity, as well as their informative and thought-provoking content. They represent a wide assortment of individuals from different cultures, areas of endeavor, and periods of history. They include print and media sources.

### Tip for Classroom Use:

Separate the three Web Quest source sheets from the full document by going to pdfsplit.com. Then post the three sheets in a location online where students can easily locate and use the hot links.

#### Angelous, Maya, Poet, Author

- <http://mayaangelou.com> Print bio and link to numerous short videos
- <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/ang0pro-1> profile, bio, & interview discuss adversity faced
- <http://www.oprah.com/omagazine/Oprah-Interviews-Maya-Angelou>
- <http://www.visionaryproject.org/angeloumaya/> Bio and 7-minute video.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKvfM7eMRXU> movie "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings", 1 ½ hrs.

#### Bak, Samuel Visual Artist

- <http://www.facinghistory.com/illuminations> Bio, art gallery, links to video, and teacher guide.
- <http://www.chgs.umn.edu/museum/responses/bak/> Artist gives lecture explaining his paintings.
- <http://www.fhlocaustmuseum.org/exhibits/past-exhibitions/icons-of-loss/about-the-artist-samuel-bak.aspx> Print bio.

#### Carver, George Washington, African-American Inventor, Botanist, Chemist

- <http://www.biography.com/people/george-washington-carver-9240299> 3 short videos and written bio
- <http://inventors.about.com/od/cstartinventors/a/GWC.htm> Print bio.
- <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/george-washington-carver> short video and print article

#### Chavez, Caesar, Union Leader and Labor Organizer

- <http://www.biography.com/people/cesar-chavez-9245781> Print bio with several short videos.
- <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/fightfields/cesarchavez.html> Biography with numerous photos.
- [http://wn.com/cesar\\_chavez](http://wn.com/cesar_chavez) 5 minute video documenting hunger strikes and boycotts led by Chavez

#### Curie, Marie, Polish-born French Physicist, Radioactive Research

- <http://aip.org/history/curie/contents.htm> Various links on website
- <http://www.notablebiographies.com/Co-Da/Curie-Marie.html#b>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz7Q-zZ4onc> BBC. *The Genius of Marie Curie*. May 2013. 59 min.

#### Darwin, Charles British Naturalist

- [http://wn.com/charles\\_darwin](http://wn.com/charles_darwin) 36-minute documentary
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GU52x27R\\_VU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GU52x27R_VU) 59-minute full-length documentary
- <http://www.aboutdarwin.com/literature/review.html> Various print articles
- <http://darwin-online.org.uk/darwin.html> Various print articles.

#### Einstein, Albert, Theoretical Physicist

- <http://wn.com/einstein> 1 ½ hr. documentary film.
- <http://wn.com/einstein> several short videos and short bio
- <http://www.shapell.org/manuscript.aspx?albert-einstein-writes-his-son-about-lifes-hardships>
- [http://www.einstein-website.de/z\\_biography/biography.html](http://www.einstein-website.de/z_biography/biography.html) print bio
- <http://www.biography.com/people/albert-einstein-9285408> bio and short video
- <http://www.atomicarchive.com/Bios/Einstein.shtml> print bio



**Bunt!**

## Web Quest Sources: Overcoming Adversity to Beat the Odds



### Galilei, Galileo, Astronomer, Mathematician, Philosopher

- <http://www.biographyonline.net/scientists/galileo.html>  
Pettinger, Tejvan. "Biography of Galileo". September 2011.
- <http://galileo.rice.edu/> Biography, Timeline, Teacher Sources
- <http://www.biography.com/people/galileo-9305220> Print bio and short videos

### Gandhi, Mahatma, Political and Humanitarian Leader of India

- <http://www.biographyonline.net/politicians/indian/gandhi.html>  
Pettinger, Tejvan. "Biography of Mahatma Gandhi", Oxford, Aug. 2008
- <http://www.biography.com/people/mahatma-gandhi-9305898> Bio and short videos.
- <http://www.mkgandhi.org/> Extensive site with bio, videos, audio clips, and articles by Gandhi.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OuZXRN6Rct0> 10-minute video
- <http://www.gandhitopia.org/video/mahatma-gandhi-pilgrim-of> 45 minute documentary  
Gandhi Serve Foundation. *Mahatma Gandhi – Pilgrim of Peace* 1997

### Hawking, Stephen, Theoretical Physicist

- <http://www.hawking.org.uk/> Biographical info and video links.
- <http://www.biography.com/people/stephen-hawking-9331710> Print bio and short videos.
- <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/stephen-hawking-master-of-the-universe/> 10-minute video.
- <http://video.pbs.org/video/2365154805/> Documentary film. 1 hr. 25 min.

### Ho, David, M.D., AIDS Research Pioneer

- <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/hoa0int-1> In depth biography and audio interview
- [http://www.adarc.org/david\\_ho\\_424.html](http://www.adarc.org/david_ho_424.html) print bio
- <http://www.rockefeller.edu/research/faculty/labheads/DavidHo/> print bio

### Jobs, Steve, Computer Technology Innovator

- <http://bloom.bg/100o0Dz> 20-minute documentary of contributions to technology
- <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2005/june15/jobs-061505.html>  
Full text of Steve Jobs' commencement address at Stanford University in June, 2005. Includes link to video of his presentation (15 minutes). Excellent autobiographical account of adversity he faced.
- <http://www.biography.com/people/steve-jobs-9354805> Bio and short videos.
- <http://allaboutstevejobs.com/bio/bio.php> Bio and other info.

### Mandela, Nelson, Civil Rights and Political Leader of South Africa

- [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/margiewarrell/nelson-mandela-his-life-w\\_b\\_4394683.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/margiewarrell/nelson-mandela-his-life-w_b_4394683.html) Print bio.
- <http://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/biography> Print articles.
- <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/biography-nelson-mandela> Print articles
- <http://www.nelsonmandela.org/multimedia/entry/nelson-mandelas-life-story-documentary> 13 min. film
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/mandela/> 1 hr. 50 min. film with transcript
- <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/218502.htm> Maya Angelous pays tribute to Nelson Mandela

### Matsumura, Naoto, Survivor of Japanese Nuclear Disaster, Animal Welfare Advocate

- <http://documentary.net/alone-in-the-zone-tending-abandoned-animals-in-fukushima/> 18 min. film
- <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2011/12/18/general/lone-holdouts-first-nuclear-winter-looms-in-tohoku/#.UvphGCigGCg> Print article. Dec. 2011.



**Bunt!**

## Web Quest Sources: Overcoming Adversity to Beat the Odds



### Montemayor, Sonia, Supreme Court Justice

- <http://www.biography.com/people/sonia-sotomayor-453906> Print bio.
- <http://www.npr.org/2013/01/14/169157494/of-the-people-sonia-sotomayor-s-amazing-rise>  
Farago, Jason. "Of the People: Sonia Sotomayor's Amazing Rise". Review of her autobiography.
- <http://www.npr.org/2014/01/13/262067546/as-a-latina-sonia-sotomayor-says-you-have-to-workharder>  
Audio interview with transcript. Lots of discussion of adversity.
- [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Background-on-Judge-Sonia-Sotomayor/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Background-on-Judge-Sonia-Sotomayor/) Print bio.

### Parks, Rosa, Civil Rights Activist

- <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/par0int-1> In depth biography and interview.
- <http://www.biography.com/people/rosa-parks-9433715/videos/rosa-parks-mini-biography-2078965885>  
5-minute video of Rosa Parks' role in the Civil Rights Movement.
- <http://www.rosaparksfacts.com/rosa-parks-videos.php> Several short videos, biography, time line.

### Robinson, Jackie, Professional Baseball Player

- <http://www.jackierobinson.org/about/jackie.php> Print biography.
- <http://www.biography.com/people/jackie-robinson-9460813> Bio and short videos.
- [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_events\\_jackie.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_jackie.html) Good description of adversity he faced.

### Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, U.S. President

- [http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/education/resources/bio\\_fdr.html](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/education/resources/bio_fdr.html) print biography
- <http://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/franklin-d-roosevelt> several short videos and print bio
- <http://www.biography.com/people/franklin-d-roosevelt-9463381> several short videos and print bio
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/fdr/player/> 4 hr. film in segments

### Sa-Soon, Cha, South Korean, Passed Driving Test after 960 Tries

- [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-11-24/opinion/ct-edit-persistence-20101124\\_1\\_kids-chilean-miners-spot](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-11-24/opinion/ct-edit-persistence-20101124_1_kids-chilean-miners-spot) "960 Times" Nov. 2010 Humorous Feature Article
- <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/04/world/asia/04driver.html?pagewanted=all> Feature story.

### Wiesel, Elie, Author, Holocaust survivor, Humanitarian

- <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/wieobio-1> bio, profile, and video interview
- <http://www.eliewiesel.foundation.org/eliewiesel.aspx> Print bio.
- <http://www.pbs.org/eliewiesel/life/> Print bio.
- <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007205> Speech opposing genocide
- <https://www.schooltube.com/video/7d5afe2a261101d87e45/> Interview & documentary.

### Yousafzai, Malala, Young Pakistani Activist

- <http://www.biography.com/print/profile/malala-yousafzai-21362253> print bio
- <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45395&Cr=education&Cr1=#.UvrdTiigGCg>  
Text and 17-minute embedded video of Malala's speech to the U.N.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjGL6YY6oMs> Insightful 16-minute interview with Jon Stewart
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPPuhqIRWuI> 57 minutes, Taliban's targeting of Pakistani schools

### Zayid, Maysoon Comedian, Actress, Activist

- <http://imeu.net/news/article004946.shtml> Print bio.
- [http://wn.com/maysoon\\_zayid](http://wn.com/maysoon_zayid) Video of comedy performance about stereotyping and prejudice
- <file:///Users/ilcrabtree/Desktop/Comedian/Maysoon%20Zayid%20%7C%20Profile%20on%20TED.com.w>  
[ebarchive](#) Short article on her use of comedy to break cultural barriers.
- <http://www.maysoon.com/> Maysoon's website about her activities and causes



***Bunt!***

# APPENDIX B



# Answer Keys

*Bunt!*



## Prereading

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### ***Quickwrite: Adversity***

Of the three prereading activities, this is the most important in establishing an understanding of the unit theme. When teaching the book as a classroom unit, it's helpful to record the responses on a chart as they are shared in class discussion and then post the chart. Students might define adversity as hardships, misfortune, difficulties, obstacles, problems, conflicts, or situations which work against us. Encourage them to expand upon where adversity comes from -- from within ourselves, from our environment (school, home, neighborhood), or from other people (family, peers, friends, coworkers, strangers). Their answers to how we overcome adversity will vary greatly. Remain nonjudgmental when students give inappropriate answers; instead, encourage them to voice different perspectives without arriving at a consensus. Use this debate as the gateway into the novel – in this book Bennie's only passion is to play baseball. With all the cards stacked against him, he must learn how to overcome adversity in order to beat the odds.

### ***What We Know About Baseball***

Possible parts of the field and player positions will include: infield, outfield, pitcher's mound, foul line, 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> bases, home plate, coach's box, batter's and catcher's boxes, and the on-deck circle.

### ***Four Corners***

Encourage students to not be swayed by anyone else's opinion when filling out the questionnaire. Follow up by asking for a show of hands for the answers to each question. When there is distinct polarity, encourage students to explain why they think their choice is the best. If short on time, select just a few of the questions to publicly air opinions about.

## Questions for Study and Discussion

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### **Chapter 1**

#### **pp 1-4**

Based on the kid's high batting average, Coach assumes that the newly arrived player will be a power hitter; instead the kid has a comical, quirky hitting style far from that of a power hitter. Coach expects that the new kid, like all good players, will follow Coach's hand signals; instead the new kid ignores him and does whatever he wants to when up at bat. For example, Coach gives him the take signal, expecting Bennie to let the ball go by. Instead Bennie hits the ball straight at the pitcher's foot.

#### **pp 5-9**

The flashback occurs when Bennie is in the student union at Skyline Community College during spring finals. A man dressed in a suit hands him a Bears baseball cap and tells him to be in Pismo the next day. The author might have wanted to create more curiosity and excitement for the reader by opening the novel with the kid's first game with the Bears.



**pp 9-15**

As team manager, Skip is optimistic, calm, open-minded, and easy-going. Coach is generally pessimistic, constantly active and motivational when working with the players, but demanding and temperamental when his authority is challenged.

Opinions will vary. Some may feel that a good coach needs to establish clear standards and enforce them consistently. Others might feel that a good coach needs to treat players as individuals and be responsive to their needs.

**pp 15-17**

Coach tells Bennie to keep his top hand low on the bat, grip the bat tight, and swing flat for more power. Bennie disagrees, claiming that his personal style is smallball. Reader's opinions will vary. Some may think that Bennie needs to learn new skills to benefit the team. Others might feel that Bennie's individual talent is what will benefit the team and he shouldn't be made to conform to a style that's not natural for him.

**pp 17-19**

The other players try to help Bennie learn the style of hitting that Coach is teaching him. T.J. says Bennie should hold his head still, while Juan says he should put his weight on his back foot first. Pedro tells him to stay up on his toes. Carlos says he needs to think about where he wants the ball to go. Johnnie, on the other hand, says the kid should go back to playing his own style of smallball. Bennie's performance has been so poor since trying to change his batting style that Skip and Coach have considered sending him back.

**pp 19-21**

In the first game after Coach goes on personal leave, Bennie's performance is lackluster until Johnnie hints that Bennie should go back to his smallball. Bennie follows his advice, with a bunt that lands him on first, bringing in a run that ties the game.

**Chapter 2****pp 23-26**

Bennie is like a genie, producing a magical effect on the team and the fans. He brings excitement to the game and renewed confidence to the players as they win more games and the enthusiastic crowds increase in size.

**pp 26-28**

Coach thinks that this is a short-lived streak; once the surprise wears off, the other teams will figure out Bennie's bag of tricks and they'll destroy him. In the last two lines of the chapter, we get a sense that Coach may be losing control over the other players as well. Answers will vary for responses to the last question.

**pp 29-33**

Bennie jogs, does footwork drills with a jump rope, performs tai-chi, runs up and down the stadium steps, does 100 push ups, and tosses and fields against a concrete wall 500 times before joining the regular team warm-up of batting and fielding. Bennie outplays Johnnie at tennis; Johnny has a hard time keeping up with Bennie during his exercise routine and falls asleep from exhaustion after working out with Bennie.

**pp 34-37**

Coach thinks Bennie is not playing his own position and is trying to show off. He is upset that Bennie caused an error that almost made the Bears lose a game.



Johnnie shares his insights into the Bears and his secrets of success as a player with Bennie. He feels that Bennie needs to enjoy life more and takes him places where he can have fun. Bennie explains to Johnnie that the strategies magicians use to misdirect attention and deceive are the strategies he uses in baseball.

**pp 40-44**

The text describes Bennie Ball as “an attitude, a mindset. An intense, enthusiastic immersion in the game”. The players are performing at their peak, while Bennie continues to succeed in outwitting the other teams with his unpredictable bunts. The Bears start making distracting comments to rattle the other team when they’re on base. The fans have names for all the kinds of bunts and love talking about their favorite plays. The answer to the last question is open-ended.

**Chapter 3****pp. 45-46**

These memories help us understand how Bennie’s love for baseball began.

**pp. 46-49**

Bennie is fearless, with high energy and unflinching determination to excel compared to the other children. We learn that Bennie’s Dad has left his family. His mom is dominated by a boyfriend who’s not very caring toward Bennie or his mom. Bennie’s 12-year-old sister, who is sometimes left alone in the house to watch Bennie, is somewhat protective of him.

**pp. 49-52**

When Bennie leaves his apartment, he passes small concrete houses with tiny yards, a large fenced-in area with more than fifty 80-foot electrical towers, fast food places, parking lots, and billboards. It does not seem like an attractive or healthy place for kids to grow up in. There isn’t any safe place where kids can play ball.

**pp. 52-53**

Bennie is venting his anger at his dad for abandoning him and letting out his hatred of his mom’s boy friend, Mike, for hitting his mom.

**pp. 53-54**

Bennie’s teachers are concerned that there may be family problems at home; Benny seems smart, but is not doing well academically and is falling asleep in school. He doesn’t seem to have any friends.

**pp. 54-55**

Ray may feel sorry for Bennie because he is friendless. He might be lonely himself and in need of companionship. Maybe he likes baseball and would like to be able to play catch with someone.

**pp. 55-56**

As Sarah Ann gets older, she cares the most about having things for herself—her clothes, her tech devices, her friends, her space. She cares least about having a good relationship with Bennie.

**pp. 56-58**

Both Bennie and Ray try to make themselves as invisible as possible around other people, tailoring their actions to not be noticed.

**pp. 58-59**

When Bennie comes home with the baseball glove, his excitement is dimmed by Mike’s accusations that he stole it and by Mike’s demands to give it to him.

Ray plays catch with Bennie and also invents a board game about Major League Baseball that he plays with Bennie.

## **Chapter 4**

### **pp. 65-67**

Ken is Asian and lives in a well-to-do neighborhood at the top of the hill, while Bennie lives at the bottom of the hill where people live in apartments or on rundown streets. Both Ken and Bennie love baseball and work hard to improve their skill.

### **pp. 68-73**

Kids in both neighborhoods make negative comments and try to make them feel unwelcome in a place where they don't belong.

### **pp. 73-76**

On the negative side, Kenny feels that Bennie is not liked, has no friends, is not sociable, and is focused on baseball to the exclusion of everything else. On the positive side, Ken admires Bennie for knowing exactly what he wants. Ken feels inner pressure to not let Bennie become a better ball player than himself, and finds himself looking forward to his chances to practice with Bennie.

### **pp. 76-78**

Bennie has given up his share of the bedroom so his sister can lock the door to protect herself from Mike. Bennie now sleeps in the dining room with his clothes in cardboard boxes. One day Bennie starts to call the cops when Mike tries to make advances on Sarah Ann. Bennie gets caught in the middle of fights between his mom and Mike and is worried about Mike hurting his mom.

### **pp. 78-85**

Answers will vary. Ken and his family are very welcoming, cordial, and fun to be around. Ken takes Bennie on a train to the Giants' stadium and they visit popular spots around San Francisco. Kenny's dad takes the boys to the batting machines where he coaches Bennie on his swing; one evening Ken's mom alters a uniform to fit Bennie so he can fill in for a missing player on Ken's baseball team. The Soto family trusts Bennie to take care of the their dog when they're away. Bennie and Ken together search for groups of kids they can join to play baseball.

## **Chapter 5**

### **pp. 87-95**

Answers will vary. Some might agree with Bennie that you can't judge how to hit a ball until you see it in the air and that the players play the game, not the coach. Others might argue that the coach sees the big picture and is the best judge of what choices to make to win the game.

### **pp. 95-99**

The team's performance worsens as a result of the team rebellion. There is more partying after the games and there are more errors during the games. Some of the best hitters are mimicking Benny's style of hitting and losing their rhythm. The Bears lose focus and there's friction between Devon and Bennie.

### **pp. 99-105**

When the Bears hit a losing streak, Skip decides to end the rebellion. He benches Bennie and Coach pulls Johnny out of the game. Skip trades Pedro for a player from another team. After their best player, Johnnie, gets called up and Bennie gets hurt, it will be hard for the Bears to get the wins they need for 1<sup>st</sup> place.

**pp. 106-107**

The Bears lose their last game and are tied for first; they will be in a one-game playoff to decide the CA League Championship.

**Chapter 6**

**pp. 109-112**

This flashback takes place at Bennie's school, Ken's home, and Bennie's home.

Bennie is 14 years old and in eighth grade.

**pp. 112-115**

Unk is Ken's elderly uncle who is visiting from Japan. He played in Nippon Professional Baseball for four years until a knee injury ended his career.

**pp. 115-118**

One exercise Unk teaches the boys is to hold two pencils with the number facing them. With one pencil close and one far away, he has them shift their eyes back and forth between the two pencils repeatedly. This improves their ability to spot the ball. He also writes numbers on the different planes of a Wiffle ball and has the boys read the numbers as the ball twirls around; this improves their ability to concentrate on the ball. Later he puts different colors on a ball and has the boys name what colors they see when the ball is pitched, so they can spot different types of pitches.

**pp. 119-122**

Bennie has been looking for a chance to try out the skills he has been working on throughout the winter, and the pick-up game with older kids on a full-size baseball field gives him that chance.

**pp. 122-125**

For the leg warmer exercise Unk has Bennie run up and down the hill several times. This strengthens his legs and improves his breath control.

**pp. 126-129**

The game of Pepper teaches the boys to be unafraid of catching the ball, which helps them play infield. In Toss Up the boys hit to the area of the field Unk calls out, helping them play outfield.

**Chapter 7**

**pp. 131-133**

Bennie's mom has lost her job and stays home most of the time; the rest of the family tries to stay away from her. Sarah Ann puts down Bennie and humiliates him at home and at school. Bennie tries to stand up to Sarah Ann, but her loudness and viciousness overpower him.

**pp. 134-139**

The coaches plan to position Ken as a starting pitcher for the team. He can place pitches where he wants them and is close to mastering the different types of pitches. He is also a good hitter.

Benny is a utility player. He's fast and has an accurate throwing hand. Bennie's energy and enthusiasm send him all over the field, which sometimes can be a hindrance.

**pp. 139-144**

Bennie gets to see the inner workings of a professional baseball team. He listens to the hitting coach's sessions with the players and repeats the coach's advice to himself as he works. In the locker room he observes the way the players tape their ankles, oil their gloves, and prepare themselves mentally for games.

**pp. 145-148****Answer Keys Continued**

Mike kicks Bennie out of the house when Bennie refuses to give Mike money that he intended to give his mom. Oliver, a previous varsity high school teammate who now goes to community college, lets Bennie sleep at his place and helps him with his schoolwork. Oliver talks his community college coach into letting Bennie join an off-season training program for baseball.

The uniqueness of Bennie's hitting style is that he is learning to "control the way a batted ball behaves after it hits the ground".

**pp. 148-152**

At first Bennie misses pitches and gets hit a lot, irritating the coach. Ken thinks Bennie is fooling around, tampering with the bat, and trying to change the game. Bennie denies tampering with the bat, but affirms that his game is to change the game.

**Chapter 8****pp. 153-159**

Answers will vary. Skip will probably talk about what they need to do to win the game. Coach seems to have realized that Bennie's unpredictable hits could help them in the game. Bennie realizes that he may have to change his approach because of his injury and because of the way the team is playing.

**pp. 159-166, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Innings**

At the start of the game, the players and coach seem unusually calm and in sync with each other.

**pp. 166-170, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Innings**

Coach's new strategy is to let Bennie hit his twisties sometimes, but Bennie will also hit the way Coach signals him sometimes. The other players will follow Coach's signals when at bat and on base.

**pp. 171-175, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Innings**

Sato's pitching is keeping the Quakes in the lead. In seven innings he has only allowed one run and six hits. In the sixth inning he strikes out Bennie with 3 great pitches, a rare occurrence for Bennie.

**pp. 175-178, 8<sup>th</sup> Inning**

The Bears get two men on base. When Bennie comes up to bat, his hit shatters the bat and by the time the Quakes get to the ball, T. J. has scored a run. With 2 runners on base and 1 out, Winnie steals third. When Sato pitches a slider that gets by the catcher, Winnie scores the tying run.

**pp. 179-189, 9<sup>th</sup> Inning**

With the bases loaded, Bennie bunts a twister that hits Sato in the calf and then careens unpredictably toward third. Meantime, Juan makes it home, while Bennie barely escapes being tagged at first, winning the championship for the Bears. Ken has pitched an outstanding game and Bennie might be throwing him the ball simply to compliment him on his performance. On a deeper level, Bennie might be thinking of his countless boyhood experiences with Ken and the friendship that grew out of their mutually shared passion for baseball. Over the years Ken has welcomed Bennie into his family, home, and ring of friends. Through Ken Bennie has been able to participate in a broader world and gain perspectives different from those provided by his own family and community. It is Ken who first introduced Bennie to the game of ping-pong, from which Bennie developed his unique style of bunting. When Bennie tosses the ball to Ken and says, "This belongs to you," in a way he is recognizing the role that Ken's friendship has played in making him who he is today.

### ***Personalities on the Playing Field***

#### **Benny Bruno**

He is determined, self-disciplined, persistent, diligent, unpredictable, independent, and self-taught. He wants to develop a unique batting style that brings him success as a player.

#### **Skip, the Team Manager**

He is an optimist, deft with people, easygoing, open-minded, friendly, relaxed, and assertive. He wants to let Bennie play his own style of ball, despite Coach's objections.

#### **Coach Jackson**

He is skilled in his craft, strategic, energetic, irritable, authoritative, pessimistic, confrontational, sarcastic, judgmental, and easily offended. He wants complete authority and respect as the coach.

#### **Johnnie Jett**

He is skilled, self-disciplined, ambitious, and professional. He wants to make it to the Majors.

#### **Shared Traits and Motives**

They all are passionate about baseball. They all want to win games.

### ***The Central Conflict: Bennie vs. Coach***

#### **Chapter 1**

##### **Event 1 Effect**

Coach Jackson feels irritated because he needs a power hitter and Bennie ignores his signals.

##### **Event 2 Effect**

Bennie doesn't understand why Coach doesn't appreciate his skill at smallball, but he tries to follow Coach's batting instructions and goes hitless for two weeks.

#### **Chapter 2**

##### **Event 3 Effect**

While Coach is out of town Johnnie persuades Bennie to go back to his style of smallball.

##### **Event 4 Effect**

Coach fears that he's losing control of the team and thinks that the team's winning streak won't last. Skip wants Coach to let Bennie continue playing smallball and see where it will take the team.

#### **Chapter 5**

##### **Event 5 Effect**

Skip ends the revolt by benching Bennie and trading Pedro.

##### **Event 6 Effect**

Coach tells Bennie to stop trying to run the team.

#### **Chapter 8**

##### **Event 7 Effect**

Bennie agrees to follow Coach's signs. Coach agrees to let Bennie hit his twisties, as long as the players know where the twistie will go.

##### **Event 8 Effect**

As a result, Bennie hits a twisty against pitcher Ken Sato in the final inning, bringing Juan home from third to score the winning run.

## ***Chapters 3 & 4: The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood***

### **Chapter 3**

#### **1. Textual Evidence**

Answers will vary. See pp. 45, 46, and 49.

#### **2. Inference**

Playing ball helps Bennie release his anger over Mike's abusiveness and his dad's indifference.

#### **3. Textual Evidence**

### **Chapter 4**

#### **1. Inference**

Bennie doesn't have the same opportunities as kids from more wealthy schools. He's too poor to pay for sports programs, and without his family's support he has to be resourceful and self-reliant.

#### **2. Inference**

Because Bennie is from the poor part of the neighborhood, Ken's friends feel that Ken shouldn't be associating with him. Ken is unaffected by their remarks and tells Bennie to ignore their taunts

#### **3. Textual Evidence**

Answers will vary. See pp. 67, 68, 71-74, 78, 81-83

#### **4. Textual Evidence**

Answers will vary. See pp. 75 and 80.

## ***Chapters 6 & 7: The Ups and Downs of Bennie's Childhood***

### **Chapter 6**

#### **1. Inference**

Bennie works hard to improve his performance when he practices. He uses his power of observation and problem-solving skills to improve his performance. He realizes that he can apply skills he's learned in other activities such as ping-pong to help him control where the ball will go.

#### **2. Textual Evidence**

Answers will vary. See pp. 116-118, 124-128.

#### **3. Inference**

Ken's dad influences him to do well in school and pursue many interests. In contrast, Bennie's parents take little interest in his activities and offer no encouragement to do well in anything.

### **Chapter 7**

#### **1. Inference**

Bennie was trying to do a good thing by giving money he had earned to his mother. But when Mike takes the money from her, Bennie confronts him and the conflict escalates to a breaking point. Now Bennie will have to find a place to live on his own while he tries to finish high school.

#### **2. Textual Evidence**

Answers will vary. See p. 146.

#### **3. Inference**

This is moment when Bennie realizes that all of his hard work has paid off. He finally has accomplished a batting style that's different from anyone else's.

#### **4. Textual Evidence**

Answers will vary. See pp. 148-152

## ***Childhood Allies & Adversaries***

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**Ken's Mom and Dad** pp. 72, 75, 80, 81

They are kind and generous, respecting Bennie as an individual. Ken's dad takes the boys to use the batting machines and gives Bennie advice on his swing. Ken's mom alters an extra uniform so Bennie can stand in for a missing player on Ken's baseball team.

**Ken** pp. 65-85, 110-111, 119-123, 128, 135-136, 138-139, 149-152

He and Bennie start out as loyal friends, joyfully immersing themselves in baseball, inventing ways to practice and improve their skills, mutually supporting each other's efforts, and exploring opportunities beyond their own neighborhoods together. At first Ken overlooks his differences with Bennie. Eventually a rift occurs in their relationship when Ken tires of Bennie's constant experimentation and accuses Bennie of trying to cheat and change the game.

**Unk** pp. 114-118, 124-128, 143

Unk has an empowering influence on Bennie. Noting Bennie's determination and passion for baseball, he introduces him to numerous training exercises used in Japan. These exercises help build Bennie's alertness and endurance. He leaves a lasting impact on Bennie when he tells Bennie that he has "a strong spirit" and something "special".

**Bennie's Mom** pp. 48-49, 73, 76-80, 113, 132, 145

At first Bennie's mom seems to care about him and take interest in his activities, but she gives in to Mike's negative domination. She does not protect and stand up for Bennie or Sarah Anne when Mike threatens their welfare. Bennie cannot rely on her for help or trust her advice.

**Mike** pp. 48-49, 58-59, 73, 76-80, 84, 113, 132, 145

Mike doesn't care at all about Bennie or Sarah Ann; he becomes a serious threat to their welfare when he attempts to sexually abuse Sarah Ann and kicks Bennie out of the house. He is lazy, argumentative, selfish, and domineering, creating a constant negative atmosphere in the home.

**Sarah Ann** pp. 48-49, 76-78, 112-113, 132-133, 139

At first she is protective of Bennie, but later turns to unleashing all her anger on him. As the stresses at home increase, she becomes more self-centered and callous. She publicly humiliates Bennie at school and embarrasses him in front of Ken. Even though Bennie tries to protect her from Mike, she pushes Bennie away from her emotionally, instead of trying to develop a closer relationship.

**Ray** pp. 53-62, 140

He is one of the few adults that is trustworthy and caring throughout Bennie's early school days. Noticing Bennie's love of baseball and isolation, he tries to draw Bennie out by playing catch with him and inventing a baseball board game that they can play together. Later he helps Bennie get a part-time job working at a big league stadium.

**Oliver** pp. 136-138, 146

Oliver is a supportive friend who helps Bennie mature. He understands what it's like to live in a cramped home situation and helps Bennie adapt to life on the high school baseball team. When Bennie gets kicked out of his house, Oliver gives him a place to sleep. He helps Bennie put more effort into schoolwork and persuades his junior college coach to let Bennie work out with them.

## Literary Devices

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### ***Figuratively Speaking***

1. Onomatopoeia
2. Irony of situation
3. Hyperbole
4. Verbal irony
5. Alliteration, simile
6. Onomatopoeia, simile
7. Metaphor
8. Personification, alliteration, simile

### ***Narrator's Voice: 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View***

1. The form of 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrative is omniscient. The narrator is able to look inside the mind of each character and reveal he is thinking and feeling.
2. Skip is tired and can't sleep. He keeps thinking about the mistakes they've made and what they need to do to win. Coach is glad that the team is now under control, but regrets that the team's spark is gone. He worries about the missing players and Bennie. Bennie lies awake trying to figure out how to play with his injured ankle without overstepping Coach. Ken is exhausted from the bus ride and thinks about how he can outperform Bennie on the field.
3. Students might feel that the scene builds suspense and makes them feel tense, worried, or excited. They might consider it a good writing strategy because it helps us remember what's happened previously and prepares us for the climactic championship game.

### ***Identifying Mood***

1. Desolate
2. Sweltering
3. Delectable
4. Overwhelmed
5. Jubilant
6. Enigmatic
7. Electrifying
8. Morbid
9. Fatalistic
10. Enraged

Responses to "Changing Moods" will vary.