Lesson Plan 1
(Language Arts - Grades 1 - 3)

“My Life as a Bat (Batter, Umpire...)

Narrative essay expressing the student’s perspective of an object or person with the use of a variety of words and detail.

The materials needed are a paper and pencil, and a creative imagination.

Before the game, read a variety of baseball oriented literature. The students will then choose to become a bat, baseball, pitcher, umpire, outfielder, infielder, hot dog, vendor, front office employee, etc., and begin a preliminary draft of a composition written from the perspective of that object or person. Discuss an author’s need to research their topics and to take from authentic experiences. Then have the student make a list of what to look for and pay attention to at the game in order to contribute detail and interest in their composition. Review examples of some of the sights, sounds, etc., which students may experience at the game.

At the game, inform the students to gather as much sensory experience as possible for their story. Think of the description words to represent the sights, sounds, smells and feelings surrounding their “character” in the story (crack of the bat, the smell of the hot dogs, etc.). Write down the experiences, words and feelings. To create more focus, have the students limit one sense to one inning. Examples: During the first inning have students focus on the sounds of the bat, the umpires, etc. Throughout the second inning have the students focus on what they see; and during the seventh inning have the students focus on the smells.

After the game, have students complete their compositions incorporating the information, experiences and words gathered from the game. Explore some of the likes/dislikes, best/worst of the game. How does the perception of the character differ after the experience of the game and the character’s participation at the game?
Lesson Plan 2
(Language Arts – Grades 1 - 3)

“WDTM” (What Does This Mean?)

Throughout this lesson, students will explore the language commonly used in baseball by examining the titles of baseball statistics. Students have the opportunity to compose phrases with the given initials and create phrases to describe events at baseball games as well as day to day occurrences.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of language and elements of nonfiction by responding to items in which they analyze the text, discern major ideas and supporting ideas. It may be helpful to make and use tables to record and sort information throughout the exercise.

Suggested material includes newspaper sports pages, paper and pencil.

Before the game, students should search newspaper sports pages (or Appendix C and Appendix D of sporting initials), for initials that describe baseball statistics and compile a list (e.g., RBI, CS, HR, ERA, GIDP, etc…). Have each student generate a list of phrases that the initials could stand for (for example, RBI = Rivera’s Best Inning; ERA = Extra Runs allowed or Everyone Rhymes Always; HR = Hit Runner or Hums Randomly).

At the game, ask the students to be on the lookout for other events and behaviors that they might wish to keep statistics on; BDOOM (balls dropped out of mitts), SOG (spit on ground), MM (mound meetings), etc… and then keep a tally of those events as they occur. Also, some students may wish to keep a tally of the “real” statistics for the game to use to calculate averages and other scorer’s data later.

After the game, determine the kinds of events that can be documented on an ongoing basis at school such as BR (Bells Ringing) or TCT (Times Charlie is Tardy). Create methods for tallying, organizing and representing the data that is collected.
Lesson Plan 3  
(Language Arts - Grades 1 - 3)

“Cause it’s One, Two, Three Squirts of Mustard on the Ol’ Hot Dog!”

Before the game, teach the students the song “Take Me Out to the Ballgame.” (If you can find the book of the same name use that to help). Have the students work in teams of 3 or 4 to composite new words to the song, celebrating or describing another part of the game or general baseball experience (the food, the pitcher, the stadium, the fans, etc.). To follow-up, have the groups share with the entire class.

While at the game, listen to the sounds and music played throughout. Pay special attention when the “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” song is played and sing along.

After the game, write songs that may be sung to the tune of “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” that are about other topics (for example, “Let Us Play Out at Recess,” “School Lunches Aren’t Tasty,” or “A Liquid is Not a Solid.”)
Lesson Plan 4
(Language Arts – Grades 1 - 3)

Expressed Gratitude

After attending the SeaWolves School Day event, discuss with students the reactions from the game and the importance of expressing positive reactions to the appropriate audience. Students may decide to express their appreciation to those responsible for purchasing tickets, to a specific ball player for an entertaining game, to the SeaWolves organization, the sponsor of the School Day, a kind usher or ticket-taker, an umpire for a good call or to chaperones.

Encourage students to use their imaginations when formatting the letter. For instance, the card or letter may take the structure of a scorecard, be written in the language of a radio sportscaster giving play-by-plays, or composed as a comic strip that represents a sequence of events in the game. Ensure that the students make their intentions clear, their response stays on topic, there is detail to support their topic, and they use a variety of words.
Students gather facts from a baseball game and use those facts to compose an article reporting on the game and/or a sportscast describing the game. With the facts they gather, they will be able to demonstrate an understanding of language and elements of nonfiction by responding to items in which they analyze the text, examining, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and/or fact and opinion. The students will express their thoughts effectively through the written word or drawing, and will share their experiences.

Before the game, read and discuss some published articles describing baseball games found in real newspapers and magazines. List how the reporters described Who, What, When, Where and How in the articles. Discuss what kinds of things the reporter probably looked for, did and wrote down while at the event she/he wrote about. Assign teams of students to be responsible for reporting on one inning each at the game. Students may follow one player's performance at the game or from another game to report on. Decide what information is important to gather. Each team should plan how they will record or remember the information they need.

At the game, the teams of students will implement the plans for observing and recalling information from the game.

After the game, teams will work together to compile their observations to share with their audience. Students will use a WWWWH format to organize the information from their inning or about their player. They may represent their news through a collaborative written paragraph, a list of information or through sequential drawings.

If you wish your students to extend their work by giving a presentation (sportscast or sports reporting), bring in videos of televised sports reporting from ESPN, Fox Sportsnews or network TV to watch and discuss. Then videotape the presentations to share with parents or other audiences.
Students have the opportunity to write a journal account of the day in the life of an Erie SeaWolves player. Allow the students to be as creative as possible.

Before the game, discuss the use of a journal. Let students create their own journal notebook from front to back. Students may decorate the journal using stickers, markers, magazine pictures, etc. Have students do an Internet search to research players that have been sent to the Detroit Tigers or other major league teams from the SeaWolves. Jot down notes from the information gathered.

At the game, instruct the students to take notes in preparation for writing a journal entry from the perspective of a player. Students might included how the player feels, what are his expectations for the game, how well is he playing (or not playing), etc…. Be sure the students give the journal a title. (Examples: “A Day in the Life of Nook Logan,” or “School Day, May 11, 2004.”)

After the game, allow the students some time to write their journal entries, and express their need to be creative. Have students share with fellow classmates, and if the students wish they may send their journals to the Erie SeaWolves player. Compare and contrast journals. In addition, do a biographical report on a famous player or dress up like that player (Examples: Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle or Jackie Robinson).
Lesson Plan 7
Roving Reporter
(Language Arts - Grades 3 -5)

To begin, provide students with a non-fiction text (newspaper article) to read or have students cut out a sports article from a local newspaper. In response to the reading, have the students summarize and analyze the components of the article. Their understanding of non-fiction will later help them demonstrate the use of language in non-fiction writing in the next exercise.

Students now have the opportunity to write a news story relating to a baseball game or topic. The following materials may be used throughout the project: sports section of the newspaper, newspaper account of a School Day at Jerry Uht Park, and the Internet.

Before the game, read the sports section with the class as an example of what is expected of them. As a class, write a descriptive, yet fictional, account of a sporting event. Include all necessary components.

While at the game, have students take notes to include in their news article assignment. Students may choose to write about the game day (a player, school day at the park, food at the park, front office staff, the game crowd, etc.) or perhaps interview individuals at Jerry Uht Park.

After the game, have the students write their news article, and put them together to form a class sports section. Share the sporting news with the rest of the school or include in the school newspaper (if applicable).
As a part of the game day experience, students will be active participants in evaluating the activities at the game. Students will then write a letter to the SeaWolves Front Office voicing their own ideas and opinions of the School Day event.

Before the game, tell the students they will be going to the game and there will be several other schools from around the area in attendance. Your class has been selected by the Erie SeaWolves Front Office to evaluate the activities at the game, and they will have the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions through a written personal experience narrative or letter. Remember the activities created and evaluated should have an educational focus. Have students brainstorm, but have the students take into account the logistics of carrying out the smallest tasks and 90-second time limitations between innings.

At the game, students will take notes on the activities that occurred throughout the game. How could they be improved? What other ideas do you have? Have students write down ideas, thoughts, and feelings while they are at the game, but also enjoy the game.

After the game, as a class list the activities that the students observed (contests, scoreboard activities, concession stand accessibility, Fun Zone, etc). Create a list of new ideas as well. Have students write a personal experience narrative or report based on the School Day they attended. Create a rough draft of a letter to the School Day Coordinator at the Erie SeaWolves, including things that they would like to see improved or implemented at the School Day events.

Revise, Rewrite and send the letter to the Erie SeaWolves Front Office.
Lesson Plan 9  
Investigative Reporting  
(Language Arts - Grades 6 - 9)

Students will be able to:

- Write an informational piece utilizing the writing process to make the writing activity clear for the intended audience.
- Identify significant individuals from the past and explain their contributions.

Before the game, have the students choose from the following topics:

- Jerry Uht Park
- Detroit Tigers
- Erie SeaWolves
- Minor League Baseball
- Pennsylvania History
- The City of Erie

1. Create 20 questions that cover the topic of study. Include the answers. Compile the results and transform into a “Trivial Pursuit” style game.
2. Create a timeline that shows both the dates and significant people within your topic. Include pictures if possible.
3. Write a news story about what you learned as if you are a news reporter.
4. List reasons why your topic should be studied in our schools. Develop a play of study or events that the students could participate in that would make a difference in our society.
5. Describe in a story, poem, and/or song format your topic.
6. Tell students they will write a proposal as if they were the mayor of their community. This proposal should attempt to explain how your topic is important to the community and should be preserved. This proposal should include how the topic can be improved for families, entertainment, cultural areas, etc.

At the game, collect evidence that supports your topic at “School Days.” Jot down any observations, events, or facts that will support your proposal.

After the game, the student will write a proposal. Mail your investigative findings to an appropriate individual within each category and follow up via mail to that individual to gather their comments and opinion.
Lesson Plan 10
“A Cat has Nine Lives,
Baseball has Nine Innings”
(Language Arts – Grades 6 - 9)

Students will be able to write a fictional narrative utilizing the writing process to make the writing activity clear for the intended audience. Students will need a news article from a recent SeaWolves game and possibly a baseball.

Before the game, show the baseball to the students. Discuss how a baseball feels during a baseball game (You may want to discuss animate and inanimate objects). Pass the baseball around the class. As the students hold the ball, read the article. At appropriate times during the article, ask students to stand, holding the ball, and describe how the ball felt when the action was occurring. After the article is read, engage the students in dialogue concerning the types of writing found in the sports section of the newspaper. Pass a copy of the article out to the students. Using the article, instruct students to write a fictional narrative describing the nine innings of life that a baseball lives, from the baseball’s perspective. Have students set the tone in their narrative making it light and funny or dramatic.

At the game, record what happens to the baseball for one inning (where it’s thrown, if it’s hit, etc…).

After the game, students should use the facts they gathered from “School Days” to create other written works such as:
- Exposition
- Summary (summarize the events of one inning of the SeaWolves players)
- Personal Experience Narrative (write about your trip to the stadium)
- Persuasive Writing (write one paragraph to convince your parents to bring you to another SeaWolves game)
- Informational Writing (write a description of your day at the game depicting events in order of occurrence)
- Letters (Draft a letter to one of your favorite players)
- Invitations
- Thank You Notes (write and send a thank you not to your teacher for taking you to the, the players, the front office staff at the SeaWolves, etc.)
- Letter to the Editor
- Directions (write clear directions from your seat to the nearest concession stand)
- Journal

Or you may have students create a story using their observations from “School Days” about what its like to be a baseball at Jerry Uht Park or another inanimate object at Jerry Uht Park.
Lesson Plan 11
The Story Behind the Songs
(Language Arts - Grades 6 - 9)

Students will be able to develop a clear focused idea, use supporting details, use different sentence structures, proper use of research/resource materials.

Before the game, provide students with the lyrics to “Take me Out to the Ball Game” and “The Star Spangled Banner.” Have the students research the songs (who wrote them, when they were written, why they are sung at the game, and other pertinent information). Have the students memorize the songs if they don’t already know them to be able to sing them at the game.

At the game, have the students write down when the songs are sung, who sings them and have them look at the crowds’ reaction and participation with the songs. Have the students participate in the singing of the songs.

After the game, have the students write an essay explaining the history and importance of these songs. Have the students explain what they saw at the game and their reactions to the participation of the crowd. In addition, have the students pick one of the songs and change the lyrics to the song, to make their own, they may make it more personal or modern.
Students will be able to read and write poems, informational pieces, thank-you letters, letters to the editor, and essays utilizing the writing process to make the writing clear for the intended audience.

1. “Casey at Bat”

You can find “Casey at Bat” in the Appendix.

a. Read all but the last verse of Casey at Bat and ask students to create their own ending.
b. Select a character from the poem and have students create a baseball card for that character.
c. Ask each student to re-write the poem in first, second and third person point-of-views.
d. Ask students to write their own versions of Casey at Bat using a current baseball player or an Erie SeaWolves player.

2. Baseball Lexicon

List baseball terms that mean something totally different outside of baseball (strike, base, pitcher, etc.). How did baseball “slang” words develop?

3. Baseball and News Journalism

a. Ask students to “announce an inning” as if they were baseball t.v. /radio analysts using a taped baseball game.
b. Using “School Days” as the basis for this project, have students write a game story for the class/student newspaper. Clip out the game story from the local newspaper. How were the students’ stories different from the local newspapers?
c. Ask students to create a verbal presentation simulating how a t.v. reporter might use reporting from “School Days” at the Uht.
d. Prepare an interview for a SeaWolves baseball player. Why did you want to ask the questions you did? What do you think the answers will be?

4. Writing Business Letters

a. After the game, direct students to write a thank-you letter to their principal, school district, and the SeaWolves thanking them for allowing the opportunity to attend “School Days.”
b. Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper describing your experience at the Uht.
c. Direct a resume to the Erie SeaWolves on why you should be hired as an Erie SeaWolves coach or marketing/promotional director.
5. Essay Writing

a. What would you do if you were the Coach, General Manager or Owner of the Erie SeaWolves?
b. What does C. Wolf do in the off-season?
c. How do you think baseball originated?
d. Describe “School Days” using each of your senses.
e. If you were the owner, how would you create public interest for the SeaWolves? How would involve the SeaWolves in the Erie community?
f. If you were C. Wolf, what would you do to encourage fans to cheer?

6. Book Reports

Have each student select a book with a baseball theme and create a book report.

7. Baseball Biographies

a. Direct students to create a baseball card – for themselves! What are their hobbies, interests, age, etc…?
b. Choose a baseball player and have them write a biography for that player.

8. Baseball & Music

a. Write a song about Jerry Uht Park and “School Days.”
b. Dissect songs that use baseball as a theme. What are the lyrics saying?

9. KWLs

Create a KWL (What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I Learned) chart about baseball. Complete the “K” and “W” prior to attending the game, and complete the “L” after the game.

10. SeaWolves Fan Club

Start a SeaWolves fan club in your school or classroom. Design:
a. A rap or cheer for the game
b. Fan club button, logo, or banner
c. Fan club pennant to wave at the game.

11. Hand Signals

Hand signals are an important part of the baseball game.
a. See if you can copy the hand signals as you watch the SeaWolves game.
b. Before or after the game, develop your own system of hand signals for different purposes (e.g. signals for the classroom, playground, or cafeteria).

12. Baseball Advertisement

Have students brainstorm in groups as to what products they could invent and sell at a baseball game. Create a poster advertisement, press release, commercial, feature story, logo, slogan and jingle for their new product.
13. Create a Baseball Card

Have students create their own baseball cards. Students can either create their own statistics or borrow them from their favorite SeaWolves player. Include a brief biography. Students may also interview a classmate and create a baseball card for that classmate based upon their interview questions.

14. Create your own Baseball Promotion

Creative promotions are a large part of Minor League Baseball. At “School Days,” what types of events occur in addition to the ballgame that attracts your attention? Have students create their own “zany” promotion that the SeaWolves could implement at the park.