



# PLAYERS IN PIGTAILS

AUTHOR: SHANA COREY

ILLUSTRATOR: REBECCA GIBBON

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Players in Pigtails](#)

**\*\* REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! \*\***

## OVERVIEW

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Did you know that one of America's favorite songs, "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," was written about a girl? And that in the 1940s girls all across America were crazy for our country's favorite game? These little known facts inspired Shana Corey to imagine a story about how one determined girl made her way to the big leagues & found a sisterhood of players in pigtails. With the same exuberant spirit that fueled the formation of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League, joyful text & jubilant pictures celebrate these brave girls' love of the game & the league they called their own." (amazon.com)

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When I was little, I loved stories about olden-day girls--my favorites were *Betsy-Tacy*, *All-of-a-Kind Family*, and *Little House On the Prairie*. Imagine my delight when I went to college and discovered that I could take ENTIRE classes on olden-day girls! I learned to call it women's history, but really--it was the exact same topic I'd been interested in since I was five. Now, I have the great pleasure and honor of editing books for children myself. I also write picture books, most of them true stories about brave women and girls in history. When I'm not writing or editing, I'm usually reading with my two little boys. For additional resources, including lesson plans, book lists, and information on school visits, check out [www.shanacorey.com](http://www.shanacorey.com)

### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Illustrator, Rebecca Gibbon was born in Wales in 1968. The youngest of four children, she was fed on a diet of picture books by Edward Ardizzone, Roger Duvoisin & Richard Scarry; she dreamt of being an illustrator. Rebecca paints in watercolor, ink, and colored pencil, and bases her characters on the people she has met and seen over the years. She lives with her husband and two boys in what was once the Old Village Store. She loves junk shops, flea markets, drinking tea and, of course, drawing.

## THE READ ALOUD

### BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- Whisper to your neighbor what you notice about the girl on the cover of the book.

## PLAYERS IN PIGTAILS

### TOPICS & THEMES:

- History
- Women in sports
- Perseverance

### *Tips for every book!*

### POWER PHRASES:

*I WONDER...*

*I NOTICE...*

*TELL ME MORE...*

### DIGGING DEEPER:

*"Tell me more, why do you think that?"*

*"How do you know that?"*

*"Why do you think they feel like that?"*

*"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"*

- (reader: Introduce the title and author.)

## DURING THE STORY

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*Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content.*

- (p. 3) I wonder if this story takes place in our time?
- (p. 7) How would you feel if your parents didn't support your passion?
- (p. 11) Why is baseball called our national pastime?
- (p. 19) How did Katie feel at Wrigley Field?
- (p. 25) I wonder why everyone thought the girls should be elegant and wear dresses. Any ideas?
- (p. 28) What message did the author want us to take away from this story?

## AFTER READING

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*Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.*

- Do you think girls should be able to play professional baseball?
- Do you think this is fiction or non-fiction and why?

## BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

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- Give a thumbs up if you have ever played or gone to a baseball game.
- If you think boys and girls can be on the same teams, put your hand in the air.
- Has this ever happened to you? Whisper to your neighbor it made you feel.

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING

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- Pair up with a partner and discuss something you really want to do in your life. Tell your partner why you should be able to do it whether you are a girl or a boy.

## SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

### 1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

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- Conduct a picture walk and let students find their favorite page and tell why.
- I wonder why the author, Shana Corey felt the need to write this story?
- How did the illustrator, Rebecca Gibbon show that this story takes place in the past?
- What could you say to someone who doesn't believe you can achieve your dreams?

### Suggested Optional Activity:

- Show the one minute video [Baseball All American Woman's Baseball League](#). Discuss the challenges and accomplishments the girls faced.
- Put vocabulary words from the story onto index cards – one word per card. Create a list of definitions. Lay the cards in the middle of the table. Have one student read the first definition aloud and pick up the vocabulary card that matches. Continue around the table until all cards are gone. (possible words: **determination**: firm or fixed intention to achieve a desired end; **fair**: consistent with rules, logic, or ethics; **impression**: strong influence on the way someone thinks about something or someone else; **obstacle**: something that stands in the way of progress or achievement; **opportunity**: a chance for progress or advancement; **stereotype**: a simplified view of a group of people.)

### 2. WRITING ACTIVITY

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- Write a letter to your parents explaining how boys and girls both can accomplish any goal. Give some examples of goals that could be achieved by boys and girls.

### 3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

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- Have each student read a portion of the poem in the front of the book, “Take Me Out to the Ball Game”. Have them pick their favorite sport, think about what they would say about it, and what they would put into a poem for that sport. Work in teams to write a new poem.

#### COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL. 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7.