



One Season in the Sun

Reading Guide

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Preliminary Remarks

- The following assignments offer tasks and activities from which the teacher or students can choose.
- Many tasks are suitable for talks or presentations to the class.
- Some tasks overlap with others.
- The material can be edited and students may copy instructions, questions, and answers into their exercise books.

About the Author

Joe Schuster is the author of **The Might Have Been**, a finalist for the CASEY Award for the best baseball book of 2012 and named by *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* editors among their 25 favorite fiction books for that year. He has published more than 600 articles, essays and reviews in national and regional periodicals. A member of the faculty of Webster University, he is married and the father of five.

About the Book

Playing major league baseball continues to be high on the list of "all-American dreams" but the chances of anyone getting there are slight. Only one in ten who play minor league ball ever steps onto a big league field for even a single inning or a single time at the plate. While many of us know the names of the greats of the game – Babe Ruth, Stan Musial, Greg Maddux, Reggie Jackson and others enshrined in the Hall of Fame – far more players have careers that pass almost unnoticed by everyone but the most ardent fan. More than one-fifth of everyone who has ever played in the majors had careers there that lasted less than a year. Many of them had big league stays of only a few weeks or less. This book tells the stories of some of those men, who were talented enough to reach the highest height in the sport and perhaps be a hero for a day or a few days but who were unable to last but a short time. Some of them suffered injury. Some of them encountered bad luck. Some had careers shortened because of bias. All of them have fascinating lives.

Pre-Reading Questions

COVER:

What type of feelings does the picture of a baseball on a bench evoke?

TITLE:

What do you think a “Season in the Sun” means?

Activities While Reading

SETTING:

Although there is no one physical setting, the Major League is the destination all the figures we meet seek. What is the same about each place where the game is played?

AS YOU GO:

Write a brief (two to three sentences) character summary of the most interesting player you read about in **One Season in the Sun**.

Do you have a favorite sportsperson? What are some of the challenges to succeed in his or her sport?

Post-Reading Questions**SETTING:**

How does the environment of the Major League affect the players and their lives?

PEOPLE:

What do all the players have in common?

What are some ways that players handle their short-lived careers?

Is there a main player in this book?

Which player's story was most compelling to you? Why?

POINT OF VIEW:

This book is told through the eyes of the author. How do you think Joe Schuster balances being a fan of the game and an expert?

THEME:

The fleeting triumph of one-season professional baseball players dominates the book. Do you think the "moment in the sun" is worth it? Is a dream worth pursuing even if only for a short time?

TITLE:

Now that you have read the book, what does **One Season in the Sun** mean?

SUMMARY:

Write a 90 to 100-word summary of the book's major points.

BOOK CRITIQUE:

Explain what you liked or did not like about **One Season in the Sun**. You can use specific passages to prove your point

WRITING A BIOGRAPHY:

Write a fictional biography of a one-season professional athlete. Describe how he or she made it to the pros, and what ended his or her career. For the final part of the bio, explain what happened to the player on retirement.