

# PAST AND PRESENT: USING BASEBALL STATISTICS TO TEACH MATH

SELECTED HISTORIC PLAYERS:

- [John B. McLean](#)  
(Cincinnati)
- [Michael Mitchell](#)  
(Cincinnati—see image below)
- [Richard Hoblitzell](#)  
(Cincinnati)
- [Edward Sweeney](#)  
(New York)
- [Jack Knight](#)  
(New York)
- [Charles Hemphill](#)  
(New York)
- [Oscar Stange](#)  
(Detroit)
- [James Delahanty](#)  
(Detroit)
- [Charles O'Leary](#)  
(Detroit)
- [George Paskert](#)  
(Philadelphia)
- [Daniel Murphy](#)  
(Philadelphia)
- [Briscoe Lord](#)  
(Philadelphia)
- [Roger Bresnahan](#)  
(St. Louis)
- [Rebel Oakes](#)  
(St. Louis)
- [Frank LaPorte](#)  
(St. Louis)

- **RECOMMENDED FOR: 4th grade Math**  
**(Standard 5: Data, Probability, and Statistics)**

This idea uses baseball cards in the [Baseball Cards, 1887-1914](#) collection. See the list in the left-hand box for selected baseball cards with statistical information on the backs. You can also find baseball statistics over the years at the [Spalding Base Ball Guides, 1889-1939](#) collection.

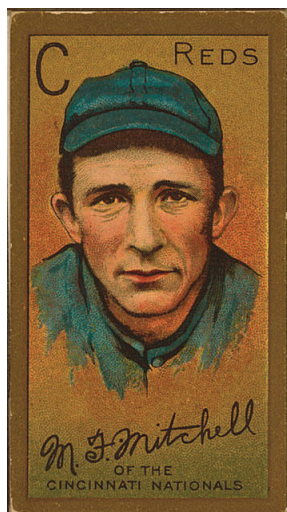
Using the [worksheet](#) provided, have students add together the batting averages for the years shown on the card for each player, then get the player's three-year average. (If a player's card has more than three years, use information from the last three years).

Once students have completed that step, choose a current major league player for students to research. If your classroom is low on computers, you may want to provide the statistics; if you do have enough computers, students can search for the statistics themselves. The Major League Baseball official Web site has a ["Historical Player" search option](#), which can provide statistics on current or former players' past seasons.

Once they have done all the math, students should then think about what has changed in baseball since the early 1900s. Have batting averages, on the whole, gotten better or worse? What could play a factor in increased or decreased batting averages? Do today's baseball cards have the same kinds of statistics?

Other related links include:

- [America's Pastime: Historic Baseball Resources](#)
- [Themed Resources: Baseball](#)
- [By Popular Demand: Jackie Robinson and Other Baseball Highlights, 1860s-1960s](#)



Key:  
G= Games  
B= Batting  
F= Fielding

