

# Major League Success

## Standards/Objectives

- Students will understand the experience of immigrant groups who came to the United States. (McREL)
- **Part A:** Students will learn how immigrants make their own dreams come true by placing the events of Albert Pujols's life in order.
- **Part B:** Students will study Albert Pujols's secrets to success and set goals for themselves to draw a personal connection to the life of an immigrant.

## Materials

- *Albert's Story* photograph card
- *Success Story* facsimile
- copies of student reproducibles (pages 100–104)
- globe or world map
- small stickers
- drawing paper
- copies of the *Student Glossary* (page 116) *optional*

### Photograph Card

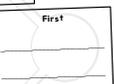
**Albert's Story**

**Showing What You Know**  
Directions: Put the events in Albert's life in order from first base to home plate.

Second



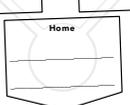
First



Third



Home



**Major League Success**

Albert was born in the Dominican Republic. He lived with his grandmother. They were very poor. But Albert's grandmother raised him to respect and care about others.

Like many boys in the Dominican Republic, Albert loved baseball. He played every day. He dreamed of playing Major League Baseball in America.

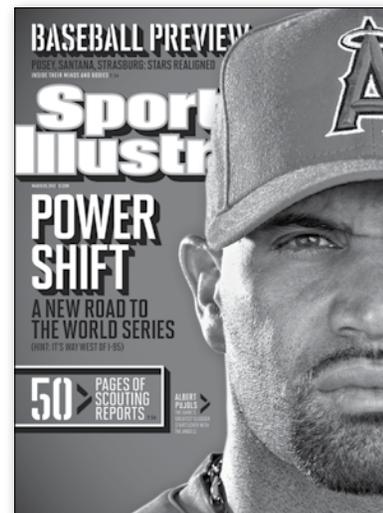
Albert's family wanted a better life. In 1996, they immigrated to the United States. They settled in Independence, Missouri. Albert was 16.

At his new school, Albert made the baseball team. He practiced hard. He was soon the star player!

In 2001, the St. Louis Cardinals asked Albert to play for them. Albert's dream had come true!

**Challenge**  
Make a list of some athletes who came to America from other countries. List their names, home countries, and sports they play. Choose one athlete and find out more about his or her life.

### Facsimile



## Introductory Activity

- Ask students to help you locate the United States on a globe. Then, point out the approximate location of Kansas City, Missouri. Have a volunteer place a small sticker on that spot.
- Ask students to help you find the Dominican Republic on the globe. Have a volunteer place a small sticker on that spot.
- Explain to students that today's lesson is about a teenage boy who moved from the Dominican Republic to America. Trace the route from the Dominican Republic to America on the globe. Then, tell students that this teenage boy became a famous baseball player.

# Major League Success *(cont.)*

## Part A: The Photograph Card

### Discussion Questions

**Top Photograph:** Show students the photograph of Albert Pujols with children at a sports clinic in the Dominican Republic. Ask them the following questions:

- Who do you think the man in the photograph is?
- What do you think is happening in this photograph?
- Would you want to have your photograph taken with a famous person? Why or why not?

**Bottom Photograph:** Show students the photograph of Albert Pujols with the 2006 World Series trophy. Ask them the following questions:

- What are the men in the photograph holding?
- How do you think the people in the photograph feel?
- Why do you think the man is holding his son on his shoulders?

### Using the Primary Source

1. Tell students that the top photograph is Albert Pujols with children at a sports clinic in the Dominican Republic. The bottom photograph shows Albert holding his son after winning the World Series. Even though Albert is one of the most successful athletes in the United States, he has never forgotten where he came from or how it feels to be poor. Ask students if they are ready to hear Albert's story.
2. Read the background information from the back of the photograph card aloud as students look at the photographs on the front of the card.
3. Next, distribute copies of the *Major League Success* (page 100) student reproducible. Have students reread the text with partners. Tell students more about Albert's family and charity work from the *Background Information for the Teacher* (page 99).
4. Show students the baseball diamond organizer on the back of the photograph card. Copy it onto the board. Distribute copies of the *Albert's Story* graphic organizer (page 101) to students. Work together as a whole class to complete the organizer by putting details from Albert's life in order.



**Kindergarten:** Use the *Albert Pujols's Main Events* modification sheet found on the Digital Resource CD (mod.pdf). Distribute copies of the sheet to each kindergartner. Then, have students cut and paste the four main events in order on the baseball diamond.

# Major League Success *(cont.)*

## Part B: The Facsimile

### Discussion Questions

Show students the *Sports Illustrated* magazine cover. Ask the following discussion questions:

- What is this?
- When do you think this magazine was created?
- How do you think Albert felt when he saw this magazine cover?

### Using the Primary Source

1. Distribute copies of the *Success Story* student reproducible (page 102). Read the text aloud as students follow along. Ask students to think about the secret to Albert's success.
2. Explain to students that the magazine cover is proof that Albert's dream came true. As a whole class, make a list of the steps Albert took to make his dream come true. You could add more details from the *Background Information for the Teacher* (page 99).
3. Distribute copies of the *My Baseball Card* activity sheet (page 103). Have students imagine they are famous baseball players. What would their baseball cards look like? If time permits, have students share their cards with the class.
4. Next, ask students to think about a dream they have for their future. What do they want to be when they grow up? What do they want to accomplish? How will they know when they have reached their goals? (See the School-Home Connection section on page 104.)
5. Students will then create items that represent their dreams come true (gold medals, trophies, ticket stubs, concert or movie posters, newspaper articles, etc.). Provide a variety of craft materials and time to create their items. Have students share their creations with the whole class.



**Kindergarten:** Ask kindergartners what they want to be when they grow up. Have them draw a picture of themselves doing that job. Encourage them to write sentences describing their drawings, if possible.

# Major League Success *(cont.)*

## Part C: Connecting to Primary Sources

### School-Home Connection

Albert Pujols combined natural talent with hard work to become a baseball success. But it all started with a childhood dream. With help from their families at home, students will think about a dream they have for their future. Give students copies of the *Major League Success School-Home Connection Letter* (page 104). Explain the assignment to students, and answer any questions. Have students fill in their parents' names and the two dates on the letter. Then, ask them to sign the letter. Follow up by asking students to create items that represent their dreams and how they came true.

### Family Tree Fridays

Invite one or more students to share their family trees and primary sources with the class for Family Tree Fridays. Attach each family tree and a student drawing of the primary source to the *Our Family* poster or wall. See page 21 for more information. The *Family Tree Fridays* template is located on the Digital Resource CD (tree.pdf).

### Content-Area Connections

- **Mathematics**—Have students write a baseball-related math problem. Students can then trade with partners to solve the other's math problem.
- **Science**—Have students find out about the muscles in the arms and which muscles are most important for batters. Then, have them find exercises that strengthen those muscles.
- **Language Arts**—Have students imagine they are sports reporters for a local newspaper. They are going to interview Albert Pujols. What questions would they ask him?
- **Art**—*Merengue* is the national music and dance of the Dominican Republic. Two instruments used to play merengue are the *guiro* and the *tambora*. Have students use recycled items to make these instruments.

### Read-Aloud Books

- *Albert Pujols: On the Field with...* by Matt Christopher (**Note:** the reading level in this book is too high, but you may choose to do a picture walk with students.)
- *When This World Was New* by D.H. Figueredo
- *The Dominican Republic (A to Z)* by Byron Augustin
- *Baseball from A to Z* by Michael P. Spradlin

# Major League Success *(cont.)*

## Background Information for the Teacher

### *The Story*

Albert Pujols was born in the Dominican Republic in 1980. His parents separated when he was very young. His grandmother, whose name was America, raised him. His 10 young aunts and uncles were like brothers and sisters to him. The family was poor, but America raised the children well. She taught them right from wrong and always to respect others.

Like many boys in the Caribbean, Albert played baseball from the time he could walk. By age six, he was playing every day. When a bat and ball were not available, he used a stick and a lime.

In 1996, 16-year-old Albert, his father, and his grandmother immigrated to the United States. They settled in Independence, Missouri, which is near Kansas City. There, they joined a small community of Dominican Republic immigrants.

Albert did not speak much English, but he learned quickly. He joined the high school baseball team and became the star player. During Albert's junior year, professional scouts noticed the hardworking player with the powerful swing.

Albert began taking extra classes to graduate early. In 1999, he enrolled in Maple Woods Community College and began playing on the college baseball team. After one season, the St. Louis Cardinals drafted, or chose, him to play for them.

In 2001, the Cardinals put Albert on their major league roster. An outstanding first season earned him the National League Rookie of the Year award. In his 11 seasons with the Cardinals, he won the National League Most Valuable Player Award three times. ESPN named him the best baseball player of the decade 2000–2009. In 2012, Albert signed a 10-year contract with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. It was one of the largest contracts in baseball history!

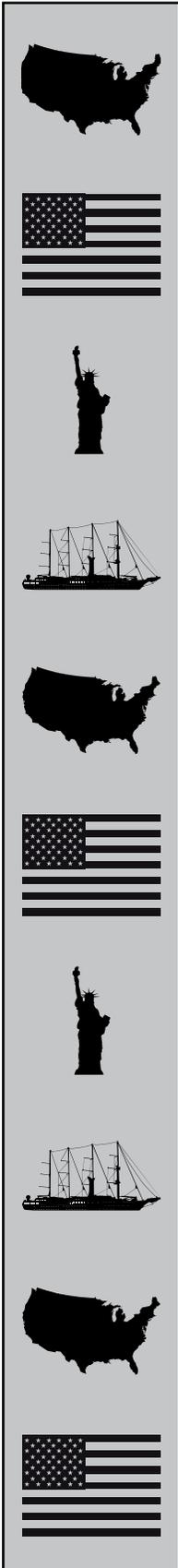
### *The Photographs*

The top photograph shows Albert with children at a sports clinic in the Dominican Republic. Albert regularly gives his time and money to good causes. Albert and his wife, Deidre, keep family and faith at the center of their lives. They have been married since 2000 and have four children. Together, they run the Pujols Family Foundation. The charity raises money and awareness for people with Down Syndrome. It also provides aid to people in the Dominican Republic.

The bottom photograph shows Albert and his son celebrating the Cardinals' 2006 World Series victory. Albert won two championships with the St. Louis Cardinals.

### *The Facsimile*

As a poor kid growing up in the Dominican Republic, Albert dreamed of playing Major League Baseball in America. The *Sports Illustrated* cover is evidence that his dream came true.



# Major League Success

**Albert Pujols visits children at a sports clinic in the Dominican Republic.**



Source: Corbis



Source: Getty Images

**Albert Pujols and his son celebrate the Cardinals' 2006 World Series win.**

Albert was born in the Dominican Republic. He lived with his grandmother. They were very poor. But Albert's grandmother raised him to respect and care about others.

Like many boys in the Dominican Republic, Albert loved baseball. He played every day. He dreamed of playing Major League Baseball in America.

Albert's family wanted a better life. In 1996, they immigrated to the United States. They settled in Independence, Missouri. Albert was 16.

At his new school, Albert made the baseball team. He practiced hard. He was soon the star player!

In 2001, the St. Louis Cardinals asked Albert to play for them. Albert's dream had come true!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Albert's Story

## Showing What You Know

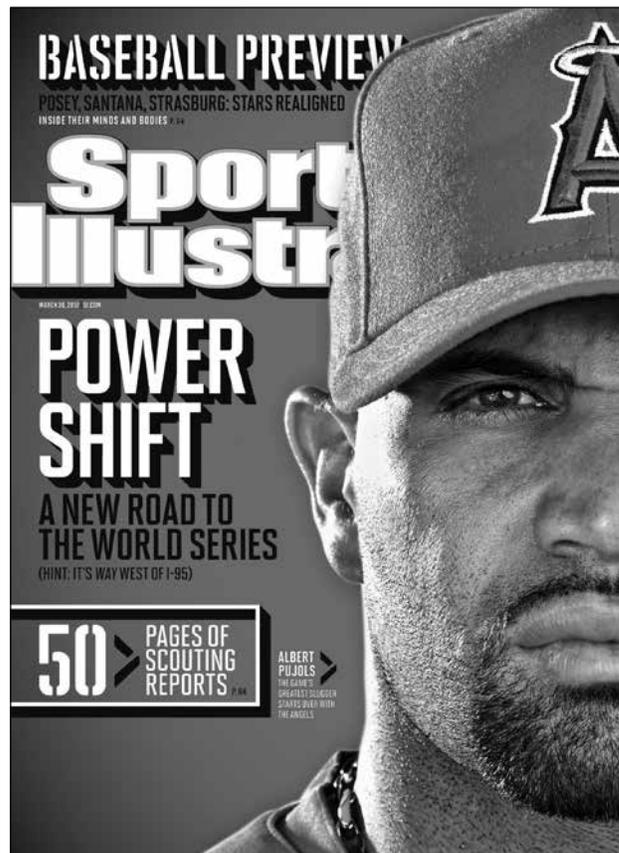
**Directions:** Put the events in Albert's life in order from first base to home plate.

The diagram shows a baseball diamond with four bases. Each base is a rectangular box with two horizontal lines for writing. The bases are labeled as follows:

- Second:** Located at the top of the diamond.
- Third:** Located on the left side of the diamond.
- First:** Located on the right side of the diamond.
- Home:** Located at the bottom of the diamond.

Each base contains two horizontal lines for writing.

# Success Story



This is Albert on the cover of a magazine.

Albert started playing baseball as soon as he could walk. He played every day. If he did not have a bat and ball, he played with a stick and a lime.

In 2001, Albert joined the St. Louis Cardinals. He kept working hard to improve his skills. He played 11 seasons with the Cardinals. He won a lot of awards. He even helped the Cardinals win two World Series.

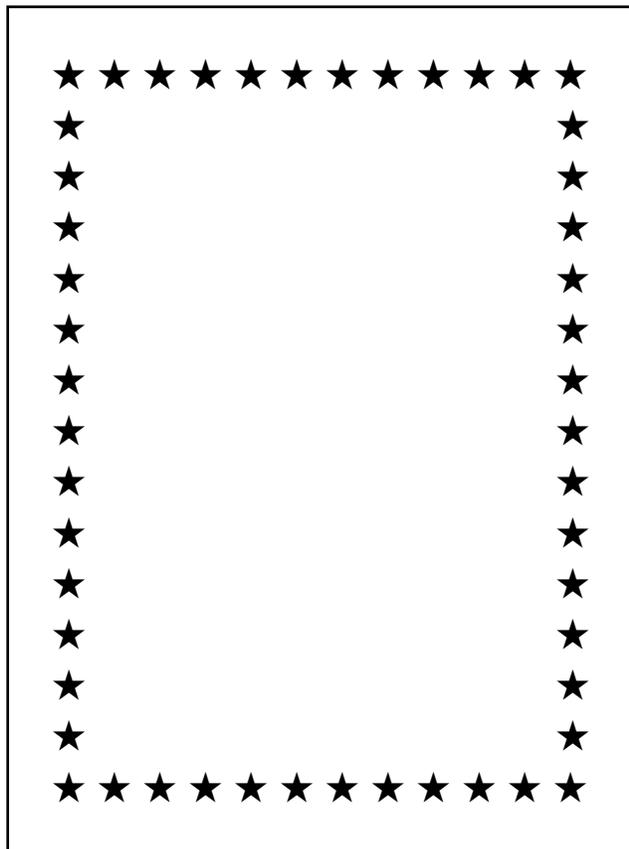
In 2012, Albert signed with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. He was on the cover of a big sports magazine. Albert is a famous baseball player, but he still likes to help others. He gives a lot of his time and money to help others in need.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# My Baseball Card

**Directions:** What if you were a baseball player? What would your baseball card look like? Draw your own baseball card below.

**Front**



**Back**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite sport:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Major League Success

## School-Home Connection Letter



\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,



We have been learning about Albert Pujols in class. He came to America from the Dominican Republic when he was 16. He was a talented baseball player who worked hard. He wanted to play in the Major Leagues. He made his dream come true.



In 1999, Albert was drafted, or chosen, by the St. Louis Cardinals. He helped the Cardinals win two World Series Championships. He went on to play with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. He continues to practice and train hard. He is known as one of the best baseball players ever.



When I grow up I want to \_\_\_\_\_.



This is my dream because \_\_\_\_\_.



I can make my dream come true by \_\_\_\_\_.



I will know that my dream has come true when \_\_\_\_\_.



I will share my dream with the class on \_\_\_\_\_.



Thank you for helping me with this project.

Love,



\_\_\_\_\_

# Albert's Story



Albert Pujols visits children at a sports clinic in the Dominican Republic.



Albert Pujols and his son celebrate the Cardinals' 2006 World Series win.

# Albert's Story

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