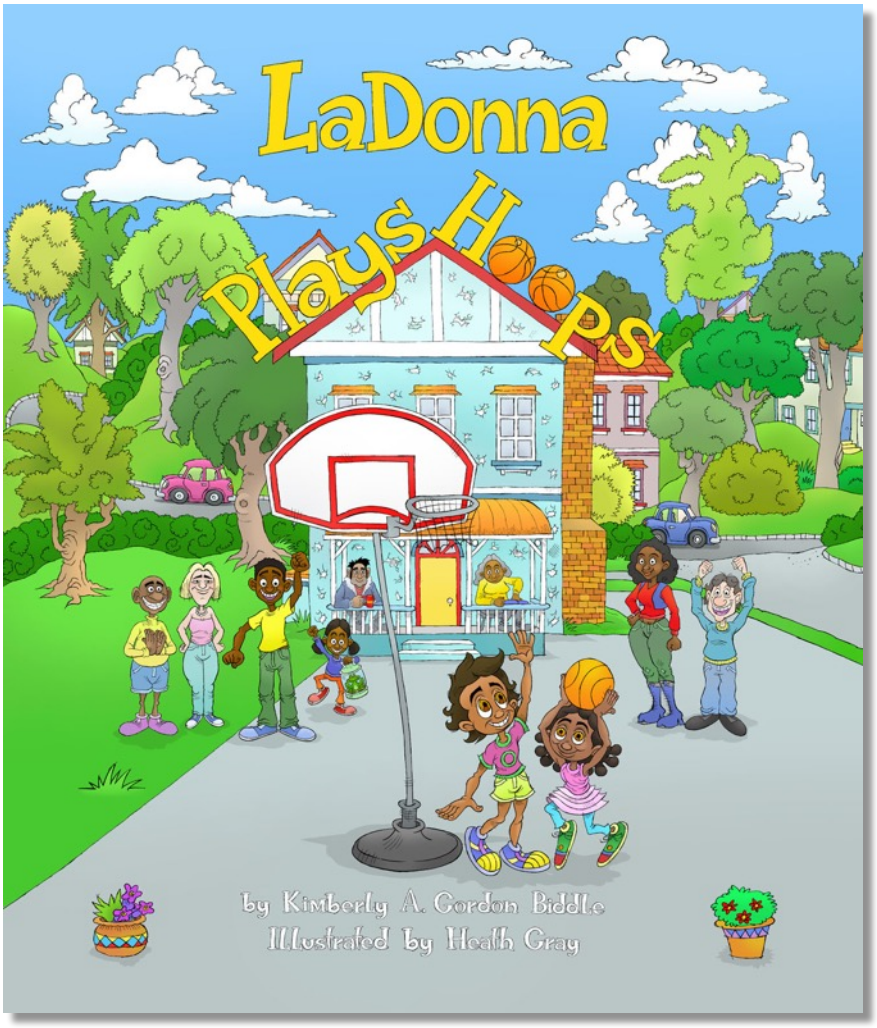
LaDonna Plays Hoops

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen
based upon the picture book
written by Kimberly A. Gordon Biddle and illustrated by Heath Gray



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Kimberly A. Gordon Biddle
Author, *LaDonna Plays Hoops*

Kimberly A. Gordon Biddle is a lover of books. Her nose was always in a book, when she was younger. She still loves to read, when she gets the chance, and she also loves to write. She has co-authored a textbook on early childhood education and is under contract to co-author one about child development careers. "LaDonna Plays Hoops" is her first book of fiction. This picture book was born in the 1980's and has grown and matured. Seeing the book come to life is a realized dream for Kimberly. For her day job, she is a professor of child development. Kimberly is also a member of the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI).

She is also a loving wife to her husband and a loving mother to her son. She currently lives in the Nor Cal area of California. She has a BA in Psychology and Music and a PhD in Child and Adolescent Development. To contact Kimberly, visit www.pinkpearlwriting.com.

Heath Gray
Illustrator, *LaDonna Plays Hoops*

Heath James Gray was born in West Auckland, New Zealand. He has had a passion for illustration from the time he could pick up a pencil. He started out as a sign writer from the age of fifteen.

Heath worked as a 2d character animator for eight years, where he trained under a Disney animator, John Ewing. Here he worked on television shows for Disney, and Warner Bros. Heath Gray also worked on many New Zealand TV series, and commercials. And directed two of these TV commercials.

Heath has dedicated his life to illustration, and specializes in children's book, and cartoon illustrations. There is nothing else Heath Gray would rather do than illustration, except perhaps travel the world in a hot air balloon.

Marcie Colleen, Curriculum Writer This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides, Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit her at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *LaDonna Plays Hoops* is designed for students in second through fourth grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *LaDonna Plays Hoops* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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Author: Kimberly A. Gordon Biddle
Illustrator: Heath Gray
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Brief synopsis:

This is an inspirational and contemporary story of a young, African-American girl who goes to visit her grandma for a family reunion. While there, she tries to become the family hoops star. She wonders if she has the skill and the will. The story presents subtle, everyday events that teach life lessons.

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *LaDonna Plays Hoops,* help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, copyright page, and title page.

Describe the cover illustration.

- Who do you see?
- Choose two words to describe the characters you see. Explain your answer using evidence from the illustration.

Pick a character and mimic what they are doing.

- How does it make you feel?
- How do you think they are feeling? What do you think they are thinking?

Read the title of the book and look closely at the cover illustration. Can you guess what the story might be about? What clues can you find?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- In your own words, describe Grandma's house. Use the illustrations to help you.
- Why is everyone going to Grandma's house?
- How many people can you count at Grandma's house?
- Who does LaDonna want to play with when she gets to Grandma's?
- Explain in your own words what happened last time LaDonna played Tyrone in basketball.
- Explain in your own words what happens this time LaDonna plays Tyrone in basketball.

Help students define the events in terms of a plot arc by using the following chart.

Beginning	Middle	End
LaDonna is on her way to Grandma's house. Introduce character:	LaDonna plays with her cousins until Tyrone challenges her to basketball. Describe: The Climax, when everything changes…	Resolution. How are things solved? The ending…

- BONUS: Using the basic plot structure above, students can create an original story about a reunion at their own house. Students can work individually or as a class.
- Art center ~ Provide a variety of art materials including crayons, pencils, markers, paint, scissors, colored paper, old magazines, and glue for students to illustrate the scenes in their stories.
- Drama center ~ Provide puppets, costumes, and props so students can recreate their new stories.

Let's talk about the people who made *LaDonna Plays Hoops.*

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let's look closely at the illustrations.

- Check out some of the following details that Heath Gray includes. Can you find:
  - A yellow car.
  - A girl chasing a white dog.
  - An orange cat.
  - A plate of cookies.
  - A piece of pie.

Writing Activities

Who is LaDonna? Who is Tyrone?~ Character Study

How a character acts says can tell readers a lot about who the character is.

Read *LaDonna Plays Hoops*. Scene by scene, record your thoughts regarding character, in a chart like the one below.

What LaDonna says	What LaDonna does	How would you describe LaDonna?
Example: *"I wonder what Grandma looks like now? Maybe she has grey hair and wrinkles, Freddy."*	Goes to Grandma's house with her dad for a reunion. Takes her pet frog along.	Curious, excited.

After gathering information regarding LaDonna's character, do the same with Tyrone's character. Then use the scenarios below to write a new scene for *LaDonna Plays Hoops*. What would LaDonna and/or Tyrone do in one of the following situations?

- It's wintertime and the family gets together for the holidays, but it's snowing and they can't go outside.
- Grandma asks LaDonna and/or Tyrone to help her plant a summer garden.
- It's a year later and Tyrone asks for a re-match.

Going to Grandma's House

Imagine that you have an invitation to LaDonna's family reunion at Grandma's house.

Create a fictional story about how you get there, what you bring to eat, and what you do when you get to the party.

Remember all stories need to have a beginning (going to the party), a middle (at the party), and an ending (saying goodbye and heading home).

Optional: Create the story together as a class.

How to Read and Write Technical Instructions

Games, like basketball, rely on instructions so that players know the rules.Using the technical instructions below, play or pantomime how to play the game of PIG.

Rules for Playing PIG

One of the most important rules in playing a game of Pig is establishing what order players will shoot in. This order will continue for the rest of the game. You can shoot free throws or at the top of the key to determine the order.

- Beginning Play—
  Play begins by the first person shooting the basketball from anywhere on the court. If the shot is missed, the next person takes a shot from any spot on the court as well. This continues until a shot is made. Once a shot is made, that person becomes the "first" person in order.
- Matching Shots
  Once a shot is made, all other players must attempt that shot in order. For instance, if four people are playing and the third person was the first to make a shot, the fourth person must then shoot, followed by the first and second person. Players must attempt the shot from t he same spot on the court as the original made shot.
- Missing Shots—
  Any players who miss a shot that must be matched earn the letter "P." Players who have already earned the first letter and miss a matched shot again earn the letter "I" and so on until a player accumulates all the letters in the word "Pig" and are thus eliminated.

  Play continues until only one player remains, who is declared the winner.

Now, have students try their hands at writing technical instructions, but explaining how to make a jelly sandwich.

Making a Sandwich

As a class, create a list of instructions on how to make a jelly sandwich. Be careful to not miss a step.

1) Gather the ingredients: a jar of jelly, and two slices of bread.
2) Get your tools: spoon, knife, plate, etc.

3) Lay the pieces of bread side by side on the table.
4) Open the jar of jelly.
5) Using the spoon, scoop out some jelly and spread the jelly on the other piece of bread.
6) Place the pieces of bread together.
7) Using the knife, cut the bread in half.
8) Place on plate.
9) Eat.
10) Clean up and put the jar of jelly away.

For some extra fun, bring in all the tools necessary to complete a recipe and have the students walk you through step by step. If they miss a step, hilarity might ensue!

Speaking and Listening Activities

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some ways to bring *LaDonna Plays Hoops* to life in the classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills.

Mime

- Ask students to silently act out a page from the book, exaggerating body motions and facial expressions. See if others can identify the page that goes along with the mimed action.

Drama

- Create a TV commercial to encourage people to read *LaDonna Plays Hoops.*
- In small groups, act out *LaDonna Plays Hoops* as an opera, a western, a "breaking news" story, a thriller, etc. The rest of the class should guess what the "style" is.
- Use the *LaDonna Plays Hoops* Reader's Theatre script to perform the entire book as a class.

Language Activities

<u>Action! Learning about Verbs</u>

LaDonna Plays Hoops is a story about LaDonna and her basketball game with her cousin Tyrone. The story is filled with action. Here are some activities to help introduce action words, or verbs, to your class.

Simon Says Verbs

The Simon Says Verbs game is a fun verb activity that will help students both identify verbs from other parts of speech and distinguish action verbs from state of being verbs. The students will also get some healthy exercise while playing this game.

Have the children all stand up in an area large enough for each child to move around safely such as in the school gym or outside on the playground. The teacher will stand in front of the class and say, "Simon says..." followed by a verb. The students should then do or be what Simon said. For example, if the teacher says, "Simon says dance," then all the children should dance. If the teacher says, "Simon says be excited," then the students should be excited. The teacher can also include some words that are not verbs. For example, if the teacher says, "Simon says table," the students should stop moving because table is a noun, not a verb.

Optional: Instead of the teacher making all the commands, individual students can take turns playing Simon. Each child should get a chance to stand at the front of the class and say, "Simon says."

Action Bingo

In this version of Bingo, the students compete to be the first to perform all the actions on the list. Items can be arranged in a normal bingo grid or simply as a list for simplicity.

Some possible items for the list are:

- Tell a Joke
- Pretend you are taking a bath or shower in the middle of the room!
- Select someone else to sing a song with you.
- Recite a nursery rhyme.
- Imitate a comic strip character until someone guesses its identity.
- Behave like a duck for 10 seconds
- Say something nice about three different people in the room.
- Shake hands with three other people in the room.
- Pantomime a two-year-old child taking a bone away from a German shepherd dog.
- Walk from one end of the room to the other with an object between you knees.
- Act like an egg being cracked and fried.
- Do an impression of a well-known celebrity. Identify the person first.
- Confer with another person and make a short poem about one of the leaders
- Select a few people to aid you in selecting a scene from a fairy tale story and act it out.

- Draw a picture of yourself and give it to someone in the room.
- Find something in your pocket or purse to give to the person on your left.
- Retell the story of Goldilocks and the three bears using the name of four other people in the room as the bears and Goldilocks.

ADD Your Own Crazy Actions!

How to Play:

1. Each student or team of students must perform all the actions from a list of actions in front of someone and then those who participated or observed that action must sign beside the item.

2. Whoever gets all the items signed first, wins!

Vocab Slam Dunks

LaDonna Plays Hoops contains many "basketball-related" words which may be new for students. Encourage them to use context clues from both the text and illustrations to infer meanings.

free throw shots	dribbling	one-on-one	the lane
two point spread	PIG	layup	"in the paint"
foul	"making it rain"	crossover	jump shot

Additional Exploration:

- While they read, ask students to look carefully for words they do not know. As soon as they come across a new vocabulary word, they should jot it down.
- Look up the unknown word in the dictionary. (Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.) Read the definition.
- Come up with a way to remember what the word means. Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.

Vocabulary Time!

This game is a fun way to learn new vocabulary. It is based on commands that the Teacher or Leader calls out while the kids move about the room.

Each command requires the kids to strike a certain pose or do a certain action.

It is best to introduce only a few of the commands at a time so kids do not get overwhelmed. After playing the game, kids can make up their own commands and actions based on the many action words in *LaDonna Plays Hoops.*

Command	Action
Bench	sit on the floor, waiting, until the command "Game Time" is given, then move about
Game Time	move around the space
One-on-One	two people link arms and skip
Jump Shot	jump and try to touch the ceiling
Dribble	bounce up and down
Making it Rain	tap on any surface to make the sound of rain
Score	groups of three, share high-fives
Free Throw Shots	one person holds arms like hoop, other mimics throwing the ball
In the Paint	lay on the floor with arms and legs spread wide
Timeout	freeze until the command "Game Time"

Math

Word Problems

For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems. Note to teachers: Use the word problems below as inspiration to write your own, based on LaDonna Plays Hoops *or any other book of study*.

1) LaDonna and her father are five blocks away from Grandma's house. The car drives one more block. How many blocks away from Grandma's house are LaDonna and her father?
   (5 – 1 = ?)

2) Four cousins rush over to greet Freddy, LaDonna's pet frog. Three more cousins join them. How many cousins greet Freddy?
   (4 + 3 = ?)

3) There are six aunts on the porch, but when LaDonna and Tyrone start to play basketball, five aunts leave the porch and move to the sidelines. How many aunts are left on the porch?
   (6 – 5 = ?)

4) LaDonna makes a basket and scores two points. She then makes a free throw and scores one more point. How many points does LaDonna score? (2 + 1=?)

5) LaDonna needs nine more points to win the game. She scores seven more points. How many more points does LaDonna need to win the game? (9 – 7 = ?)

Under Where? Spatial Sense

Look at the "Running to the backyard with Freddy" illustration in *LaDonna Plays Hoops*.

Describe where the cat is sitting.

[examples: on the steps, outside the house, in the middle of the all the people]

Describe where the cousins are playing cards.

[example: on the pavement, at the table, below the porch]

Describe where the cars are located.

Describe where the girls are playing double dutch.

Describe where LaDonna is.

Have students pick another illustration in *LaDonna Plays Hoops* and discuss where things are spatially within that illustration.

Now look around your classroom.

- Describe where your desk sits.
- Describe where your teacher is sitting or standing.
- Describe where the chalkboard/whiteboard is.
- Describe where the clock is.
- Describe where the door is.
- Can you describe where anything else is?

PIG Hopscotch

This hopscotch activity will help students improve motor skills, balance, and self-regulation behaviors. Additionally, this game will encourage them to learn about math concepts such as number recognition and counting, as well as elements of art including shape and line.

This game can be created for indoor spaces through simply taping out the boxes on the floor and/or traditionally by drawing them on the pavement outdoors.

Materials:

- Masking tape (for indoor version)
- Sidewalk chalk, markers, or dark crayons
- Letters P, I, and G.
- One die

Set Up:

Create the hopscotch boxes. Students can help draw the squares.

How to Play:

1. Place the letter P in one of the squares. In another square, place the letter I. And in yet another place the letter G.
2. The first student rolls the dice twice and adds the two numbers together to know how many boxes they must hop to. (i.e. 2 + 4 = 6, hop six spaces)
3. The students hop their way through, counting as they go.
4. If they land on the box with the beanbag, they win that letter!
5. Play continues until everyone gets the PIG or everyone has been given a chance.

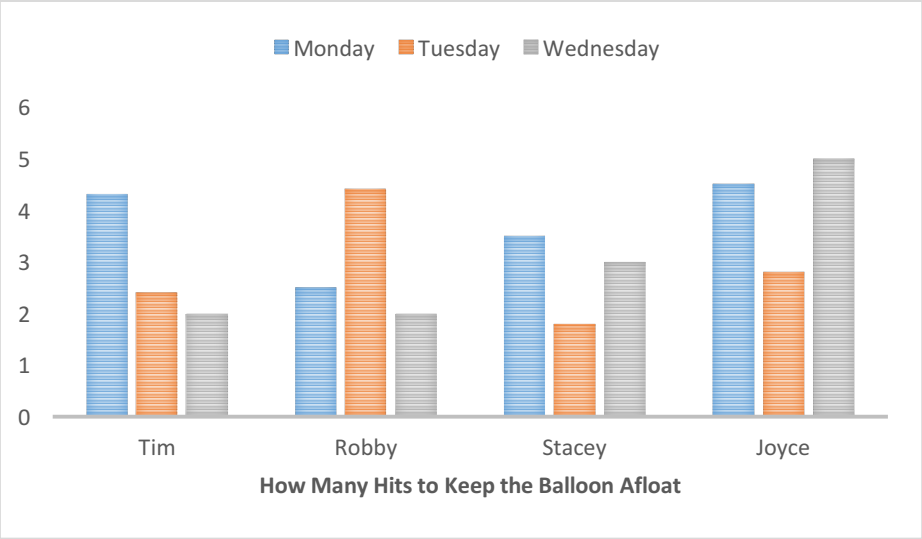
For an extra challenge, change the location of the letters each turn.

Graphing Persistence

Like LaDonna, most kids love a challenge, especially if the game allows them the opportunity to improve over time.

- Play a game to see how high each student can build a tower out of blocks or how many times they can hit a balloon without letting it touch the floor. These activities build motor skill and concentration.

- Create a graph and chart results over several days. Students should work independently and try for their personal best. Goals can be set at the end of each session—what to try and what to accomplish the next day.



Science

A Handy Family Tree

Ever notice that some family members look or act like each other?

Some of the special traits about each one of us are "handed" down from our family members. These traits are *inherited* traits. Other traits are *learned* traits that you pick up from the environment.

As a class, create a list of inherited traits and a list of learned traits to make sure everyone understands the difference.

To create their family trees each student will need:

- A piece of poster board or large piece of paper
- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Pens or markers
- Tape or glue

Instructions:

1. Trace the right and left hand of the student onto a piece of colored construction paper. There will need to be a pair of handprints to represent each family member. So, depending on the size of their family, more handprints might be needed. Students with large families may choose to only do immediate family.

2. Cut out the handprints.
3. On each finger of the left hand, list an inherited trait (physical characteristic), such as eye color, hair color, dimples, freckles, chin shape, etc. There should be 5 inherited traits, one for each finger.
4. On each finger of the right hand, list a learned trait that has been acquired or learned based on personality, such as hobbies, interests, likes or dislikes, etc. There should be 5 learned traits, one for each finger.
5. Draw a tree trunk onto a large piece of paper or poster board.
6. Glue or tape the handprints above the trunk to form a tree. The oldest person's pair of hands should be placed the closest to the trunk. Work upward with the youngest person's handprints on top.

Create a bulletin board display of the family trees. Allow time for discussion in which students trace their own inherited and learned traits through their family trees.

The Science of Bouncing a Basketball

What makes a ball bounce? If you were to see a ball drop to the ground in slow motion, you would see its shape change dramatically. When it hits the ground, the bottom of the ball becomes flat against the floor. Then when it bounces up, it returns to its original shape. The changes in shape are due to a balance of forces and energy:

When you drop a ball, gravity pulls it toward the floor. The ball gains energy of motion, known as kinetic energy. When the ball hits the floor and stops, that energy has to go somewhere. The energy goes into deforming the ball-- from its original round shape to a squashed shape. When the ball deforms, its molecules are stretched apart in some places and squeezed together in others. As they are pushed about, the molecules in the ball collide with and rub across each other. (Doherty, 1991)

- How high will a ball bounce?
- Will the air pressure change the bounciness of a ball?
- How can you measure the height a ball bounces?

<u>You will need:</u>

- ball air pump
- ball pressure gauge (available at a sporting goods store)
- basketball or soccer ball
- stepladder
- video camera with a tripod
- paint

- tape measure (preferably metric)
- large roll of paper
- volunteer

Experiment:

1. Draw the background for your experiment, which will act as a large ruler for measuring your bounces on video. Use the paint and a tape measure to make a series of lines on your roll of paper. It should be tall enough to hang up behind your ladder, about 5 feet tall. Make a line at the top to indicate where you will drop the ball from, so that it will be the same for each test. Then make a series of lines every 3 inches.

2. Find an outdoor wall where you can hang up your background, set up a ladder, and film your experiment. It should be on a smooth cement surface for optimal ball bouncing. Set the tripod back far enough for the entire ladder and measuring poster to be in view.

3. Fully pump up the basketball and check the pressure with the pressure gauge.

4. Write the pressure in the data table:

Air Pressure in PSI (lbs)	Height of Bounce (ins)

5. Get the video camera ready. Carefully climb the ladder with the ball. Start recording, hold your arms out and drop the ball from the same height each time. It is important to let the ball fall out of your hands, and not to push it down with your hands, wrists, or arms.

6. Let the ball bounce until it stops, and then stop recording.

7. Use the pressure gauge to release some of the air pressure from the ball. Record the new pressure reading in your data table and repeat steps 4 and 5.

8. Keep releasing pressure and repeating the experiment until the ball no longer bounces.

9. Now, take your video and watch it to gather your data. You will need to be able to stop the video to make your measurements when the ball is at its highest

point in the first bounce. Write each measurement in the data table.

Make a line graph of your data. Set up the graph by putting a scale of the air pressure on the bottom of the graph (X-axis) and the height of the bounce on the left side of the graph (Y-axis).

Use the data table to plot points on the graph. Then draw a line to connect the dots.

Is it a straight line? Does it slope up or down? What might this say about the results?

Social Studies

All About Me; All About My Family

The first community we ever belong to is family.

This project allows students the opportunity to get to know one another, and serves as an introduction to community.

Students will make books that contain pages with answered questions and pictures about themselves and other loved ones in their lives.

Yarn is used to bind the pages together.

Each student should have a special day that he reads his book to the class.

- Pages in each book include:

  A portrait
  I am called ____
  My first and last name is ____
  My address is ____
  I live in ____ (the country, a city, etc.)
  I live with ____
  I am good at ____

- In addition to the page about themselves, additional pages should be created about other loved ones in the student's life. This is their community.

Family Traditions

Many families have traditions. A tradition is something that is done year after year and passed down from generation to generation. Some family traditions involve how holidays or birthdays are celebrated. Some families have reunions, like LaDonna's.

- Describe LaDonna's family reunion.
- Why do you think LaDonna's family has a reunion every other year?
- How is LaDonna's family tradition alike or different from your own family's traditions?
- Does your family have a special holiday or birthday tradition?
- What is your favorite family tradition?
- Is there a tradition you would like your family to adopt?

Good Sports and Sore Losers

Once the game is over, how you handle winning or losing is the most important thing. Do you call the other team cheaters? Throw a tantrum? Brag about winning? Someone who is a good sport will congratulate the other team, whether they won or lost.

It's essential to practice good sportsmanship behaviors and incorporate them into your game-playing habits.

Choose one of these three scenarios, then write what a good sport would do and what a sore loser would do, as well as what might happen as a result those actions.

Scenario 1: It's the bottom of the 9th inning, the bases are loaded, and your teammate comes up to bat. You know that if he/she gets a hit, your team will win. Your teammate strikes out. Your team loses.

Scenario 2: You're playing basketball with neighborhood friends. The other team makes a basket that you think shouldn't count. The other team insists it does.

Scenario 3: Your soccer team made it to the semi-finals. You're playing the toughest team in the league and you're down by four goals. There are 3 minutes left in the game. The coach takes you out so one of your teammates who rarely plays can get on the field.

What would a good sport do?	What might happen next?

What would a sore loser do?	What might happen next?

1. What does it mean to be a good sport?
2. List four ways to be a good sport.
3. Your team lost a basketball game. Which reaction is considered good sportsmanship? a. Running to the other team's bench to accuse them of cheating
   b. Congratulating the other team
   c. Yelling at the referee for bad calls during the game
4. Why is it important to be a good sport?
5. Do you think LaDonna is a good sport or a sore loser? What about Tyrone?
6. How might LaDonna act differently to be a better sport? What about Tyrone?