This multi-media resource list, compiled by Susan Conlon of the Princeton Public Library in partnership with the American Library Association, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary “Kokoyakyu: High School Baseball” that premieres on July 4th, 2006 at 10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings at www.pbs.org/pov/).

In Japan, baseball is not a pastime — it’s a national obsession. And for many of the country’s youth, the sport has become a rite of passage, epitomized by the national high school baseball tournament known simply as “Koshien.” Four thousand teams enter, but only 49 are chosen to compete in the championship that grips the nation for two weeks every August. “Kokoyakyu: High School Baseball” follows two high school teams and their dedicated coaches as they go through the highs and lows of trying to make it onto the “sacred” dirt of Koshien stadium. Whether they win or lose, their quest becomes a life-changing experience that these Japanese youths will treasure forever.

ADULT NONFICTION


Whiting, Robert. The Meaning of Ichiro: The New Wave from Japan and the Transformation of Our National Pastime. New York: Warner Books, 2004. A look at the export of baseball players from Japan (like Ichiro Suzuki) to the major leagues in the U.S. Whiting also examines American players and managers who have played in Japan, such as Bobby Valentine and Alfonso Soriano.


ADULT FICTION


FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Gratz, Alan. Samurai Shortstop. New York: Dial Books, 2006. While obtaining a Western education at a prestigious Japanese boarding school in 1890, sixteen-year-old Toyo also receives traditional samurai training which has profound effects on both his baseball game and his relationship with his father.


VIDEOS/DOCUMENTARIES

“Bad News Bears Go to Japan.” A film by John Berry. Paramount Pictures, 1978. (91 min.) Third film in the comedy series in which the American Little League team travels to Japan to compete with the best team. www.amazon.com
Delve Deeper into "Kokoyakyu: High School Baseball"
A film by Kenneth Eng


“Mr. Baseball.” A film by Fred Schepisi. Universal Pictures, 1992. (108 min.) An American professional baseball player, late in his career, is traded to a team in Japan and faces an East/West culture clash both with the differences in baseball and society. www.amazon.com

“Ningen no Tsubasa.” (Wings of a Man). A film by Akihisa Okamoto, 1995. (135 min.) Shinichi Ishimaru, ace pitcher for Japan’s Nagoya Team from 1941 to 1943, died as a kamikaze pilot in May 1945 at the age of 22. This film covers Shinichi’s life from 1940 as a high school student in Saga Prefecture.

“Year of the Bull.” A film by Todd Lubin. Urban Works Studio, 2003. (84 min.) Taurean Charles, a high-school football player, struggles to get out of the inner city and into a Division I collegiate program, while also battling standardized tests, societal pressure and family conflict. www.amazon.com

WEB SITES

P.O.V.’s “Kokoyaku: High School Baseball” Web site www.pbs.org/pov/pov2006/kokoyaku/ Includes an interview with the filmmaker, resources, special features and more.

Official Kokoyaku Film Web site www.projectilearts.org/kokoyaku/high_school_baseball.html Includes video updates, photos, filmmaker’s weblog and more.

JAPAN

Association of Teachers of Japanese www.colorado.edu/ealld/atj

An international, non-profit, non-political organization of scholars, teachers, and students of Japanese language, literature and linguistics. Dedicated to deepening knowledge and appreciation of Japan and its culture.

Irasshai, Georgia Public Broadcasting www.peachstar.org/irasshai

Georgia Public Broadcasting’s Japanese Language and Culture Distance Learning Course allows students, teachers and visitors to voyage to Japan through the Web. The “Launch Pad” includes a list of dozens of major topics and subtopics with links to sites and material related to the various topics.

Japan Forum www.tjf.or.jp/eng/indexe/indexe.htm

Japan Forum is an organization focused on the promotion of cultural exchange and mutual understanding among people of different cultures, specifically in Japanese language education in elementary and secondary schools. It offers information on the daily lives of Japanese children, lesson plans, curriculum guidelines, teaching materials and news on Japanese language education.

Japan Information Network http://jin.jcic.or.jp

Maintained by the Japan Center for Intercultural Communications (JCIC), this site offers statistics, regional information and links to other sites in Japan.

Japan Society, Inc. www.japansociety.org

The Japan Society is an American institution that promotes understanding between the United States and Japan. In addition to sponsoring numerous cultural and educational events in New York, the Society has an extensive library and educational resources that can be bought or borrowed.


Portal for sites about Japan.

Media Production Group (MPG) www.aems.uiuc.edu/HTML/AEM_Svidguides.jsa

In 1991 the Media Production Group (MPG) was formed as a collaborative vehicle to produce a series of television programs and video teaching materials on Japan in cooperation with the National Institute of Multimedia Education in Chiba, Japan.

National Clearinghouse for U.S. - Japan Studies www.indiana.edu/~japan

This clearinghouse at Indiana University has an on-line database featuring abstracts of print materials, artifact kits, videos and software that are useful to those interested in teaching about Japan, especially at the K-12 level.


This clearinghouse at Indiana University has an on-line database of Japan Digest.

Ohio State Site for Teaching (and Learning) About Japan www.csuohio.edu/history/japan-JapanStudies

Includes several pages of links to sites related to topics of interest to students and teachers (e.g., arts, food, places, popular culture, theater, etc.). Connected to this site is a visual introduction to Japan, featuring 77 photo images of places, people and a set of fifteen woodblock prints.

The Sadako Film Project www.sadako.com

A project of Informed Democracy, a non-profit educational organization that produces media for young audiences, including Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes and How to Fold a Paper Crane. Offers information about the videos, the story of Sadako, instructions for folding a paper crane and related educational resources.
Delve Deeper into "Kokoyakyu: High School Baseball"
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Wellesley College Library
www.wellesley.edu/Library/Research/japanese.html
Research resources for Japanese language and literature.

Midnight Eye
www.midnighteye.com
The latest and best in Japanese cinema.

BASEBALL IN JAPAN

Baseball Guru
http://baseballguru.com/bbjp1.html
Has articles and resources on baseball in Japan.

www.japanball.com/baseballjapan.htm
Has daily news, scores, standings, stats, directories and baseball tour and travel information.

History of All-Star Series in Japan
http://mlb.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/mlb/events/japan_series/history.jsp
MLB site with articles on Major League tours of Japan, history of baseball in Japan, home run kings, videos, facts and figures, multimedia and more.

Japanese Baseball.com
www.japanesebaseball.com
Dedicated to the discussion of professional baseball (Pro Yakyu) in Japan.

Japanorama
www.japanorama.com/baseball.html
An overview of baseball in Japan including ballparks, glossary of terms and identification of differences between baseball played in Japan and the U.S.

Jim Allen’s Baseball Page
www2.gol.com/users/jallen/jimbball.html
A resource for baseball fans in general and Japanese baseball fans in particular.