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Word Count: 287

Inspiration at the Ballpark

Austin slid his bat from his bag, settled a batting helmet on his head, and strode from the dugout to join his friend Luke near the on-deck circle. The first game of their doubleheader would start in moments—as soon as the opposing pitcher had finished warming up—and Austin and Luke were the first two batters.

Luke, taking a practice swing, asked, “Are you going out for pizza after the game?”

“No, I have that presentation due Thursday for social studies,” said Austin, “and I haven’t even started because I’m just not that interested in the Great Depression.”

“It should be easy,” said Luke. “We talked about the Great Depression in all those lectures about the stock market crash and economies around the world collapsing. What about the millions of people unemployed, wandering the country looking for work, seeking food from charities and all that?”

“Yeah,” said Austin, “but I need to find something we didn’t cover in class.”

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The two of them stopped talking and looked out across the infield.

“All I want to think about is baseball,” Austin continued. “I bet professional ballplayers never have to worry about depressing things like the Great Depression.”

“Ballplayers sure had to worry about it back then,” said Luke, smacking his bat against his cleats to knock out the dirt. “To save money, professional teams slashed their rosters and the players’ pay. They even gave away groceries to get people to attend games.”

“That’s interesting,” mused Austin, squinting at Luke. “In fact—”

“Batter up!” the umpire bellowed from behind home plate.

“You’re up,” said Jake.

Austin nodded. “Hey, thanks. I think I just found my topic. Why not research the thing I want to think most about anyway?”