

Learning Resources for
Ballpark Mysteries #16

The Colorado Curveball

By David A. Kelly



Background

About the Book

The Colorado Curveball is the 16th team book in the Ballpark Mysteries series. There are also four Ballpark Mysteries Super Specials that take place in special locations (such as the World Series or the Cooperstown Hall of Fame).

In **The Colorado Curveball**, Mike and Kate travel to Denver, Colorado. They arrive there to a ballpark covered in snow! Luckily, the stadium has a heater that can melt the fluffy flakes in time for next day's game. But when the ballpark engineers get a mysterious note saying that someone may tamper with the scoreboard, the snow becomes the least of the cousins' problems. It's time for Mike and Kate to switch into sleuth mode and solve a mystery that will take them underground, a mile above sea level, and even face to face with a dinosaur!

About the Author

David A. Kelly is a children's book author, travel writer and technology analyst. He's the author of the *Ballpark Mysteries* series from Random House, in which cousins Kate and Mike solve mysteries at different major league ballparks, and the *Most Valuable Players* (MVP) series from Random House as well, in which a group of elementary school kids have adventures playing different sports. Mr. Kelly is also the author of the early reader, *Babe Ruth and the Baseball Curse* and the picture book *Miracle Mud: Lena Blackburne and Secret Mud that Changed Baseball*.

He has written about travel and technology for the New York Times, the Boston Globe, the Chicago Sun Times, and many other publications.

Mr. Kelly lives in Newton, MA, with his wife and two sons.

For more information, visit David's webpage – www.davidakellybooks.com

You can follow Mr. Kelly on social media:

- Twitter @davidakelly
- Instagram @davidakellybooks
- Facebook @ballparkmysteries.

Signed and personalized books are available at: www.buydavidakellybooks.com

Free Q&A Skype sessions are available at: www.dakskype.com

In-person and virtual author visits are available at: www.dakvisits.com

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Colorado Compound Words

Book Tie-in: The author, David A. Kelly uses compound words in this book. As students read the book, ask them to look for compound words.

Standards:

- Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., *birdhouse*, *lighthouse*, *housefly*; *bookshelf*, *notebook*, *bookmark*). (L.2.4.D)

Objective:

- Students will define, identify, and use compound words.

Procedure:

- Explain that compound words are formed when two or more words are put together. When they are put together the words create a new word and a new meaning.
- Put the following examples on the board: doghouse, football, mailman. Ask students to identify each part of the compound word.
- Introduce compound matching game. Each student will get a word. Instruct students that they need to create a compound word by finding another student that has a word that goes with their word.
- After completing the matching game, use the compound word worksheet as a formative assessment.



Colorado Compound Words

Cards for Compound Matching Game. Run on cardstock. Cut apart.

rain	coat	sail	boat
school	work	shoe	lace
water	melon	air	port
fire	fly	moon	light
sun	flower	grand	mother
foot	ball	day	time
out	doors	pillow	case

Name: _____

Colorado Compounds



Create compound words.

out	
-----	--

hall	
------	--

	speaker
--	---------



	steps
--	-------

base	
------	--

cover	
-------	--



all

fielder

foot

loud

way

ball



Home Run Verbs

Book Tie-in: The author, David A. Kelly uses strong verbs in his writing. In fact, you could say they are home run verbs. As students read the book, ask them to look for home run verbs.

Standards:

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (L.2.1)
- Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., *toss, throw, hurl*) and closely related adjectives (e.g., *thin, slender, skinny, scrawny*). (L.2.5.B)
- Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., *When other kids are happy that makes me happy*). (L.2.6)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (L.3.1)
- Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., *knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered*). (L.3.5.C)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships. (L.3.6)

Objectives:

- Use grade-appropriate verbs correctly in writing.
- Recognize the difference between strong and weak verbs.
- Identify synonyms for words.

Procedure:

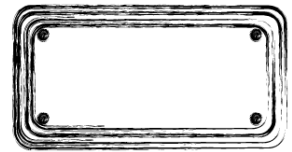
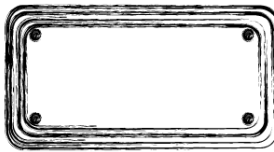
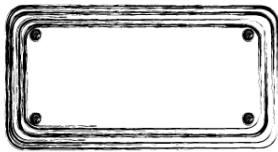
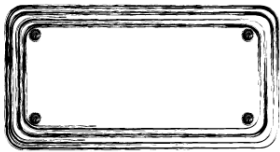
- Ask students to define a verb. Ask them to give examples.
- Ask students to define a synonym. *What would be a synonym for little? big?*
- Write the word “said” on the board. Ask students to give synonyms for this word.
Examples: answered, replied, whispered, stated, yelled, sang, laughed.
- Now explain to students that “said” is an overused word. It is like a base hit in baseball. It gets the job done, but it doesn’t always score. The other words are home run hits. They are strong words because they are more descriptive and they are not overused.

- Explain to students that the author, David A. Kelly uses home run verbs in his writing.
Examples: cruising (p.4), crumpled (p.30), zipped (p. 50)
- Have students complete the Home Run Verbs worksheet.
- After completing the Home Run Verbs worksheet, have students choose one of the home run verbs and use it in their own sentence.

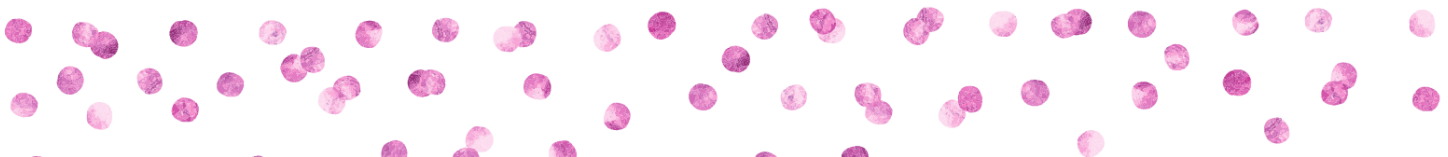
HOME RUN VERBS!

The author uses strong verbs in his writing to bring the story to life. These are home run verbs. Weak verbs are like base hits. They don't have as much power as strong verbs. Match the home run verbs to base hit verbs.

Name: _____



ran moved wiggled drank slipped moving raced looked



Key

**HOME RUN
VERBS!**

The author uses strong verbs in his writing to bring the story to life. These are home run verbs. Weak verbs are like base hits. They don't have as much power as strong verbs. Match the home run verbs to base hit verbs.

Name: _____



giggled moved wiggled drank slipped moving raced looked





Onomatopoeia In The Outfield

Book Tie-in:

The author, David A. Kelly uses onomatopoeia in this book. Using onomatopoeia helps the reader hear the sounds that are happening in the story. Point out that these words are written in italics.

Standards:

- Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song. (L.2.4)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (L.3.5)

Objectives:

- Students will define, identify, and use onomatopoeia words.

Procedures:

- Explain that onomatopoeia is a sound word. It imitates or mimics the sound it represents.
- Show the video. [Video](#)
- Put the following examples on the board: snap, knock-knock, neigh, whirr. Ask students for additional examples.
- Share with students that the author, David A. Kelly uses onomatopoeia throughout *Colorado Curveball*. Explain to them that they will be searching for examples of onomatopoeia in the book. Pass out the worksheet, onomatopoeia in the outfield for students to complete.
- Create a class video showing examples of onomatopoeia. Have students choose a word and illustrate it. Use the template provided. Then record students saying and showing their word.

Name: _____

ONOMATOPOEIA IN THE OUTFIELD!

ONOMATOPOEIA

Onomatopoeia is a sound word.
It imitates or mimics the sound it
represents. Find an example of
onomatopoeia on each of the page
numbers below.

page 10

page 33

page 47

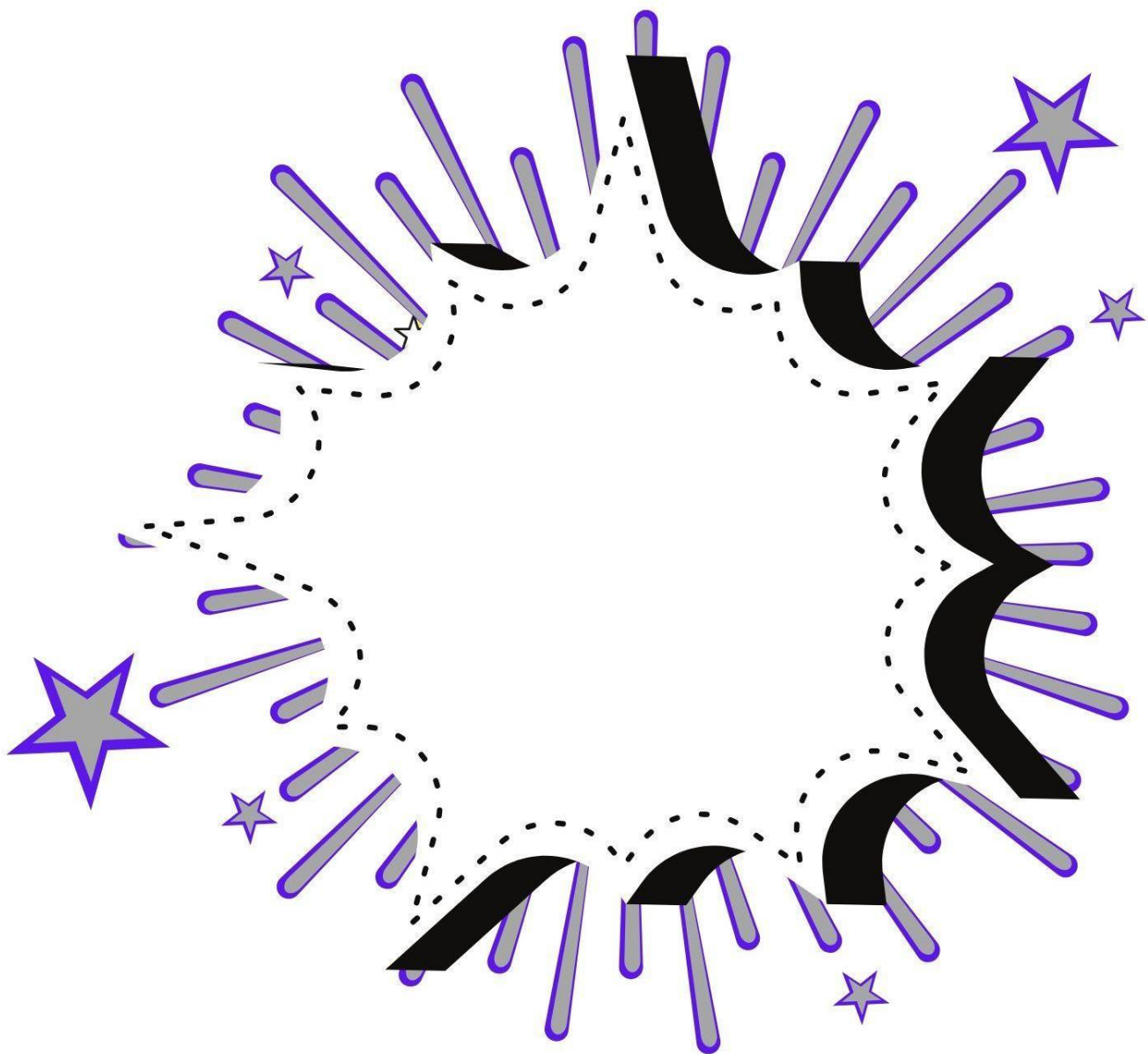
page 48

page 58

page 75

page 82

Chose one of the words above and use it in a sentence.





Making A Mascot

Book Tie-in: Sport teams often have mascots. They entertain fans. The Colorado Rockies have Dinger the dinosaur as their mascot.

Standards:

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (L.2.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section. (W.2.2)
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (L.3.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. (W.3.2)

Objectives:

- Create a class mascot.
- Write a descriptive paragraph explaining their class mascot.

Procedure:

- Ask students who the mascot of the Colorado Rockies is? *Dinger*
- Show the video of Dinger. [Video](#)
- Discuss mascots with students. *What are some mascots in our community? State? How do they add to the games? What is their purpose?*
- Tell students that they will be creating a class mascot. Brainstorm possible animals that could be mascots. Discuss colors choices.
- Allow students 20 minutes to design their mascot.
- Explain to students that they will now write 3-5 sentences describing their mascot. Teachers may want to model a paragraph for students.
- Share out mascots and paragraphs.

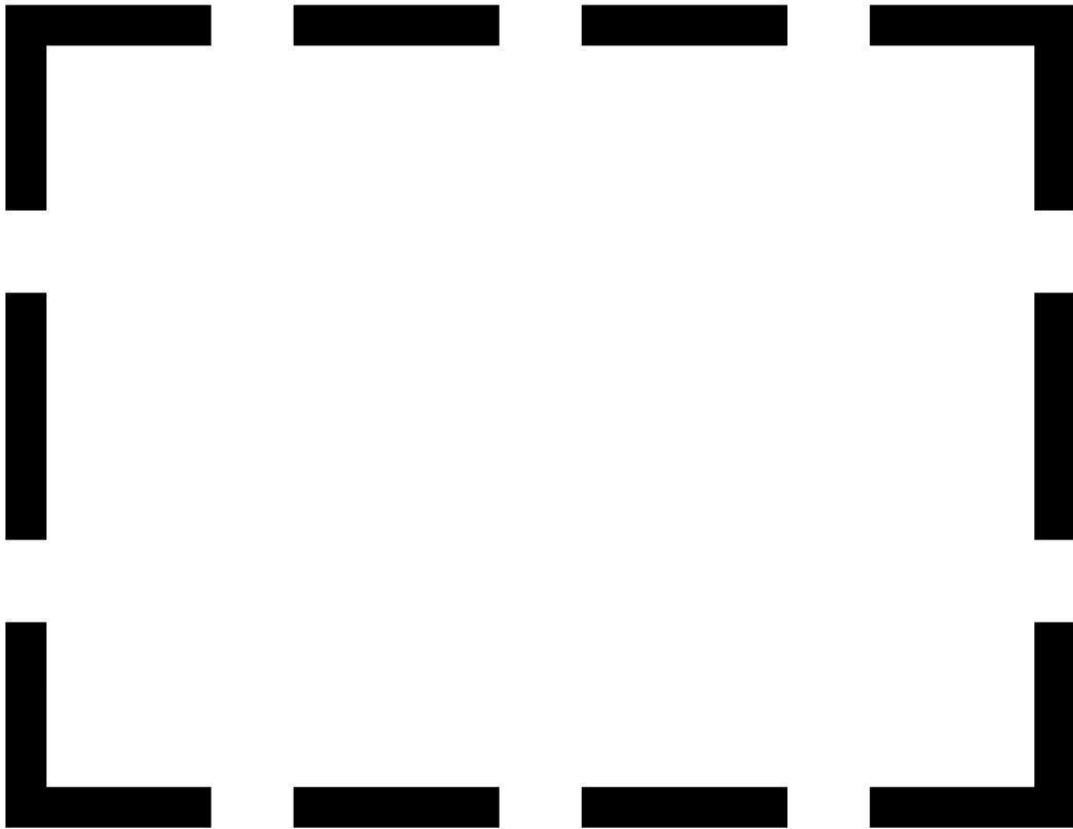


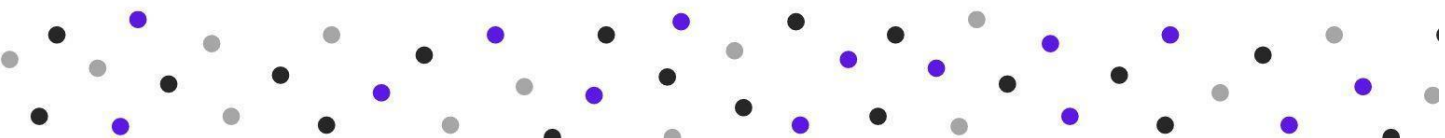
Name: _____

Date: _____

Create A Class Mascot

Create a class mascot. Name your mascot. Then write 3-5 sentences describing your mascot.







Tennis Ball Bounce!

Standards:

- Analyze data from tests of two objects designed to solve the same problem to compare the strengths and weaknesses of how each performs. (NGSS:K-2-ETS1-3)
- Plan and carry out fair tests in which variables are controlled and failure points are considered to identify aspects of a model or prototype that can be improved. (NGSS:3-5-ETS1-3)
- Make observations and/or measurements of an object's motion to provide evidence that a pattern can be used to predict future motion. (NGSS:3-PS2-2)

Objective:

- Identify how temperatures affect how a tennis ball bounces.

Procedure:

- Read aloud the passage below:

"The players were hitting more home runs because the ballpark is one mile above sea level and the air is thinner up here. There are fewer molecules of oxygen, which means less air resistance to slow balls down when they're hit. But more importantly, the mountain air dries out the baseballs, so they're hard and slicker. That makes it harder for pitchers to grip and throw curveballs and most other pitches. And drier baseballs also bounce off the bat more than moist ones and travel farther."

- Discuss this with students. *What did the Colorado Rockies do to solve this problem?*
- Pose the following question to students: *I wonder if temperatures will affect how a ball bounces?* Have students discuss their thoughts. Explain to students that they will participate in a lab to answer this question.
- After the class discussion, ask each student to answer the following question: *How does temperature affect how a ball bounces?* Provide the sentence following sentence stems:
 - *I think hot temperatures will make a ball bounce...*
 - *I think warm temperatures will make a ball bounce...*
 - *I think cold temperatures will make a ball bounce ...*
- Complete the lab and have students complete the lab sheet.



Bouncing Tennis Balls

Materials:

- 6 tennis balls
- Chart paper
- Measuring tapes

Procedure:

- Prior to the lab, place 2 tennis balls in a warm place--outside or near a heating vent. Place 2 tennis balls in the refrigerator. 2 tennis balls will be at room temperature.
- Tape chart paper or bulletin board paper onto a wall. Place the top of the paper about 9 feet from the floor. Mark off the drop point at 4 feet from the floor.
- Drop the balls from the 4 feet drop point. Record where balls bounce up directly on the paper. Record the type of ball for each drop. Drop each type of ball twice.
- Measure the height of each drop. Record data on worksheet.
- Discuss results of the lab.
- Complete the worksheet.

Results: The hot tennis balls should bounce higher than the cold tennis balls. For a detailed explanation, go to the Wonderopolis link [here](#).

TENNIS BALL BOUNCE!



Does temperature affect the bounce of a baseball? Let's find out!

Materials:

- 2 warm tennis balls
- 2 room temperature tennis balls
- 2 refrigerated tennis balls

Warm Tennis Ball Drop

1

2

Cold Tennis Ball Drop

1

2

Hot Tennis Ball Drop

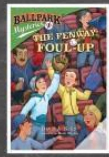
1

2

Results

Conclusion

How Many of the Ballpark Mysteries Have You Read?



Boston Red Sox



New York Yankees



L.A. Dodgers



Houston Astros



Kansas City Royals



Chicago Cubs



San Francisco Giants



Miami Marlins



Philadelphia Phillies



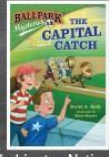
Toronto Blue Jays



Detroit Tigers



Texas Rangers



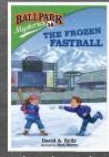
Washington Nationals



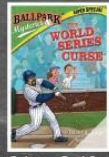
St. Louis Cardinals



Baltimore Orioles



Colorado Rockies



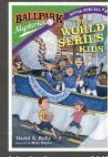
Cubs vs. Red Sox



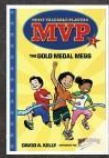
Hall of Fame



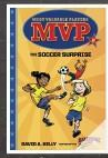
Mets vs. Yankees



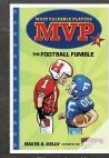
Little League WS



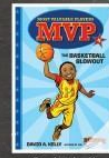
Olympics



Soccer



Football



Basketball

Check off
the books
you've read!



Babe Ruth



Miracle Mud

Illustrations copyright 2011 Mark Myers