

Path to the Bigs

Read the sports article.

Then follow the directions in the Text Marking box.

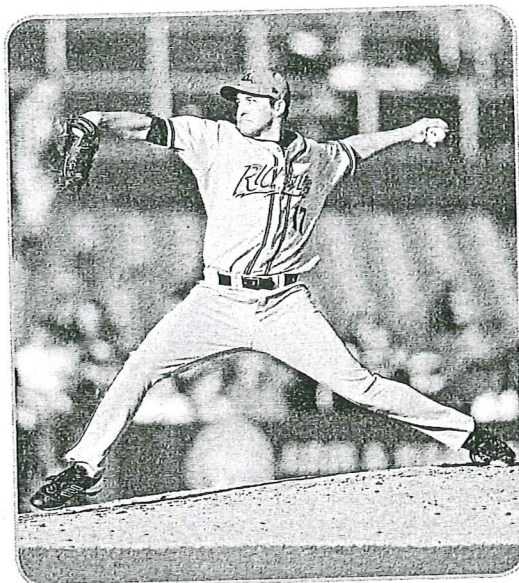
It's called the "bigs," the "majors," or the "show." By any name, Major League Baseball (MLB) is the dream of talented high school or college ballplayers. For most, it's a long, uphill road to the fame and riches MLB promises. A lucky few make it; most don't.

Long after T-ball, little league, and baseball camp, talented athletes continue to develop their skills in high school and college. For a fortunate few, the dream seems within reach. But the process is highly competitive and involves several stages.

First, a scout from a MLB club learns about promising players and watches them in action. If impressed, the scout informs the team of players with potential. Then, the team drafts the players and signs them to a contract. But it's not for the majors. The prospects next go into the team's minor league system to refine skills.

The levels of Minor League Baseball ascend from Rookie- through Single-, Double-, and Triple-A leagues. Players generally start at the lowest level and hope to rise. At each level, competition stiffens. Players who improve may advance within the system to get closer to their goal. This can take years, if it happens at all.

Finally, if all the stars align, a player gets "called up" to the majors, where he strives to make the most of this rare opportunity.



Ryan Bradley, pitching for the Richmond Flying Squirrels, a Double-A team of the San Francisco Giants, April 13, 2013

Text Marking

Find the sequence of events.



Box the signal words.



Underline the important events.

1-2-3

Number the events in the sequence they happen.

Path to the Bigs

▶ Answer each question. Give evidence from the article.

1 What does the author mean by the “uphill road” (paragraph 1) a young baseball player faces on his way to the big leagues?

- A. Some stops along the way may be at high altitudes.
- B. The player will have no chance of ever playing for the Dodgers.
- C. The path to the majors will be hard and demanding.
- D. The way to the majors gets easier and easier.

What in the text helped you answer? _____

2 According to the author, which best describes a high school player’s chances of reaching the major leagues?

- A. fifty-fifty
- B. slim
- C. zero
- D. pretty good

What in the text helped you answer? _____

3 Why does the author use the word *rare* and the expression “if all the stars align” (paragraph 4) when describing a player’s opportunity to play for a major league team?

4 Based on the text, what can you infer about the qualities a person must possess in order to succeed in Major League Baseball?

