

## There's No Base Like Home

written by Jessica Mendoza and  
Alana Mendoza Dusan

illustrated by Ruth McNally Barshaw

### About the Book

**Genre:** Middle Grade Fiction

**Format:** Hardcover  
256 pages, 5-1/2 x 8-1/4

**ISBN:** 9781620145883

**Reading Level:** Grade 5

**Interest Level:** Grades 3–8

**Guided Reading Level:** V

**Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:**  
N/A

**Lexile™ Measure:** N/A

\*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

**Themes:** Families, Friendship, Latino/  
Hispanic/Mexican Interest, Middle  
Grade, Sports

**Resources on the web:**

[leeandlow.com/books/there-s-no-base-like-home](http://leeandlow.com/books/there-s-no-base-like-home)

### SYNOPSIS

This will be twelve-year-old Sophia Maria Garcia's best year ever: she's trying out for the same championship softball team her sister played on at her age, and she's starting middle school. New school, new team, new Sophia!

But all does not go according to plan. Sophia does not make the Waves softball team and her best friend is suddenly more interested in boys than Sophia. As the middle school blues set in, and her family is pulled in different directions, Sophia must reach deep down and find a little UMPH—the difference between being good and great—to figure out her own place, on and off the field.

ESPN Major League Baseball analyst and two-time Olympic medalist Jessica Mendoza teams up with her sister Alana Mendoza Dusan for their first highly-illustrated novel for young readers, based on their own childhood softball adventures.

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

## BACKGROUND

### Author's Note from Jessica Mendoza

Dear Reader,

One of the hardest things to do in life is to figure out who you are. What makes you different? What allows you to STAND OUT? The easiest path is to try to fit in, to be like those around you—or like those you see on TV. Look like this, treat people like that, dress this way, and have the same goals as others.

However, I've found that the best experiences in life—and the most fun you'll ever have—come from stepping outside the box. Competing in the Olympics was one of the coolest things I ever experienced. Now, working with Major League Baseball as a TV analyst for ESPN, as one of very few women in the field, has been one of the hardest yet best things I've ever done. None of these things would have been possible had I not learned how to stand out.

I remember as a young girl always trying to fit in, picking the wrong friends at first, hiding my passion for playing softball. But then I started noticing strong female role models who were successful: Olympians, college athletes, even a local athlete who had a full scholarship for softball. They were different, and they were unafraid of being different. I made a change in my life and surrounded myself with people who got me. I found myself smiling when I didn't have to act, or dress, or say the same things as others, because I knew that staying true to my own passions and beliefs would lead me to stand out and be successful.

In this book, Sophia Garcia takes a similar journey. She is a young girl exploring all the unique aspects of her own life. She faces the challenges we all face as girls, from the judgment of others to the beauty and hardships that come from competing in sports. Through it all is the one constant as we grow and figure it all out: family.

My sister Alana and I wrote *There's No Base Like Home* to give all young girls more confidence to stay true to who they are. We hope they make better decisions from it and ultimately stand out to become the strongest, smartest, and most successful versions of themselves.

### An Interview with Jessica Mendoza

*Sports Illustrated Kids* interviewed Jessica Mendoza about her process writing the book and the importance of staying true to who you are. Jessica discusses what she wants kids to take away from the story, her experience as an athlete and how it influenced the book, her personal connections, and more. For the full interview, see *SI Kids' "Book Review: There's No Base Like Home"* (<https://www.sikids.com/kid-reporter/book-review-theres-no-base-home>).

### About the Co-Author, Jessica Mendoza

The co-author of *There's No Base Like Home*, Jessica, Mendoza, is an Olympic Gold and Silver Medalist. She joined ESPN in 2007 and in 2015, became the first woman to serve as an analyst for nationally-televised MLB games. She is a trailblazer in the field of professional sports and is one of the leading voices in ESPN's Major League Baseball coverage. For more information on Jessica's athletic and professional accomplishments, see ESPN's Press Room (<https://espnpressroom.com/us/bios/jessica-mendoza/>).

## BEFORE READING

### Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- What are you passionate about? When do you make time for your passion? Do you share your passion with your family and friends?
- Ask students to think about their family and what family means to them. Is family important to you? How do you interact with your family members? Why are some family relationships complicated? How do you help and support your family? How do they help and support you?
- What does it mean to be a friend? What are the qualities of friendship? How do you support your friends? Why is it important to be loyal to your friends and support them as they change?
- What do you know about softball? Have you ever seen a softball game? What are some differences between softball and baseball? Similarities? Do you enjoy sports?
- How do you demonstrate respect to others? How do you show someone that you care about them and what they believe in, even if it might be different from your beliefs?
- Describe a time you had a significant change in your life. What caused the change? How did the change make you feel? Over time did you adjust to the change? Why or why not?
- Why is bilingualism important? If you are bilingual (or speak more than two languages), what does it mean to you? If you are not bilingual, why do you think those languages are significant to that person?

You may want to have students journal their responses to these questions so that you can refer back to it throughout and after the reading of the book to further their thinking on the topic(s).

- **Bilingual Word Search:** This activity can be done prior to reading the novel and also during whole class or guided reading groups. *There's No Base Like Home* contains many Spanish words. Present the students with a vocabulary list of content-specific words. Which ones do they know? Which ones do they not know? Invite them to look up the meanings of the words using a translation website such as [www.spanishdict.com](http://www.spanishdict.com). Students may keep records of the translations. Once they've been introduced to the vocabulary, introduce the Easter Egg Hunt. The teacher may stuff the eggs with both Spanish and English vocabulary. During the reading,

student(s) who identify the word or translation will pause the lesson and go on an Easter Egg Hunt. The first student to locate the proper egg wins a prize.

### Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)  
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Title Exploration.** Talk about the title of the book, *There's No Base Like Home*. Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- What is the significance of the title, cover illustration, and dedication? Look at the frontispiece, the illustration facing the title page. How does this inform what you think you will be reading about?
- Read the "About the Authors" section at the back of the book and learn about Jessica Mendoza and Alana Mendoza Dusan. *There's No Base Like Home* is their debut middle grade novel. What do you think the process is like to write a book for young readers? Why do you think these sisters wrote this book for young readers?
- Read the "About the Illustrator" section at the back of the book and learn about Ruth McNally Barshaw. What do you think the process is like to illustrate a book for young readers? Why do you think she wanted to illustrate this story in particular?
- Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or see new words.
- Have students quickly write feeling(s) in their notebook during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them write a journal entry about it. Have students complete one journal entry per reading session.
- Point out that this book contains Spanish words and phrases. Ask students why a book might be written this way. Why does it matter what language an author uses? How does a language change how a story is told or who hears it? What should you do when coming across an unfamiliar word? Show students the glossary in the back of the book and have them peruse it. Suggest that they can turn to this whenever they come across an unfamiliar word in Spanish. Also note that not all words will be found in the glossary. Students can keep a running log in their reading journals of new words found and their meanings.

### Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- how Sophia's family supports and looks after one another throughout the book
- what friendship means to Sophia and how it changes over the course of the story
- why it's important to embrace change

- what it means to have good sportsmanship

Encourage students to consider why the authors Jessica Mendoza and Alana Mendoza Dusan, would want to share this story with young people.

## VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Many words can be found in the glossary at the end of the book, but there are also some that are not included. Students could be encouraged to create a log of these words—they will not be listed here.

### Content Specific

bunt, changeup, curveball, doubleheader, dugout, fastball, fly ball, inning, pinch runner, pinch hitter, shortstop, strike zone, windup, conquistador, rookies, dollop, zinc, scouting, infielders, outfielders, valerian, mullein, chamomile, aloe, calluses eucalyptus, tamale, kugel, Tejano, umpire, symphony orchestra, baton, ligament, rotator cuff, poaching, sportsmanship

### Academic

intimidating, trite, weeping, condiments, stickler, devour, piston, stoic, prospective, dynasty, jinx, generate, stifled, superstitions, intensity, complacent, notch, executing, telepathically, instinctive, dominate, consolation, convey, endearment, tendency, metaphors, remedies, conferred, procrastination, wayward, deprivation, pondered, recruited, revived, assessments, initiate, affable, contagious, affiliated, suspended, disqualified, poaching, salvage, acoustics, contraption, evacuate, clique, coveted, ensued, interjected, perspective, momentum, adrenaline, descended, bashing, enable, reassuring, mock, revel, erratically, indefinitely, instinctively, intimidating, sentiment, renewed, beneficial, festering, dissipated, momentum, discreetly, pronouncement, vigorously, grievances, relentless, monologue, replaceable, ousted, resonated, monotone, perused, salivate, coincides, anticipation, formation, proclaimed, enforce, diminished, culminated, disastrous, graciously, tolerate, input, criticism, decompress, fundamentals, optimistically, diplomat, grueling, choreographed, curtsy, incoherently, amused, sabotaged, reprimand, nonchalantly, theatrically, retaliation, havoc, slyly, amused, interjected, bliss, self-conscious, inaudibly, resenting, disgruntled, cuticle, nostalgia, venting, perplexed, averted, despised, quivered, jubilation, adrenaline, ruckus, gloating, emphasis, gestured, conceal, effusive, avert, commotion, blunter, haphazardly, cascaded, ironic, envy, recite, dialogue, elicit, resonated, subsided, harmony, concession, wistfully, mesmerized, precision, grit, dreading, podium, inaugural, fragile, integrity, contention, unison, dominance, superstitious, consecutive, defused, , canopy, camaraderie, revived, archivals, condescending, adamantly, lackadaisical, vantage, taunting, simultaneously, idolized

## AFTER READING

### Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

### Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Who is the narrator of the novel? How old is she? What is important to her?
2. Who are the members of Sophia's immediate family? How does Sophia introduce each member of her family?
3. What are 'Dadisms'?
4. Who gave Sophia her journal?
5. How is dinner conducted at Sophia's house? How do you and your family have dinner?
6. What team does Sophia want to join at the beginning of the story?
7. What does Ellie give Sophia the night before her Waves tryout?
8. Describe how Sophia is feeling during Wave tryouts days 1 & 2.
9. Who are the members of the Waves team who tease Sophia?
10. Does Sophia make the Waves team? How does she feel when the news is revealed?
11. Who is Sophia's best friend? Describe her. What movie do Sophia and her best friend love the most?
12. What does querencia mean? Where is your querencia? (refer to page 38)
13. Who are the California Quakes? How does Sophia feel about joining the Quakes' team at first?
14. Describe Sophia's first day of middle school.
15. Why is hard for Sophia to be compared to Ellie?
16. Why does Sophia need strength training?
17. Who is Christina?
18. Who are CJ and Teresa?
19. What events are causing Sophia stress during the first month of middle school?
20. How does Sophia feel about her first softball tournament?

21. Why does Sophia's family hold a tamale party for her abuleita's birthday?
22. What does Casey learn about when she goes to Sophia's house for the tamale party?
23. How does Sophia first feel when her dad suggests she play in the outfield and be a utility player?
24. Why do Sophia and Casey have an argument about Jason Brooks?
25. What holidays are important to Sophia's family? What holidays are important to your family?
26. Why does Sophia's mom advocate that there should be a no criticism rule on the drive home from a game?
27. Why do Sophia's parents have to work weekends?
28. Why do the Quakes organize a carwash?
29. How much do the Quakes raise from their car washing fundraiser?
30. What activities does Sophia enjoy doing with Teresa and CJ?
31. Who is Caleb? What does Sophia learn about herself after talking with Caleb?
32. How does Sophia feel about her parents missing some of her games because they have to work?
33. Why does Sophia start to compare her life to Teresa's? How do these comparisons make her feel?
34. Why does Sophia have to apologize to her dad?
35. Why is the Emerald Tournament so significant?
36. Why is Sophia having trouble pitching?
37. What does Coach Adam from the Waves offer Sophia at the end of the story? What does Sophia decide to do about Coach Adam's offer?
38. Who surprises Sophia during her last game of the tournament? How does Sophia react to this surprise?
39. What does Teresa give Sophia as a gift? What does it say?
40. What does Sophia's younger cousin say to Sophia that is meaningful to Sophia?

### Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Return to the book cover. What do the title and illustration mean to you after reading the book?
2. Analyze why the authors, Jessica Mendoza and Alana Mendoza Dusan, use journaling to tell the story of Sophia. Why is journaling important? How do you experience time based on the structure of the book? How do these choices impact the reading experience?

3. How does Sophia change throughout the book? How does her growth relate to her experiences in softball?
4. What does “fake it till you make it” mean? Why is this a useful expression?
5. An identity crisis can occur when a person’s sense of identity is unsure because of a period of uncertainty and confusion. This can be caused by a change in their circumstances and expected role in society. Why does Sophia feel as though she is having an identity crisis?
6. In class, after reading *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, Sophia’s peers look to her to give “the Mexican perspective” (p. 67). Why is this an uncomfortable situation for Sophia? How does it make her feel to have to represent an entire culture? How does she pushback in this moment?
7. What does Sophia learn by sitting on the bench?
8. Create a venn diagram that shows the differences and similarities between the Waves coaching style and the Quakes coaching style. How do these different coaching styles impact the team members?
9. Why is it important to fail sometimes? What does Sophia learn from failure?
10. Why does Sophia get frustrated with her dad sometimes? What are the different ways she communicates her feelings?
11. How does Sophia’s relationship with Ellie transform over the course of narrative? Her relationship with Casey?
12. How do Sophia and Ellie teach each other life lessons during the story? What do they learn from each other over the course of the book?
13. What does “family” mean to you after reading this story? Have any of your perceptions or feelings toward your family members change after reading this book? How do Sophia’s relationships with her family members inspire you to act toward your own family and friends?
14. After finishing the novel, read Jessica Mendoza’s Author’s Note. What inspired her to write this story? How can our own lives and experiences be mined for inspiration? How can real life be used in fiction writing?
15. What do you learn about good sportsmanship and teamwork from this book?
16. What do you think it was like for the co-authors and sisters, Jessica Mendoza and Alana Mendoza Dusan, to work on this book together?

### Reader’s Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader’s response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What do you think the authors’ message to the reader is? Think about possible motivations to



write the book. What do you think they wanted to tell her readers?

2. Have students make a text-to-self connection. How do you react to change? What is your role in your own family? What do Sophia's experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?
3. Have students make a text-to-text connection. What connections did you make between Sophia's story and Dorothy's from *The Wizard of Oz*? Why do you think the authors chose to title the book based on a play on words from *The Wizard of Oz*? Did you think of any other books while you read *There's No Base Like Home*? Why did you make those connections?
4. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world or on the news? Why did *There's No Base Like Home* make you think of that?
5. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about different character changes, the setting, and the relationships. What did you learn from reading *There's No Base Like Home*?
6. What kinds of conflicts are presented in *There's No Base Like Home*? Discuss Sophia's conflicts within herself, with peers, with her friends, with her family, and conflicts in the world. Compare and contrast the different conflicts within the text.
7. If you could interview the authors, Jessica Mendoza and Alana Mendoza Dusan, what questions would you ask them? Why? What do you want to know about their writing process and how they came up the ideas to write *There's No Base Like Home*?

### ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)  
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Have students give a short talk about a character or central figure in the story they admire or connect to the most. Have them discuss what characteristics they admire about the person they chose.
4. Have students illustrate or discuss what activity they are passionate about.
5. What real-life people or events are you reminded of by characters or events in the story? Prepare a short essay, citing examples from the book and your chosen character/event to justify the similarities.
6. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English language learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the

meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

7. The book contains several different Spanish words. Have students highlight them in the text, and then record them separately. Have students look up their definitions and share their knowledge about these words, if applicable.

### Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. In small groups, have students select a journal entry that resonated with them. Assign students to be the narrator and the different characters featured in the selection. Ensure that the section has adequate dialogue, then have students act out that portion of the story. Have students identify what emotions are being conveyed in this scene, and what makes them think that. How do those emotions then affect their live performance during the reader's theatre?
2. Have students go on a Social and Emotional Learning scavenger hunt in the text, looking for evidence in the details from the book. Assign students to relevant Social and Emotional Learning themes, such as: empathy, problem-solving, perspective taking, perseverance, and recognizing and managing emotions.
3. How does your family inform your sense of self and the choices you make? Are there similar experiences you share? What are something that make you different from your family?
4. Encourage students to identify passages where characters manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways. In a chart with four columns, write: What was the cause of the conflict? What was the consequence of the conflict? How does the character(s) resolve the problem? What are additional ways the character(s) could have solved the problem? What advice would you give?
5. Change is difficult for Sophia. She tries to stay true to herself even as the environment around her is changing. Why is change scary? When you have to deal with change, what are some things you do to stay grounded in yourself? How can you support and love people as they change over time? How can people love and support you as you change over time?

## INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

### English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Assign students in groups for an in-depth character study analyzing Sophia and Ellie.** Have the groups and/or partnerships brainstorm about a guiding question: What and how can this character teach us? Encourage students to think about how these characters have made mistakes and have done good things in the book, and ultimately what they learned from these characters. Have students share their findings and answer the following guiding questions: How is this character important to the book, and what lessons did they teach us over the course of the story? How did their actions develop the narrative, and why are they crucial to understanding the meaning of the book? Students can present their findings to the class.
- **Have students identify a place where Sophia's character changes in the book.** Why do students think that was a point where Sophia changed? How does Sophia feel before the change, what causes the change, and then how does she feel after? Create a graphic organizer with a column on the left that says "Before," a column in the middle that says "Event—what happened that caused the change," and then a column that says "After."
- **Sophia's dad tells her "quitting is not a word in our vocabulary" (p45).** Divide the class into two groups and have them debate whether quitting can be a good thing. Have the teams use the book to support their position.
- **Select a scene in which you disagreed how a character handled a situation, person, or event.** In the voice of that character, rewrite the scene as you think it should have happened.
- **Sophia refers to a quote from actress Judy Garland, "always be a first-rate version of yourself, instead of a second-rate version of somebody else." (p. 172).** In a persuasive essay, analyze this quote. Show whether Sophia's character demonstrates the message of this quote.
- **Select a scene in which you disagreed how a character handled a situation, person, or event.** In the voice of that character, rewrite the scene as you think it should have happened.
- **Pretend you are creating a movie based on *There's No Base Like Home*.** Who would

you cast as each main character and what would you want the sets to look like? Make notes about these items and then describe the scenes you would be most excited to film.

### Social Studies

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students conduct additional research on co-author and Olympic Gold and Silver Medalist, Jessica Mendoza** (<https://espnpressroom.com/us/bios/jessica-mendoza/>). Have students look up different video clips of Jessica while she's doing commentary Major League Baseball (MLB) Commentary. Jessica was part of the first all-female MLB Broadcast Team (<https://bleacherreport.com/articles/10012907-jessica-mendoza-melanie-newman-to-lead-1st-ever-espn-all-womens-mlb-broadcast-team>). Why do you think this was a significant event? How do you think Jessica changed the way people viewed women in sports and in sports commentary? Students can prepare an informational poster or essay to provide details about what they learned about Jessica and her groundbreaking career, both as an athlete and as a commentator.

### Arts/Performing Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **In the introduction, Sophia has a drawing of her family, and she introduces everyone to the reader.** Draw your own family and introduce yourself and your family members to the class.
- **In small groups, create your own cheer like the teams do in *There's No Base Like Home*.** Perform your cheer to the class.
- **Use a movie or video platform to create a book trailer for the novel.** Have students refer to other book trailers for inspiration. What makes an effective book trailer? For ideas, check out this Creating Reading Excitement with Book Trailers lesson plan (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroomresources/lesson-plans/bookreport-alternativecreating-c-30914.html>) by ReadWriteThink.org.
- **Watch *A League of Their Own*.** What do you learn about softball from the movie? What differences and similarities are there in the movie and in *There's No Base Like Home*?
- **Encourage students to draw another cover for the current book, *There's No Base Like Home*.** What would students want to see on the cover? What was the most important or exciting thing that resonated with them in the book that they would want to show potential readers? Students can create alternate covers based on their reactions after reading the story.
- **Envision a sequel to *There's No Base Like Home* and have students title the second book.** What do they think it would be called? Write a synopsis and create a cover for the book.

What kind of materials do they want to use for the cover? Encourage students to consider what they think will happen in the second book, and how that reflects the artwork for the cover. How can they use the current cover to inspire their work?

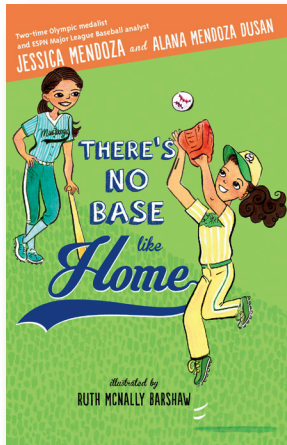
### School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Have students keep a journal for a month.** Document different moments and how you feel about them. Feel free to add drawings to your journal entry.
- **Have students interview a parent, guardian, or adult mentor about their middle school experiences.** How did this person react to and handle a situation when they were faced with obstacles? What advice do they have for someone transitioning from middle school to high school?
- **Encourage students to think about recipes that they like making at home with their families.** Sophia and her family enjoy cooking together, and they are often involved in many of the different processes of making a meal. Students can bring in a recipe from home or consider making it at home and having the class enjoy it during the school day.



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS & ILLUSTRATOR

**Jessica Mendoza** is a Major League Baseball analyst for Sunday Night Baseball on ESPN. She is the first female analyst in MLB postseason history and ESPN's first-ever female MLB analyst. Jessica also serves as a contributor on ABC's Good Morning America. She won gold & silver Olympic medals in 2004 and 2008, respectively, as a member of the US Women's Softball Team.

**Alana Mendoza Dusan** was a Division 1 softball player at Oregon State University. She currently teaches high school English and lives in Bend, Oregon, with her husband and two children.

**Ruth McNally Barshaw** is the award-winning author and illustrator of the Ellie McDoodle series. She played softball for a summer league when she was twelve, but learned much more about strategy from this manuscript. She resides with her author-husband Charlie in Lansing, Michigan. See her work at [ruthexpress.com](https://ruthexpress.com).

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## REVIEWS

"The Mendoza sisters' strong bond shines throughout their engagingly illustrated collaboration, resulting in a wonderful story of family and friendship that will quickly become an MVP among softball-fiction fans." – *Booklist*

"Jessica and Alana turn their experiences as softball sisters into pure gold. Great sports action and family drama—with personal details and game tips—combine to make *There's No Base Like Home* a heart-felt novel filled with empowering messages." – *Billie Jean King, Founder of the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative and the Women's Sports Foundation*

"*There's No Base Like Home*: a perfect title with a beautiful message authored by two women who have clearly found their "home base" within. There is strength in uniqueness. . . . This is timely and timeless." – *Kerri Walsh Jennings, three-time Olympic gold medalist and professional beach volleyball player*

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