

LEVELED BOOK • J

Ichiro Suzuki

**Multi
level
J•M•P**

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Ichiro steals third base in a game against the New York Yankees.

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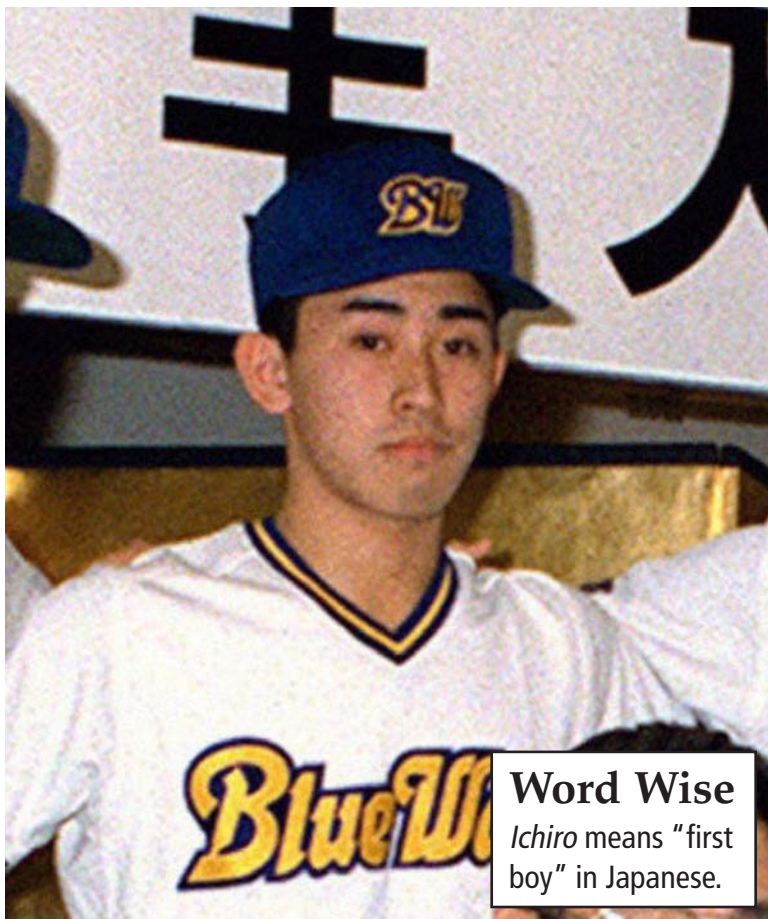
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Ichiro practices his batting before a game.

Born to Play

Ichiro Suzuki was born in **Japan** on October 22, 1973. Ichiro's dad wanted him to become a great **baseball** player. He made Ichiro **practice** for hours every day.



Word Wise

Ichiro means "first boy" in Japanese.

Ichiro joined the Blue Wave when he was eighteen years old.

Ichiro worked very hard. He didn't like it sometimes, but he kept working. All his hard work paid off. He started to play for the Blue Wave when he was eighteen.

ICHIRO SUZUKI

Height: 5' 11" (1.8 m)

Weight: 170 lbs (77.1 kg)

Position: Outfielder

Bats: Left

Throws: Right

Date of Birth: Oct. 22, 1973

Born: Kasugai, Japan



Ichiro hits a game-winning home run while playing for the Blue Wave in 1996.

Japan's Favorite Player

Ichiro played with the Blue Wave team for seven years. They won many games with his help. He was the best batter on any of the teams. Almost everyone in Japan knew who he was.



One of Ichiro's many ads hangs over a busy shopping area in Tokyo, Japan.

Ichiro's fans loved him. They saw him on TV. They saw him in ads. They came to the **museum** that Ichiro's dad built. The museum has many things from Ichiro's life.



Fans in Tokyo, Japan, watch Ichiro play on television.

The fans still loved Ichiro when he later went to the United States. Many of his fans watched his games on television. Some fans came to the United States just to see him play.

Japan's Pastime

People in the United States love baseball. So do people in Japan. They have been playing the game since the late 1800s.

Babe Ruth sits with batboys during an all-star game in Japan in 1934.





Many pitchers fear Ichiro's swing.

Coming to the United States

Ichiro wanted to play in the United States. He was thinner and smaller than most American players. He also didn't hit the ball hard. Some people didn't think he would do well.



Ichiro steals a base in 2001. He is one of only a few baseball players who use their first names on their jerseys.

Ichiro joined the Seattle Mariners in 2001. He played very well in his first year. Ichiro had 242 hits, stole 56 bases, and scored 127 runs.



Ichiro holds one of the many awards he has won.

Ichiro won two important awards in his first year. Few other players had won those awards in their first year.



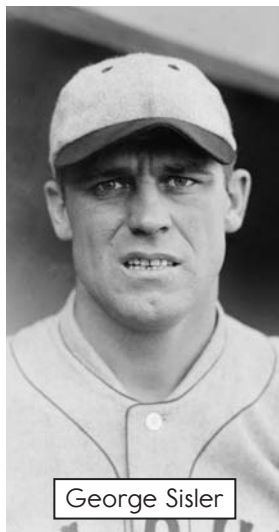
Ichiro plays in his first game as a New York Yankee.

Ichiro was traded to the New York Yankees in 2012.

Ichiro by the Numbers

Year	Team	Hits	Home Runs	Runs Batted In	Batting Average
2001	SEA	242	8	69	.350
2002	SEA	208	8	51	.321
2003	SEA	212	13	62	.312
2004	SEA	262	8	60	.372
2005	SEA	206	15	68	.303
2006	SEA	224	9	49	.322
2007	SEA	238	6	68	.351
2008	SEA	213	6	42	.310
2009	SEA	225	11	46	.352
2010	SEA	214	6	43	.315
2011	SEA	184	5	47	.272
2012	SEA	105	4	28	.261
2012	NYN	73	5	27	.322
Total		2,606	104	660	.322

Source: ESPN



George Sisler's daughter congratulates Ichiro on breaking her father's record.

Setting Records

Ichiro has won many awards for playing baseball. He has also broken **records**. He remembers breaking one record the most. On October 1, 2004, he had his 258th hit. This broke the record for hits in one **season**. The record had stood for 84 years. "I think this is the best moment," Suzuki said.

Glossary

- baseball** (*n.*) a game played between two teams with a bat and ball on a field (p. 4)
- Japan** (*n.*) an island nation east of China in the Pacific Ocean (p. 4)
- museum** (*n.*) a building used to store and show things that are important to history, science, or art (p. 8)
- practice** (*v.*) to do something over and over again, often for the purpose of getting better at it (p. 4)
- records** (*n.*) measurements of events or achievements that have never been exceeded (p. 15)
- season** (*n.*) a certain time of the year when something usually happens, such as a sport being played or a type of weather taking place (p. 15)

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