

King James

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THE
GUIDE
BOOK



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About TheatreWorks Silicon Valley


Founded in 1970, TheatreWorks has grown from a truly original Silicon Valley start-up to become the peninsula's leading professional nonprofit theatre company.


Now in our 54th season, TheatreWorks presents a wide variety of contemporary plays and musicals, as well as revitalizing great works of the past. We are champions of new work, offering artists support and a creative home as they develop exciting new stories for the American theatre. Offstage, arts education programs in our schools and arts engagement programs in our neighborhoods uplift our audiences and strengthen community bonds.

Whether onstage or off, in everything that we do, TheatreWorks seeks to celebrate the human spirit and the wonderful diversity of our Silicon Valley community. For more info, visit theatreworks.org

How to use this guide? It's easy. It's link-friendly!

TOC Click on Table of Contents title & you'll go right to that page!

 **BLUE** text links are active to external resources.

 The arrow (middle bottom of page) will take you to the TOC.

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CENTER COURT: The History of Basketball

For Shawn and Matt, the game of basketball isn't just fun, it's a way of life. They are lifelong fans of the Cleveland Cavaliers and both have a complex and emotional relationship with the game and its players.

1891



James Naismith, a Canadian physical education instructor, invents basketball in Springfield, Massachusetts.

1946

The Basketball Association of America (BAA) is founded.

1895



The first official basketball rules are published.

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

1936

Basketball becomes an Olympic sport at the Berlin Olympics.



1898

The National Basketball League (NBL) is formed, the first professional basketball league.



1949

The BAA merges with the NBL to form the National Basketball Association (NBA).

2010s

LeBron James establishes himself as one of the greatest players of all time, winning multiple championships with different teams.



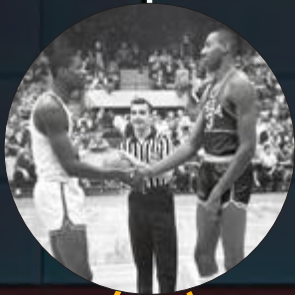
1990s

Michael Jordan leads the Chicago Bulls to six NBA championships.



1950s-60s

Wilt Chamberlain and Bill Russell dominate the NBA, becoming legendary players.



2000s

Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal dominate the Los Angeles Lakers.



1976

The ABA and the NBA merges, strengthening the league.



1980s

Magic Johnson and Larry Bird become rivals and elevate the game.



1970s

The ABA (American Basketball Association) challenges the NBA's dominance.



FOR 3 POINTS!



When was your NBA team established?

Try to order the following teams from oldest to newest using the hints below:

Golden State Warriors

Denver Nuggets

Cleveland Cavaliers

Los Angeles Lakers

New York Knicks

ANSWERS: Knicks (1946), Warriors (1946, but 1971 as this name), LA Lakers (1948, but 1960 in LA), Cavaliers (1970), Nuggets (1976)



CLUE 1: New York was one of the original teams

CLUE 2: The Golden State Warriors were originally founded as the Philadelphia Warriors but moved to San Francisco in 1962

CLUE 3: The Cleveland Cavaliers were founded in 1970

CLUE 4: Denver has the youngest team on the list.



The Legend of King James

Basic Info

FULL NAME:

LeBron Raymone James

BORN: December 30, 1984

BIRTHPLACE: Akron, Ohio

SPOUSE: Savannah James
(2013-present)

CHILDREN:

LeBron Jr., Bryce, Zhuri

ASTROLOGICAL SIGN:
Capricorn



Stats of a King

- **21 seasons** for the Cavaliers, Lakers, Heat.
- Averages: **27.1 points, 7.5 rebounds, 7.4 assists** in **1,492 regular-season games**.
- Selected to play in **20 All-Star games**.
- Awards: **Rookie of the Year, 4 MVP, 4 Finals MVP, 4 NBA championships**

Career Highlights

NBA CHAMPIONSHIPS: He has won four NBA championships, with the Miami Heat (2012, 2013) and the Cleveland Cavaliers (2016, 2020).

NBA FINALS MVP: LeBron has been named the NBA Finals MVP four times.

NBA MOST VALUABLE PLAYER (MVP): He has won four NBA MVP awards.

NBA ALL-STAR: LeBron has been selected to the NBA All-Star game 19 times.

ALL-NBA TEAMS: He has been named to the All-NBA First Team 18 times and the All-NBA Second Team twice.

ALL-DEFENSIVE TEAMS: LeBron has been selected to the All-Defensive First Team six times and the All-Defensive Second Team five times.

OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALS: He has won three Olympic gold medals with the United States men's national basketball team.

*"Commitment is a big part of what I am and what I believe.
How committed are you to winning?
How committed are you to being
a good friend?
To being trustworthy?
To being successful?
How committed are you to being
a good father, a good teammate
a good role model?
There's that moment every
morning when you look in
the mirror:
Are you committed,
or are you not?"*

*"I'm just
a little
kid from
Akron."*

*"Greatness is
defined by how
much you want
to put into what
you do."*

"You have to be able to accept failure to get better."

THE STANDS: Basketball Culture

Sports traditions serve as a unifying force for fans, creating a sense of community and shared identity. They provide a way to connect with others who share the same passion, celebrate victories together, and commiserate over losses. Like for Shawn and Matt, sports tradition can provide:

- **Community and Belonging:** a shared experience and group identity.
- **Emotional Connection:** joy, excitement, and heartbreak.
- **Cultural Significance:** family and generational traditions.

MATCH THE FOLLOWING BASKETBALL TRADITIONS TO:

AT HOME TRADITIONS

AT THE GAME TRADITIONS

TRADITIONS FOUND **OTHER PLACES**

Staying completely silent until a team's 10th Point is scored

Pump-Up playlist for before, during, or after the game

Tailgating, meet with other fans and cook in the parking lot

Fan contests to reward the most die-hard fan

Victory Dance for whenever a point is scored or for the end of the game

Fantasy Basketball Leagues so you can play along

Fan Chants

Throwing toilet paper on the court after the first basket of the first home game

Themed decorations for the game



Take the Shot:
Why do Shawn and Matt feel betrayed when LeBron leaves the Cavaliers?

Staying completely silent until a team's 10th Point is scored (Other Places)
Pump-Up playlist for before, during, or after the game (At Home)
Victory Dance for whenever a point is scored or for the end of the game (At Home)
Throwing toilet paper on the court after the first basket of the first home game (At the Game)
Themed Decorations for the game (At Home)
Fantasy Basketball Leagues so you can play along (At Home)
Tailgating, meet with other fans and cook in the parking lot (At the Game)
Fan Chants (At the Game)
Fan contests to reward the most die-hard fan (Other Places)

FREE-THROW LINE: **Adult Male Friendship**

At its core, this is a play about friendship. Over the course of 12 years, the friendship between Shawn and Matt develops, highlighting the challenges, complexity, and importance of friendship. secret ballots in the way we are generally accustomed to.

However, friendship is often elusive for adults - especially male-identifying adults.



"American men are stuck in what's been dubbed a friendship recession, with 20 percent of single men now saying they don't have any close friends, and more than half of all men report feeling unsatisfied with the size of their friend groups." (NPR)

"As young boys, they haven't yet felt the societal pressure to "be manly" and hide their feelings. But as they age, it often becomes harder for them to buck the stereotypes of how men are "supposed" to act. And those stereotypes include not showing emotion and not depending on others—both of which can be interpreted as weaknesses." (Newport Institute)





So how do you make friends?

Below are some tools that experts suggest.

Circle the ones you use and put a star next to the ones you want to try.

1. **Join a club.** Being around the same people regularly can help you make friends.
2. **Embrace your interests.** Go out and do the things you like to do in the world. Meet people who have similar interests.
3. **Start a conversation.** Being brave and just striking up a conversation is always the first step.
4. **Be a good friend.** Doing favors and being genuinely interested in others helps you know more about them.
5. Go out into the world. Staying home means there are no chances to make new friends.
6. Rejection is ok! Often we are afraid of someone might reject us, so we don't put ourselves out there. It's scary. But chances are, the other person is just as nervous as you.
7. Embrace your heritage. Sometimes cultural groups can be a place to find new friends that have similar backgrounds to you.

Take the Shot:

Ask someone
in your class
something about
themselves.

NOTHING BUT NET: Race in the NBA



Take the Shot:

What role do you think race plays in the way Shawn and Matt react to LeBron James leaving the Cavaliers?

Tension in the friendship of Matt and Shawn are sometimes wrapped up in their respective race and socioeconomic statuses.

The NBA has a complex history intertwined with the broader issues of race and equality in the United States. From the early days of segregation to the present, the league has played a significant role in shaping racial dynamics in American society.





Early Years and Segregation

1950: The NBA integrated for the first time with the signing of Chuck Cooper, Nat "Sweetwater" Clifton, and Earl Lloyd.



1960S: The league saw a significant increase in the number of Black players, and they began to dominate the game. Players like Bill Russell and Wilt Chamberlain became icons of the sport.

The Civil Rights Era and Beyond

1960S AND 1970S: The NBA was a microcosm of the broader societal changes taking place during the Civil Rights Movement. Players like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Julius Erving used their platforms to speak out against racial injustice.



1980S AND 1990S: The NBA continued to evolve, with players like Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan becoming global superstars. However, the league also faced challenges, including the drug-related controversies of the 1980s.



The Modern Era and Ongoing Issues

21ST CENTURY: The NBA has become increasingly diverse, with players from all over the world competing at the highest level. However, issues of race and equality continue to be relevant.



Social Justice Movements:

Players like LeBron James and Kevin Durant have been vocal advocates for social justice, using their platforms to raise awareness about issues such as police brutality and racial inequality.

The History of Basketball

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- https://www.ducksters.com/sports/lebron_james.php
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Adult Male Friendship

- <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-a-growing-number-of-american-men-say-they-are-in-a-friendship-recession>
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Race in the NBA

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- https://www.lemonde.fr/en/summer-reads/article/2023/07/26/from-segregation-to-black-lives-matter-the-nba-is-a-mirror-of-the-us-racial-tensions_6068327_183.html
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