



# The History of Sports and Famous Athletes Comprehension Series

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## Introduction

Muhammad Ali was one of America's greatest 20th-century boxers and athletes. Muhammad Ali was born Cassius Clay in Louisville, Kentucky. He started fighting at the age of 12 after his bicycle was stolen. Under the guidance of Joe Martin, Clay became an explosive boxer and won six Kentucky Gold Gloves during high school. In 1960, Clay won a gold medal in the Olympics at Rome, Italy.

## The Louisville Lip

Clay then turned professional under the guidance of Angelo Dundee and became famous for his unorthodox style. Ali tirelessly promoted himself and earned the nickname the "Louisville Lip" for statements such as "I am the Greatest," and "I'm young, I'm pretty, I'm fast, and no one can beat me." From 1960–1963, Cassius Clay was 19–0 with 15 knockouts. On February 25, 1964, Clay defeated Sonny Liston and won the World Heavyweight Championship.

## A Boxing Immortal Changes his Name

In 1965, Clay joined the Nation of Islam and changed his name to Muhammad Ali. Ali defended his championship for the next several years, winning many matches with a breathtaking combination of speed and power. In 1967, however Ali was stripped of his championship for refusing to fight in the Vietnam War. Ali immediately became a controversial figure and was the subject of outrage for many Americans. Although Ali lost his title to Joe Frazier in 1971, he cemented his title as "The Greatest" by outdueling George Foreman in 1974 in "The Rumble in the Jungle." In 1975, Ali defeated Joe Frazier in "The Thrilla in Manila." In one of the best fights in boxing history, Ali won by TKO after the 14th round. In 1981, Ali retired with a career record of 56–5 with 37 knockouts.

## After Boxing

In 1984, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, which would eventually confine him to a wheelchair and make it hard for him to communicate. Ali died on June 3, 2016.

### 1. Which is NOT true about Muhammad Ali?

- A. He changed his name to Cassius Clay
- B. He won a gold medal in the Olympics
- C. He started boxing after his bike was stolen
- D. He was born in Kentucky

**2. To which of the following questions would Joe Martin be the answer?**

- A. Who taught Muhammad Ali as a professional boxer?
- B. Who taught Cassius Clay to be an explosive boxer?
- C. Who guided Cassius Clay as a professional boxer?
- D. Who taught Muhammad Ali to be an explosive boxer?

**3. What was Muhammad Ali called “the Louisville Lip?”**

- A. Because he was from Louisville and had a prominent lip
- B. Because he was from Louisville and trained under Angelo Dundee
- C. Because he was from Louisville and went undefeated
- D. Because he was from Louisville and liked to talk about himself

**4. What does “unorthodox” mean in the following sentence?**

Clay then turned professional under the guidance of Angelo Dundee and became famous for his unorthodox style.

- A. powerful
- B. unusual
- C. illegal
- D. objectionable

**5. Why did many people become outraged with Ali?**

- A. He refused to fight in the Vietnam War
- B. He changed his name from Cassius Clay to Muhammad Ali
- C. He lost his title to Joe Frazier
- D. He was diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease

**6. Which of the following is true?**

- A. Ali defeated Joe Frazier in “the Rumble in the Jungle.”
- B. Ali defeated George Foreman in “the Thrilla in Manila.”
- C. The “Thrilla in Manila” lasted 14 rounds before Ali won.
- D. Ali retired in 1984.

**7. Which of the following best describes Muhammad Ali?**

- A. An incredible boxer who only won a lot of fights, but who rarely knocked out his opponents.
- B. An incredible boxer who was not afraid to make unpopular political statements
- C. An incredible boxer who largely stayed out of politics and who was loved by all
- D. An incredible boxer and humble man who let his boxing do the “talking.”



## **BABE RUTH Reading Comprehension**

George Herman, "Babe Ruth", was born February 6, 1895, in Baltimore, Maryland. His parents owned a saloon near the current site of Camden Yards in Baltimore. They were of German descent and taught him to speak German fluently. George was actually somewhat of a petty criminal as a young boy. By age seven he was already involved in drinking alcohol and chewing tobacco. Because he was too difficult for his parents to control, George was sent away to a Catholic school. It was here where Brother Matthias taught him baseball.

As a teenager, George became the team's catcher and then pitcher. At the age of 19, Jack Dunn, a scout for the Orioles, discovered George's baseball talents and promptly signed him to a contract. After performing well as a pitcher and a batter for the Orioles during spring training, George made the team. Because he was such a young talent, he earned the nickname "Babe."

On April 22, 1914, Babe pitched a shutout against the Buffalo Bisons in his Major League debut. Because the Orioles were in poor financial shape, Jack Dunn was forced to sell off his best players. Babe was sold to the Boston Red Sox in 1914 for an amount between \$20,000 and \$35,000.

After pitching for the Red Sox minor league club in Providence, Rhode Island, Babe was called up to the Majors permanently toward the end of the 1914 baseball season. After the season, he married Helen Woodford. In 1915, Babe secured a spot in the Red Sox starting pitching rotation. That year, the Red Sox won the World Series. Babe pitched to a record of 18 wins and 8 losses. He also batted .315 and hit four home runs. He pitched even better in 1916, going 23–12 with nine shutouts. The Red Sox again won the World Series and Babe pitched a shutout in Game Two. In 1917, Babe went 24–13, though the Red Sox failed in their bid to win a third consecutive World Series.

In 1917, because of his success at the plate, Babe began playing the outfield more and pitching less. In 1918, he led the Major Leagues with 11 home runs. Once again, Babe led the Red Sox to the World Series title, even though the season was shortened by World War I. In 1919, Ruth set the Major League record by hitting 29 home runs in a season. He had become the best player in baseball. Babe became an attraction wherever he went, and large crowds gathered to watch him play. Many believe he was the driving force behind the increased popularity of baseball. Despite his on-the-field success, Ruth began to wear out his welcome with the Red Sox. He frequently argued with management and had a reputation for partying late in the night and consuming large amounts of alcohol. His marriage to Helen Woodward also deteriorated. Because he was the biggest star in baseball, he demanded higher salaries from management even though the team was in a terrible financial position. On January 3, 1919, the Boston Red Sox sold Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees. The sale would become one of the most infamous transactions in sports history and became forever known as "The Curse of the

Bambino." After selling Babe Ruth, the Red Sox would endure 15 consecutive losing seasons and would not win another World Series until 2004.

Babe Ruth would become the biggest star in sports history as a New York Yankee. In 1920, he had the best season in baseball history. He hit (a then unheard of) 54 home runs and batted .376! Amazingly, only one TEAM hit more home runs than Babe Ruth in 1920. Ruth immediately became a national icon and the pride of New York City. He was not only the most popular athlete in the United States, but the most popular person! In 1921, Babe enjoyed the greatest statistical season in baseball history—still no one has matched it. He hit 59 home runs and batted .378. He also knocked in 177 runs and amassed 857 total bases. His 857 total bases in a season remains a record today. Although he led the Yankees to the World Series, he injured his arm in Game Five, and the Yankees were defeated in seven games. Ruth had a subpar year (for him) in 1922, and again, the Yankees were defeated in the World Series.

1923 was the inaugural season for the new Yankee Stadium, which would later be nicknamed "The House that Ruth Built." Babe batted .393 and hit 41 home runs. In 1923, the Yankees won the World Series, and Babe Ruth hit three home runs. Ruth would go on to lead the Yankees to World Series titles in 1927, 1928, and 1932. The 1927 Yankees, with Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, went 110–44. Many historians say it was the greatest team in baseball history. That year, Ruth hit a record 60 home runs (it was broken by Roger Maris in 1961). In the 1928 World Series, Ruth batted .625 and hit three home runs! In 1932, the Yankees beat the Chicago Cubs four games to none. The 1932 series, however, will forever be remembered for one of the most legendary events in sports history. In Game Three of the series at Chicago's Wrigley Field, Babe Ruth allegedly pointed to the center field bleachers as a declaration of where he would hit the next pitch. Amidst the screaming fans and taunting gestures of the Cubs players, Ruth deposited the pitch in the center field bleachers some 440 feet away. The home run, perhaps the most celebrated in baseball history, became known as Babe Ruth's Called Shot. Today, experts are in disagreement as to whether Ruth actually called his home run or was simply pointing at the pitcher. Several grainy videos and pictures exist but still don't show conclusively what Ruth was pointing to. After this home run, the Curtiss Candy Company posted a huge billboard overlooking Wrigley Field advertising their Baby Ruth candy bars. Three years before, in 1929, Babe Ruth married Claire Merritt. He would remain with Merritt, who is credited with helping Babe clean up his personal life, bad habits, and diet, until his death.

After the 1932 series, however, Ruth's career began coming to end. The 1934 season was his last as a Yankee. He signed with the Boston Braves in 1935 and played less than half the season. He hit his last home run at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh on May 25, 1935. It was his 714th home run. Today, Babe Ruth is third on baseball's all-time home run list. Ruth's career was perhaps the greatest in baseball history. In 1936, he was one of the first five players inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. In June of 1948, the Yankees retired his number "3." Unfortunately, his reckless lifestyle caught up with him quickly after this retirement. On August 16, 1948, Babe Ruth died of throat cancer. He was only 53. Nearly 10,000 people attended his funeral, and tens of thousands more lined up along the streets of New York to pay their respects. Babe Ruth remains an icon today and one of the most recognizable sports personalities in history. His birthplace in Baltimore has been converted into the Babe Ruth Museum.

**1.) Where was Babe Ruth born?**

- a.) Baltimore
- b.) Boston
- c.) New York
- d.) Pittsburgh

**2.) Which of the following is NOT true about Babe's childhood?**

- a.) Babe drank alcohol.
- b.) Babe was difficult to control.
- c.) He could speak German.
- d.) He was homeschooled.

**3.) What was Babe's record as a pitcher in 1916?**

- a.) 18 wins, 8 losses
- b.) 23 wins, 8 losses
- c.) 23 wins, 12 losses
- d.) 12 wins, 8 losses

**4.) What happened second?**

- a.) Babe pitched a shutout against the Buffalo Bisons.
- b.) Babe was sold to the Boston Red Sox.
- c.) Babe was sold to the New York Yankees.
- d.) Babe pitched a shutout in Game 2 of the 1916 World Series.

**5.) Which of the following describes "The Curse of the Bambino"?**

- a.) The Curse of the Bambino refers to the Orioles after they sold Babe Ruth to the Red Sox.
- b.) The Curse of the Bambino refers to the Yankees after they bought him from the Red Sox.
- c.) The Curse of the Bambino refers to his reckless behavior, which included drinking alcohol and chewing tobacco.
- d.) The Curse of the Bambino refers to the Red Sox after they sold him to the Yankees.

**6.) Which of the following is a record (stated in the passage) that still stands today?**

- a.) Babe Ruth's 714 home runs
- b.) Babe Ruth's 60 home runs in a season
- c.) Babe Ruth's three World Series championships with the New York Yankees
- d.) Babe Ruth's 857 total bases in one season

**7.) What was "The House that Ruth Built"?**

- a.) Fenway Park
- b.) Yankee Stadium
- c.) Forbes Field
- d.) New York City

**8.) Which of the following occurred last in Babe Ruth's baseball career?**

- a.) The 1928 World Series Championship with the Yankees
- b.) 60 home runs in a season
- c.) The 1927 season in which the Yankees went 110–44
- d.) Babe's "Called Shot"

**9.) Which of the following happened before 1930?**

- a.) Babe Ruth hit his last home run at Forbes Field.
- b.) Babe Ruth turned 53.
- c.) His last season with the New York Yankees
- d.) His marriage to Claire Merritt

**10.) What is an "icon" as used in this passage?**

- a.) A symbol on a computer
- b.) A person who is very famous and recognizable
- c.) A person who doesn't want attention
- d.) A person who has a troubled life



## **Muggsy Bogues Reading Comprehension**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Tyrone “Muggsy” Bogues was the shortest player in the history of the National Basketball Association (NBA). At 5’3” Bogues was noticeably shorter than even the shortest players. Spud Webb was the second shortest player in the NBA during Bogues’s career, and he was 5’7”.

Muggsy Bogues grew up in inner-city Baltimore, Maryland. Although his parents called him “Apple,” he earned the nickname “Muggsy” because of the toughness and leadership he showed during pick-up basketball games on the outdoor courts in Baltimore. His high school team, the Dunbar Poets, was arguably one of the best of all-time. Including Bogues, Dunbar’s 1981-1982 team featured four future NBA players. During his senior season, Dunbar went 31-0. Bogues earned a scholarship to Wake Forest University, where he would become the school’s star point guard. Bogues left Wake Forest as the ACC (Atlantic Coast Conference) career leader in steals and assists. The Washington Bullets drafted him 12<sup>th</sup> overall in the 1987 NBA draft. Interestingly, he was on the same team as Manute Bol – the tallest player in NBA history. Bol was two feet and four inches taller than Bogues.

Bogues had a successful and notable NBA career that spanned 13 years, ten of which were spent with the Charlotte Hornets. He was known for his incredible speed, passing ability, quickness, and knack for stealing the ball from opponents. Bogues holds several Hornets records including career steals and assists. In the 1993-1994 season, he averaged 10.8 points per game and 10.7 assists! Despite his lack of height, he managed to block 39 shots, including a shot attempted by 7’0” center Patrick Ewing. Bogues was said to have a 44-inch vertical leap and could nearly dunk a basketball on a ten-foot hoop. Bogues retired after the 2000-2001 season as a Toronto Raptor. During his career, he played for four teams: The Washington Bullets, Charlotte Hornets, Golden State Warriors, and Toronto Raptors.

Since his retirement from the NBA, Bogues has coached basketball, worked in the real estate industry, and made appearances in various movies and television shows.

### **1. Why does the author mention Spud Webb in the first paragraph?**

- A. To emphasize that short players could be successful in the NBA
- B. To emphasize that Muggsy Bogues was shorter than the shortest NBA players
- C. To emphasize that Muggsy Bogues was a great player
- D. To compare his career to that of another short player.

**2. What can be inferred from the passage?**

- A. Muggsy Bogues had his most successful seasons with the Charlotte Hornets
- B. Muggsy Bogues was one of the best players in NBA history
- C. His most successful season was likely with the Toronto Raptors
- D. Muggsy Bogues was probably much taller than 5'3"

**3. Muggsy Bogues was not...**

- A. quick and fast.
- B. a great passer.
- C. a great scorer.
- D. great at stealing the ball.

**4. What does “arguably” mean in the following sentence?**

His high school team, the Dunbar Poets, was arguably one of the best of all-time.

- A. It means people from Dunbar High School often argue
- B. It means Bogues’s high school team was unquestionably the best of all-time.
- C. It means Bogues’s high school team was good, but probably not the best of all-time
- D. It means Bogues’s high school team may have been the best of all-time, although some might consider other teams the best of all-time

**5. What question is answered in the third paragraph?**

- A. How high could Muggsy Bogues jump?
- B. What did Muggsy Bogues do after he retired?
- C. Who was Manute Bol?
- D. How many season did Muggsy Bogues play with the Toronto Raptors?

**6. Which is NOT true about Muggsy Bogues?**

- A. He went to Wake Forest University
- B. He was originally drafted by the Charlotte Hornets
- C. His parents gave him a different nickname than Muggsy
- D. He once blocked a shot by someone who was seven feet tall

**7. Which word in the third paragraph means “skill?”**

- A. knack
- B. notable
- C. records
- D. incredible

## Manute Bol Reading Comprehension

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Manute Bol was the tallest player in the history of the National Basketball Association (NBA). At 7'7" Bol towered over even the tallest players in the NBA. Born in the African nation of Sudan, Bol's mother was said to be nearly seven feet tall and his father was 6'8" tall. Bol claimed his great grandfather was 7'10" tall! Bol played soccer as a child but switched to basketball at age 15 when he grew too tall for soccer.

Bol came to the United States in 1993. He played college basketball at Bridgeport State University in Connecticut where he averaged 22.5 points per game, 13.5 rebounds, and 7.1 blocks. In 1985, Bol was drafted by the Washington Bullets in the second round. Although he did not finish college, Bol said he entered the draft to earn enough money to ensure his sister could leave war-torn Sudan. Interestingly, in 1987, the Bullets drafted the 5'3" point guard Muggsy Bogues, resulting in the NBA's tallest player in history playing at the same time as the NBA's shortest player in history.

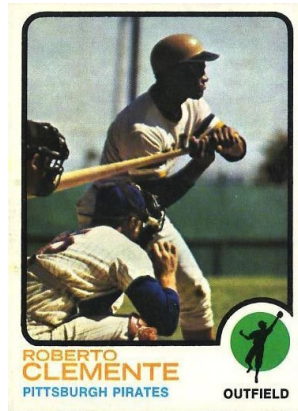
As a player, Bol was limited by his lack of mobility and strength and never became a force on offense. Bol did, however, excel on defense. Bol once blocked eleven shots in a single half, and twice blocked eight shots in a single quarter. In a game against the Orlando Magic in 1992, Bol blocked shots on four consecutive possessions. In his career, Bol blocked 2,086 shots and is the only player in NBA history to have more blocked shots than points scored. He retired from the NBA in 1995 after suffering a knee injury.

Over the course of his basketball career, Bol contributed nearly all of his earnings to Sudanese causes and advocated Sudan-related causes. He was well-respected by his teammates and was said to be a practical joker. He forged close friendships with NBA stars Charles Barkley and Chris Mullin. On July 10, 2006, Bol died of kidney failure. He left behind ten children. One of his sons, Bol Bol, is considered a top college basketball recruit and plays for the Oregon Ducks (as of 2018).

### 1. Which of the following is listed from tallest to shortest?

- A. Manute Bol >> Manute's great grandfather >> Manute's mother
- B. Manute's great grandfather >> Manute's mother >> Manute Bol
- C. Manute's great grandfather >> Manute Bol >> Manute's mother
- D. Manute's great grandfather >> Manute's father >> Manute's mother

- 2. Why did Manute Bol enter the NBA draft?**
- A. Because he didn't want to finish college
  - B. Because he wanted to play for the Washington Bullets
  - C. Because he needed money to help his sister escape from Sudan
  - D. Because he thought he'd become a big star
- 3. Which would be an accurate description of Manute Bol's professional basketball career?**
- A. Manute was a highly effective offensive player and defender
  - B. Although Manute was not effective as a defender, he was very effective as an offensive player
  - C. Although Manute was not effective as an offensive player, he was highly effective as a defender
  - D. Manute was neither effective as an offensive player or defender
- 4. For which of the following questions would "because he was too tall" be the answer?**
- A. Why did Manute Bol retire from basketball?
  - B. How did Manue Bol die?
  - C. What was Manute Bol ineffective as a basketball player?
  - D. Why did Manute Bol quit soccer?
- 5. Which of the following made Manute Bol unique among NBA players?**
- A. He was very tall
  - B. He did not finish college
  - C. He averaged 22.5 points per game in college
  - D. He finished his career with more blocks than points
- 6. Which of the words used in the third paragraph means "ability to move?"**
- A. mobility
  - B. consecutive
  - C. possessions
  - D. retired
- 7. Which is NOT true about Manute Bol?**
- A. He played with the shortest player in NBA history
  - B. Manute's mother was taller than his father
  - C. Sadly, Manute died of kidney disease in 2006
  - D. Manute's son, Bol Bol, plays in the NBA



Roberto Clemente Walker was born on August 18, 1934, in Barrio San Antón, Carolina, Puerto Rico. He was the youngest of seven children. His father was a foreman who oversaw sugarcane cutters and helped deliver sand and gravel for a construction company. His mother did laundry, ran a grocery store, and did other jobs on the sugarcane plantation. Roberto did odd jobs so he could help the family and buy himself a bicycle. Growing up, Roberto played baseball and participated in track and field. He won medals for the javelin throw and short distance races. Throwing the javelin strengthened his arm for throwing a baseball.

At age 18, Roberto joined a Puerto Rican professional baseball team, the Cangrejeros de Santurce, where he played with Willie Mays in 1954. That year, Santurce won the Caribbean World Series. Roberto was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1954. He played on a minor league team for a season before being chosen in the draft by the Pittsburgh Pirates. Roberto quickly made a major impact in both the Pirates and Major League Baseball. He played outfield with the Pirates from 1955 to 1972. He was selected for the National League All-Star team 15 times, won 12 Gold Glove Awards, and won four National League batting titles. He was the National League Most Valuable Player in 1966 and the World Series Most Valuable Player in 1971. His career batting average was .317 with 3,000 hits, 240 home runs, and 1,305 RBIs.

Roberto was known for his humanitarian efforts. He helped people in need across the United States and Central America and held free baseball clinics for children in Puerto Rico. In 1972, an earthquake struck Managua, the capital of Nicaragua. Roberto had managed a Puerto Rican all-star team in Managua, and he had friends there. He became the honorary chairman of an earthquake relief committee that raised \$150,000 and gathered nearly 26 tons of relief supplies. Tragically, on New Year's Eve, he died when the plane he was on to deliver the supplies crashed into the Atlantic Ocean.

Normally, a player cannot be inducted into the Baseball Hall-of-Fame until at least five years after he stopped playing. An exception was made for Roberto, and he was inducted in 1973. He was the first Hispanic player to be inducted to the Hall-of-Fame. After his death, Major League Baseball established the Roberto Clemente Award recognizing the player who combines outstanding skills on the field with devoted work in the community. Broadcaster Tim McCarver called Roberto, "the greatest right fielder of all time," because of his precise and powerful throwing arm. Roberto once said, "If you have a chance to accomplish something that will make things better for people coming behind you, and you don't do that, you are wasting your time on this earth." Roberto also said, "I want to be remembered as a ballplayer who gave all he had to give."

- 1. What is the main focus of the first paragraph?**
  - A. Roberto's childhood
  - B. Roberto's parents
  - C. Roberto's skill in throwing a javelin
  - D. How Roberto earned money
- 2. Which can be inferred from the second paragraph?**
  - A. Roberto Clemente was the greatest baseball player in history
  - B. The Pirates won the World Series in 1971
  - C. Roberto had the highest career batting average of any Pittsburgh Pirate
  - D. Roberto Clemente should have played for the Brooklyn Dodgers
- 3. The third paragraph states that Roberto was known for his humanitarian efforts. Which of the following would qualify as such an effort?**
  - A. Signing autographs for fans
  - B. Helping to deliver food to victims of a hurricane
  - C. Donating your old bike to charity
  - D. Painting a picture for a friend
- 4. Which of the following is the best explanation for why Roberto Clemente was inducted into the Professional Baseball Hall-of-Fame in 1973?**
  - A. He was a great player who won a World Series with the Pittsburgh Pirates and who won the National League's Most Valuable Player award
  - B. He won the all-star 15 times
  - C. He would have been a Hall-of-Fame player when he was eligible, but his career and life were cut short tragically
  - D. He was a humanitarian who spent a lot of time helping people less fortunate
- 5. Which is NOT true about Roberto Clemente**
  - A. He was born in Puerto Rico
  - B. He died while trying to deliver supplies to people in Puerto Rico
  - C. His career ended with exactly 3,000 hits.
  - D. He died on New Year's eve

- 6. Which of the following is closest in meaning to the following quote?**

"If you have a chance to accomplish something that will make things better for people coming behind you, and you don't do that, you are wasting your time on this earth."

- A. Use your time wisely
- B. Make a positive impact on the world
- C. Help to save the earth
- D. Only play baseball if you help people

**7. If the entire passage was limited to the second paragraph, which of the following could be its title?**

- A. The history of the Pittsburgh Pirates
- B. The Tragic Story of Roberto Clemente
- C. The Amazing Baseball Career of Roberto Clemente
- D. Roberto Clemente at the 1971 World Series



## Abner Doubleday

Abner Doubleday was a military general who was thought to have fired the first shot in the Civil War at Fort Sumter in 1861. He was also a Union general at the Battle of Gettysburg. Despite his actions in the Civil War, Doubleday is most famous for “inventing” baseball. Doubleday was said to have invented the game in a cow pasture in Cooperstown, New York, in 1839 according to the Mills Commission - a group of business executives who convened for the purposes of discovering the true roots of baseball. Despite the weak and circumstantial evidence that pointed to Doubleday as the inventor of baseball, their “findings” were generally accepted by the American public. Doubleday, in fact, never claimed to have anything to do with the invention of baseball and was unsure why it was attributed to him. According to records, when Doubleday died, he left no mention of himself as the inventor of baseball in his detailed records or papers. Furthermore, in his formal obituary published in the *New York Times*, there was no mention of baseball.

## Reality

Baseball more likely evolved in the streets and ball yards of the eastern United States and was probably influenced by the English sports of rounders and cricket. Rounders was a game similar to baseball in which players hit a ball with a paddle and ran bases. In 1845, a group of New Yorkers founded the New York Knickerbockers Baseball Club. One of its founding members, Alexander Joy Cartwright, is credited with establishing rules that began to shape baseball into the game we know today. Cartwright designed the diamond-shaped field, invented the three-strike rule, and set the lines for fair and foul balls. The first game governed by his rules was played in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1846. Under Cartwright’s rules, players could no longer throw the baseball directly at players to get them out.

In 1857, several baseball clubs from the east coast convened to establish official rules for baseball. Known as the “Laws of Base Ball,” the 12-page document is the first known account of a baseball rule book. Among other things, the book established the nine-inning game, the 90-foot distances between bases and that each team was to field nine starting players. The original “Laws of Base Ball” document recently sold at auction for more than \$3,000,000.

## Civil War and Beyond

Baseball quickly grew in popularity. During the Civil War, it was introduced to soldiers from the western and southern parts of the country, who in turn, brought it back to their hometowns after the war. Soldiers often played baseball at their encampments as did prisoners of war who played in front of spectators and guards. Following the Civil War, the Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first professional baseball team with full-time players who were paid for their services. The Red Stockings played their first game on May 4, 1869, against the Cincinnati Great Westerns. They won 45-9. The Red Stockings would end their first season with 65 wins and zero losses – the only perfect season in baseball history.

- 1. Abner Doubleday...**
  - A. was proven to be the inventor of baseball.
  - B. tried to convince people he was the inventor of baseball.
  - C. invented baseball while fighting in the Civil War.
  - D. wasn't sure why people thought he invented baseball.
  
- 2. Why does the author use quotes for the words "findings" and "invented"?**
  - A. Because these were the words that were actually used
  - B. To emphasize that the actual use of these words would probably be inaccurate
  - C. To ensure the reader understands the words
  - D. To make sure the reader actually reads the words
  
- 3. Which of the following best describes the early history of baseball?**
  - A. It was invented by the New York Knickerbockers Club in 1845
  - B. The game was influenced by English games before it was shaped into the game we know in the 1840s
  - C. Baseball was invented by Abner Doubleday in 1839 and was shaped into modern baseball over the course of the many years
  - D. Baseball evolved into the game we know after the three-strike rule and the nine-innings rules were implemented
  
- 4. What happened first?**
  - A. The first game governed by Cartwright's rules was played in Hoboken, New Jersey
  - B. The New York Knickerbockers Baseball Club was formed
  - C. The Battle of Fort Sumter was fought
  - D. December, 1844
  
- 5. Which of the following best describes the evidence the Mills Commission used to establish Abner Doubleday as the inventor of baseball?**
  - A. Very weak
  - B. Strong
  - C. Very Strong
  - D. Allowed

**6. Which is NOT a rule of baseball?**

- A. There are 90 feet between bases
- B. There are nine innings per game
- C. Runners are considered out when hit with a thrown ball
- D. Teams have nine starting players

**7. Which could be a title for the first paragraph?**

- A. Doubleday: A Case of Mistaken Identity
- B. Doubleday: The True Inventor of Baseball
- C. Doubleday: An American Fraud
- D. Doubleday: The Death of American Legend

Michael Jordan Printable Reading Comprehension

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Michael Jordan was born on February 17, 1963, in Brooklyn, New York. Soon after he was born, his parents moved the family to Wilmington, North Carolina. Michael excelled at sports from an early age. Although he was cut from the Laney High School varsity basketball team his sophomore year in high school, he grew four inches over the summer and averaged 25 points per game as a junior. During his senior year, he became the only player in high school basketball history to average a triple-double (at least 10 points, 10 rebounds, and 10 assists per game). That year, 1982, he was named a McDonald's High School All-American and received a scholarship to play basketball at the University of North Carolina. Michael quickly became a star. During his freshman year, he hit the game-winning shot against Georgetown University that resulted in a national championship. After his junior year, Jordan decided to leave North Carolina to enter the NBA draft.

In the draft, the Chicago Bulls picked Jordan third overall. Jordan's impact on the NBA (National Basketball Association) was legendary. During his rookie season with the Bulls, he scored 40 points or more seven times. In addition, Jordan made the NBA All-Star team and won the Rookie of the Year award. After sitting out much of the 1985–1986 season because of a foot injury, Jordan's exploits on the basketball court continued to astound fans, coaches, and fellow players. In the 1986–1987 season, he averaged an unheard of 37.1 points per game, which was the highest of his career.

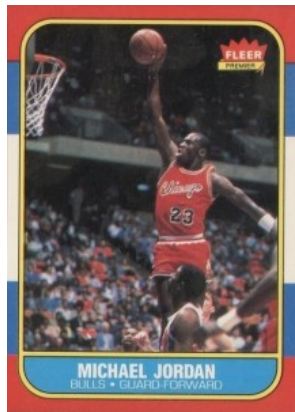
From making spectacularly unimaginable shots, to winning slam-dunk contents, the high-flying, tongue-wagging Jordan soon became the most popular athlete in the world. Intimidating and extremely competitive, he had a knack for hitting game-winning shots and playing tenacious defense. He established marketing deals with some of the world's largest companies such as Nike, Haines, Gatorade, McDonald's, Wheaties, and MCI. Nike's Air Jordan shoe line became one of the most popular of all time. One Gatorade commercial that featured Jordan and the song "If I Could be Like Mike," is one of the most recognizable commercials involving a professional athlete in TV history. He even starred in the Disney film "Space Jam."

Despite his success both on the court and off, Jordan and the Chicago Bulls failed to make the NBA Finals until 1991, when they finally defeated the rival Detroit Pistons in the Eastern Conference Semifinals. That year, they defeated the Los Angeles Lakers to win the NBA championship and Michael Jordan was named MVP. Jordan and his Chicago Bulls teammates went on to win three consecutive championships from 1991–1993. Michael won the Most Valuable Player in the NBA finals each time. He also won an Olympic gold medal (actually, his second) as one of the captains of America's "Dream Team" in 1992.

In 1994, however, Jordan announced his (first) retirement from basketball to pursue his dream of playing baseball. He played for the Birmingham Barons, a minor league affiliate of the Chicago White Sox. Michael was less than successful in baseball. He only batted .203 and was never called up to the Major Leagues. In 1995, Michael Jordan decided to come back to the NBA and briefly wore the number "45" because "23" had already been retired by the Bulls. He would go on to lead the Bulls to three more NBA championships. Once again, he was selected as the MVP of the NBA Finals each time. On January 13, 1999, with seemingly nothing more to prove or accomplish, Michael Jordan retired for a second time. Despite his retirement, Jordan could not let go of his competitive urges. In 2001–2002, after serving as an executive for the Washington Wizards, Jordan returned to the court as a guard for them. Although his skills had declined, he averaged 22.9 points per game. On February 21, 2003, he became the first 40-year-old player to score 40 points in a game. On April 16, 2003, Jordan played his very last game in the NBA against the Philadelphia 76ers. The normally harsh Philadelphia fans gave him a three-minute standing ovation. In addition, the Miami Heat retired the number "23," even though Jordan had never played for them. Jordan retired forever after the 2003 season. He ended his career as the NBA's third all-time leading scorer with 32,292 total points. He led the NBA in scoring ten times during his career and made the NBA all-defensive team nine times.

Today, Michael Jordan is still involved with the NBA as the owner of the Charlotte Bobcats.

- 1. What happened between Michael's sophomore and junior years in high school?**
  - A. He scored 25 points per game as a junior
  - B. He averaged a triple-double per game
  - C. He grew four inches
  - D. He was offered a scholarship to Georgetown University
- 2. Which of the following was true about Michael's college career?**
  - A. He was part of a team that won a national championship
  - B. He left college after his junior year to enter into the NBA draft
  - C. He attended the University of North Carolina
  - D. All of the Above
- 3. Which of the following statements best describes how Jordan's NBA career started?**
  - A. He had growing pains
  - B. He fizzled out early in his career
  - C. He was an immediate star
  - D. His first two years were the best two years of his career
- 4. If the answer to a question is "1986-1987," what could be the question?**
  - A. In what season was Jordan drafted?
  - B. In what season did Jordan suffer a series foot injury?
  - C. In what season did Jordan have the highest scoring average in his career?
  - D. In what season did the Bulls make its first NBA finals?
- 5. Which is NOT true about Michael Jordan?**
  - A. He also enjoyed a successful baseball career
  - B. He starred in a Disney film
  - C. He was on teams that won six combined NBA championships
  - D. He won two Olympic medals
- 6. Why did Michael Jordan retire for the second time?**
  - A. He was getting old
  - B. He was injured
  - C. He had nothing left to accomplish
  - D. He felt his days of winning NBA championships were over
- 7. Which of the following best supports the notion that Jordan was one of the most respected athletes of all time?**
  - A. He averaged 22.9 points per game with the Washington Wizards
  - B. He became the first player to score 40 points in a game at age 40
  - C. Even the harsh fans in Philadelphia gave him a standing ovation
  - D. He is now the owner of the Charlotte Bobcats

**“Air” vs “King”**

Michael Jordan



LeBron James

Both Michael Jordan and LeBron James are considered among the greatest professional basketball players to have ever lived, although they never played head-to-head, as Jordan retired just before James played his first game. Both players were incredible scorers, amazing defenders, bloodthirsty competitors, and trend-setting icons of the NBA. Michael Jordan was voted into the professional basketball Hall-of-Fame in 2009 and LeBron James will be voted in as soon he is eligible. At the time this article was written (in 2018), LeBron James was still considered the best player in the NBA. The question is: Who was better – “Air” Jordan or “King” James?

**For Jordan** – This is an easy argument. Michael Jordan was clearly the better player. First and foremost, he won all six NBA championships he played in. Furthermore, he was named MVP in all six! Even though LeBron has played in seven NBA Finals, he has only been victorious three times. That means LeBron and his team lost four NBA championships. Winning championships is the easiest way to judge a player’s greatness.

Jordan’s accolades are endless. He won the NBA scoring title ten times (compared to just one scoring title for James) and was named the NBA’s most valuable player a mind-blowing five times! Jordan was so good at basketball, that after this third NBA championship, he took a year off to play baseball. When he came back to the NBA, he promptly won three consecutive championships all over again with the Bulls. I know LeBron is great, but no one can compare to Jordan.

**Rebuttal For James** – Jordan may have won all six championships he played in, but James has already played in seven and has several more years to play. Championships aren’t necessarily the best way to measure how great a player is, although three is nothing to “sneeze” at.

At the age of 34, LeBron James already has more career assists, rebounds, and three-point baskets made than Jordan had in his entire career. If he plays to 40, (like Jordan did) he’ll easily surpass him on the NBA’s all-time points scored list. LeBron is the most versatile player the NBA has ever seen and can play point guard, shooting guard, and both forward positions. Obviously Jordan was a great player, but Jordan couldn’t play four positions.

**1. Which of the following makes it difficult to judge who was better?**

- A. Michael Jordan played baseball for a year
- B. LeBron James is still playing professional basketball
- C. Jordan and James played in different cities
- D. Both Jordan and James played in a lot of NBA championships

**2. The first author believes...**

- A. a player's greatness can be judged by how many points he scores.
- B. a player's greatness can be judged by how many championships he participates in.
- C. a player's greatness can be judged by how many championships he wins.
- D. a player's greatness can be judged by how many All-star games he plays in.

**3. What does the second author suggest?**

- A. If LeBron James plays as long as Michael Jordan, he may win more championships and pass him on the all-time scoring list
- B. If LeBron James plays as long as Michael Jordan, he might become a more versatile player
- C. If LeBron James plays as long as Michael Jordan, he might accumulate more assists and rebounds than Jordan
- D. Being is seven total championships is better than winning six.

**4. What does "versatile" mean as used in the following sentence?**

LeBron is the most versatile player the NBA has even seen and can play point guard, shooting guard, and both forward positions.

- A. Multitalented
- B. Complicated
- C. Similar
- D. Abundant

**5. What do Jordan and James have in common?**

- A. They have been in the same number of NBA championships
- B. They were both great defenders
- C. They are both currently in the Professional Basketball Hall-of-Fame
- D. They both played at the same time

## Jackie Robinson

In 1997, Major League Baseball retired Jackie Robinson's number 42. "Retiring" a number is an honor and means it can no longer be used. No player on any team can wear the number 42 because Jackie Robinson wore 42 when he played baseball in the 1940s and 1950s.

Jackie Robinson was the first African American man to play in Major League Baseball. In the 1940s and 1950s, African Americans were not welcomed in some places. As Jackie traveled to different cities, people would call him names just because of the color of his skin. Jackie carried on and showed incredible bravery through it all. He became a hall-of-fame player and even led his team, the Brooklyn Dodgers, to a World Series Championship. Jackie's courage made it so other African Americans could play in the Major Leagues.

### 1. Why was number "42" retired?

- A. Because Jackie Robinson was a Hall-of-Fame baseball player
- B. Because Jackie Robinson was sometimes treated badly when he played baseball
- C. Because Jackie Robinson was African American
- D. To honor Jackie Robinson and the courage he showed

### 2. Who can wear number 42 in baseball today?

- A. All-star players
- B. African American Players
- C. No one
- D. Players that show courage

### 3. Because of Jackie Robinson...

- A. other baseball players can wear number 42 proudly.
- B. other African Americans could play Major League baseball.
- C. bravery is honored in Major League baseball.
- D. the Baseball Hall-of-Fame opened.

### 4. Why did people call Jackie Robinson names?

- A. They did not think he was a good baseball player
- B. They did not like him because he wore number 42
- C. They did not like him because of the color of his skin
- D. They did not like him because he was on the Brooklyn Dodgers



## Jackie Robinson – Details Focus

Jackie Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia. Just a year after his birth, his mother moved him and his four siblings to Pasadena, California, after Jackie's father deserted them. Jackie had a passion for sports at an early age and played football, baseball, basketball, and track for UCLA (the University of California at Los Angeles). He would become the first person in the history of UCLA to earn varsity letters in four different sports. He excelled in all four sports and led the Pacific Coast Conference (now the Pac-12) in scoring as a basketball player. Furthermore, he was a national champion long jumper.

In 1941, however, Jackie left college because of financial difficulties and joined the U.S. Army. Robinson became first lieutenant of the 761st Tank Battalion, a group of black soldiers. By federal law, black soldiers were not allowed to fight alongside white soldiers. Robinson, however, never accompanied the battalion in combat. He was court-martialed for refusing an order from a bus driver to move to the back of the bus. He was eventually acquitted of the charges.

In 1944, Jackie joined the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Baseball League. He was soon noticed by a baseball scout for the Brooklyn Dodgers. Although there was no law against signing black baseball players in the Major Leagues, there was an "unwritten rule" against it. Attempts to sign players from the Negro Leagues had been rebuffed in the past. Nevertheless, the Dodgers owner, Branch Rickey, had begun a secret mission to sign the top players from the Negro Leagues. In 1946, Rickey signed Jackie Robinson to a Major League contract and designated him for assignment on the Dodgers minor league team in Montreal, Quebec (Canada). While Robinson was welcomed in Canada, the situation in the United States was less than cordial. On April 15, 1947, amidst incredible fanfare and controversy, Jackie Robinson was called up to the Major Leagues. He became the first black player in 57 years to play in a Major League baseball game.

During Robinson's first year he endured racism, taunting, and intolerance. Some of his teammates even threatened to stop playing rather than have Jackie as a teammate. Nevertheless, Branch Rickey and several of the Dodgers players supported Jackie. Despite the obstacles that stood in his way, Jackie proved his integrity and strength as a person. He went on to have a stellar baseball career. He led the Major Leagues in stolen bases in 1947 and became the Major League Baseball Rookie of the Year. In 1949, he was named the National League's Most Valuable Player (MVP). That year, he had 203 hits and belted 16 home runs. He also knocked in 124 runs and stole 37 bases. He batted .342. After five more stellar years, Jackie Robinson led the Brooklyn Dodgers to their only World Series victory in 1955. They won the championship in seven games over the rival New York Yankees (although when the Brooklyn Dodgers moved to Los Angeles, they won several more titles). In 1956, Jackie Robinson chose to end his baseball career after eight seasons at the age of 37. He ended his career with a .311 lifetime average. Furthermore, Jackie Robinson stole home 19 times. To this day, no other player since the World War II era has stolen home as many times. He was an all-star 6 times in his short career.

In 1962, Jackie Robinson was inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame. He died on October 24, 1972. On the 50th anniversary of his Major League debut (April 15, 1997), Major League Baseball retired his number, 42. It will never be worn again by any major league player on any team. April 15 was also named Jackie Robinson Day. To this day, Jackie Robinson remains a hero. He was a pioneer in breaking the "Color Barrier" in professional sports and paved the way for thousands of African-American athletes in dozens of sports. On October 29, 2003, United States Congress honored him (after his death) with the Congressional Gold Medal—the highest honor Congress can give.

**1.) How many hits did Jackie Robinson have in 1949?**

- a.) 124
- b.) 342
- c.) 203
- d.) 19

**2.) In what year did the Brooklyn Dodgers win the World Series?**

- a.) 1947
- b.) 1955
- c.) 1949
- d.) 1956

**3.) Which of the following sports was Jackie Robinson NOT involved with at UCLA?**

- a.) football
- b.) track
- c.) basketball
- d.) soccer

**4.) Today, \_\_\_\_\_ can wear Jackie Robinson's number "42."**

- a.) only African-Americans
- b.) no one
- c.) all Major League baseball players
- d.) no Major League baseball players

**5.) Jackie Robinson stole home \_\_\_\_\_ times during his baseball career.**

- a.) 311
- b.) 37
- c.) 19
- d.) 27

## Jackie Robinson – Main Idea Focus

Jackie Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia. Just a year after his birth, his mother moved him and his four siblings to Pasadena, California after Jackie's father deserted them. Jackie had a passion for sports at an early age and played football, baseball, basketball, and track for UCLA (the University of California at Los Angeles). He would become the first person in the history of UCLA to earn varsity letters in four different sports. He excelled in all four sports and led the Pacific Coast Conference (now the Pac-12) in scoring as a basketball player. Furthermore, he was a national champion long jumper.

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**1.) Which of the following is answered in the third paragraph?**

- a.) How did Jackie Robinson perform in his first Major League game?
- b.) When was Jackie Robinson called up for his first game in the Major Leagues?
- c.) When was Jackie Robinson elected to the Hall of Fame?
- d.) Which of Jackie's teammates supported him?

**2.) The final paragraph of the passage discusses...**

- a.) Jackie Robinson's athletic accomplishments
- b.) Jackie Robinson's impact on sports and culture
- c.) Jackie Robinson's fight against racism
- d.) The circumstances of Jackie Robinson's death

**3.) The second paragraph describes how Jackie Robinson reacted to**

\_\_\_\_\_.

- a.) playing baseball
- b.) military orders
- c.) racist laws
- d.) white soldiers

**4.) Which of the following titles would best describe the life of Jackie Robinson?**

- a.) Jackie Robinson: A Great Baseball Player
- b.) Jackie Robinson: National Champion Long Jumper
- c.) Jackie Robinson: Overcoming Racism to Become an American Legend
- d.) Jackie Robinson: Stealing Home 19 Times

**5.) What can be learned in the first paragraph?**

- a.) Why Jackie joined the Army
- b.) Jackie's favorite sport
- c.) Jackie excelled in different sports
- d.) Why Jackie's father deserted them

## Jackie Robinson – Sequencing Focus

Jackie Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia. Just a year after his birth, his mother moved him and his four siblings to Pasadena, California, after Jackie's father deserted them. Jackie had a passion for sports at an early age and played football, baseball, basketball, and track for UCLA (the University of California at Los Angeles). He would become the first person in the history of UCLA to earn varsity letters in four different sports. He excelled in all four sports and led the Pacific Coast Conference (now the Pac-12) in scoring as a basketball player. Furthermore, he was a national champion long jumper.

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**1.) What happened last?**

- a.) Jackie Robinson was inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.
- b.) Jackie's number 42 was retired forever.
- c.) 1972
- d.) Jackie won the Congressional Gold Medal.

**2.) In what year did Jackie help the Brooklyn Dodgers win the World Series?**

- a.) 1955
- b.) 1949
- c.) 1954
- d.) 1956

**3.) What happened first?**

- a.) Jackie joined the Kansas City Monarchs.
- b.) Jackie left college and joined the Army.
- c.) Jackie's mother moved the family to Pasadena, California.
- d.) Jackie played sports at UCLA.

**4.) What happened second?**

- a.) Jackie joined the Kansas City Monarchs.
- b.) Jackie left college and joined the Army.
- c.) Jackie's mother moved the family to Pasadena, California.
- d.) Jackie played sports at UCLA.

**5.) Which of the following occurred before 1947?**

- a.) Jackie became the Major League Baseball Rookie of the Year.
- b.) Jackie became the National League Most Valuable Player.
- c.) Jackie made his Major League Baseball debut.
- d.) Jackie played baseball on Montreal, Quebec.

## Jackie Robinson – Contextual Vocabulary Focus

Jackie Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia. Just a year after his birth, his mother moved him and his four siblings to Pasadena, California, after Jackie's father deserted them. Jackie had a passion for sports at an early age and played football, baseball, basketball, and track for UCLA (the University of California at Los Angeles). He would become the first person in the history of UCLA to earn varsity letters in four different sports. He excelled in all four sports and led the Pacific Coast Conference (now the Pac-12) in scoring as a basketball player. Furthermore, he was a national champion long jumper.

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**1.) Jackie had a passion for sports at an early age and played football, baseball, basketball, and track for UCLA (the University of California at Los Angeles).**

**What does “passion” mean in the sentence above?**

- a.) skill
- b.) problem
- c.) relationship
- d.) love

**2.) During Robinson’s first year he endured racism, taunting, and intolerance.**

**What does “taunting” mean in the sentence above?**

- a.) impatience
- b.) acceptance
- c.) thoughtfulness
- d.) name-calling

**3.) Despite the obstacles that stood in his way, Jackie proved his integrity and strength as a person.**

**Which of the following might have been such an obstacle?**

- a.) pain
- b.) talent
- c.) racism
- d.) competition

**4.) He was court-martialed for refusing an order from a bus driver to move to the back of the bus. He was eventually acquitted.**

**What does “acquitted” mean in the sentence above?**

- a.) found innocent
- b.) lost
- c.) removed
- d.) accused



**5.) While Robinson was welcomed in Canada, the situation in the United States was less than cordial.**

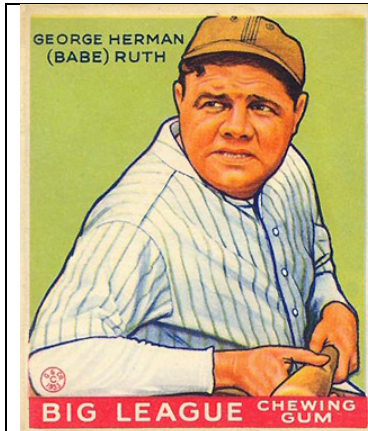
**What does “cordial” mean in the sentence above?**

- a.) intelligent
- b.) friendly
- c.) mean
- d.) perfect

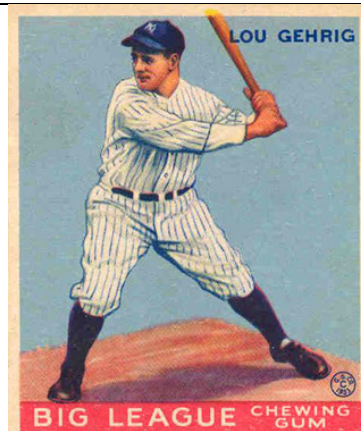
Monument Park at Yankee Stadium

Name \_\_\_\_\_

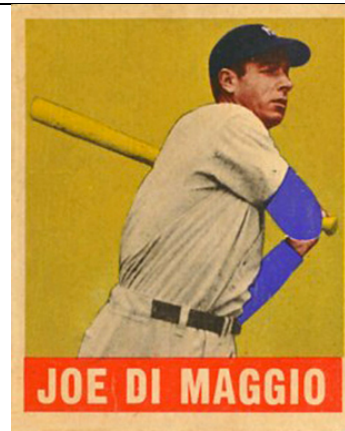
### The Legends of Monument Park



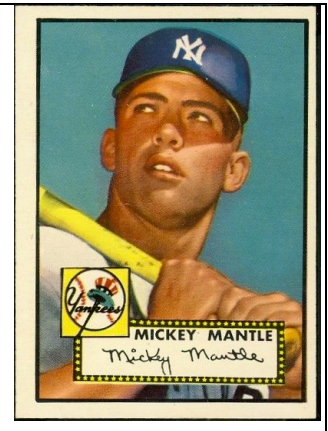
# 3 – Babe Ruth



# 4 – Lou Gehrig



# 5 – Joe DiMaggio



# 7 –Mickey Mantle

The New York Yankees are the most storied team in Major League Baseball. As of 2018, the Yankees have participated in 40 World Series and won 27 – by far the most among any team in history. Many of the most famous players in baseball history played for the Yankees, including Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, and Mickey Mantle. Each of these legends is enshrined in the Major League Baseball Hall-of-Fame and at Monument Park in Yankee Stadium.

**Babe Ruth** is arguably the most famous player in baseball history and was the most famous celebrity of his time. He played for the Boston Red Sox before being sold to the Yankees. Nicknamed “the Sultan of Swat,” and “The Great Bambino,” Ruth hit 714 career home runs and knocked in over 2,200 runs.

**Lou Gehrig** played first base for the New York Yankees for his entire 16-year career from 1923 to 1939. Nicknamed “the Iron Horse,” Gehrig played in 2,130 consecutive games! Gehrig played for six World Series championship teams and won the Triple Crown in 1934. This means he led the American League in home runs, runs batted in, and batting average.

**Joe DiMaggio** played his entire 13-year career with the New York Yankees. Nicknamed “Joltin’ Joe” and the “Yankee Clipper,” he is most famous for achieving at least one hit in 56 consecutive games – a record that still stands today. He played for nine World Championship teams and won the American League Most Valuable Player award three times. He was an all-star in all thirteen of his seasons.

**Mickey Mantle** played his entire 17-year career with the New York Yankees. Nicknamed “the Mick,” Mantle is considered the greatest switch-hitter and center-fielder in baseball history. This means he batted both left-handed and right-handed. Like Lou Gehrig, Mantle won the Triple Crown. He ended his career with 536 home runs and still holds the World Series record for the most home runs, runs batted in, total bases, runs scored, and walks.

- 1. The New York Yankees... (circle all that are true)**
  - A. have played in 27 World Series.
  - B. have had some of the greatest baseball players in the sport's history.
  - C. have Monument Park in Yankee stadium.
  - D. have played for forty seasons.
  
- 2. Which of the following differentiates Babe Ruth from the other Yankees in the chart?**
  - A. He won the triple crown more than once
  - B. He played on a team other than the Yankees
  - C. He is enshrined in both the Major League Baseball Hall-of-Fame and Monument Park
  - D. He has multiple nicknames
  
- 3. What differentiates Mickey Mantle from the other Yankees in the chart?**
  - A. His career lasted more than ten years
  - B. He played his entire career with the New York Yankees
  - C. He was on teams that won multiple World Series
  - D. He was a switch hitter
  
- 4. Which of the following statistics is a record that still stands today?**
  - A. The Sultan of Swat's 714 home runs
  - B. Joltin' Joe's 56-game consecutive hit streak
  - C. The Iron Horse's 2,130-game streak
  - D. None of the above
  
- 5. What is NOT true about the Triple Crown?**
  - A. It was achieved by Mickey Mantle
  - B. The Triple Crown is won when a player leads his league in home runs, runs batted in, and batting average
  - C. It was achieved by Joe DiMaggio
  - D. It was achieved by Lou Gehrig

John Madden Reading Comprehension

Name \_\_\_\_\_

John Madden was born on April 10th, 1936, in Austin, Minnesota, but lived most of his childhood in California. Madden was an outstanding high school football player and ultimately played in college at California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo. Although he was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles, a knee injury destroyed any chance of a professional career in football.

Madden, who majored in education, quickly took to coaching. He served various coaching roles at Allen Hancock College and San Diego State, before being hired as linebacker coach for the Oakland Raiders. When the Raiders head coach resigned in 1969, Madden was promoted to head coach. At the time, the 32-year-old Madden was the youngest person to be hired as head coach in NFL history. Madden proved one of the greatest coaches in Raiders history, leading them to their first Super Bowl Championship in 1977 with a 32-14 victory over the Minnesota Vikings. He retired from coaching the following year. As of 2018, he is still the youngest coach in NFL history to reach 100 wins.

Following his coaching career, Madden became a popular broadcaster and was widely considered the sport's most knowledgeable and entertaining commentator. For over 30 years, Madden appeared on NBC, CBS, Fox Sports, and Monday Night Football and called eleven super bowls. Madden's exclamatory style, invented words and phrases, and use of the telestrator contributed to his popularity. A telestrator is a tool that allowed him to draw diagrams on the screen which would help people understand the details of NFL plays. In 1984, he introduced the "All-Madden Team" which comprised the players he deemed to be toughest. Interestingly, John Madden was terrified of flying airplanes and traveled from city-to-city by train or custom-built "Madden cruiser" bus. Madden was elected to the Professional Football Hall-of-Fame in 2006. In 2009, Super Bowl XLIII, in which the Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Arizona Cardinals.

Today's youth know John Madden from the popular John Madden's Football video game series. Popularly known simply as "Madden," John Madden has lent his voice, personality, and insights to the game since 1988. Since it was first released, it has sold over 120 million copies. Despite its enormous popularity, Madden is most proud of how it teaches people about the detailed nature of football. According to him, it serves as a "way to for people to learn the game at a pretty sophisticated level."

**1. What happened last?**

- A. Madden became the youngest head coach in NFL history (at the time).
- B. Madden coached at Allan Hancock College and San Diego State
- C. Madden became linebacker coach for the Oakland Raiders
- D. 1970

**2. When did John Madden win his first Super Bowl?**

- A. Early in his coaching career with the Raiders
- B. Late in his coaching career with the Raiders
- C. 1969
- D. When he was a linebacker coach

**3. Which of the following is NOT answered?**

- A. Why was John Madden a popular broadcaster?
- B. How many games did John Madden win in total with the Oakland Raiders?
- C. What different jobs did John Madden work after it was clear he could not play professional football?
- D. How many super bowls did John Madden call?

**4. What does “custom-built” mean in the following sentence?**

Interestingly, John Madden was terrified of flying airplanes and traveled from city-to-city by train or custom-built "Madden cruiser" bus.

- A. expensive
- B. built to John Madden's specifications
- C. built to hold lots of people
- D. built to ride smoothly on highways

**5. Why did people enjoy Madden's use of the telestrator?**

- A. The telestrator made watching football more interesting
- B. People liked to hear John Madden's voice
- C. People enjoyed watching Madden draw lines on the screen
- D. It helped people understand complex plays

**6. Which of the following would most likely reflect the of a sixth grade student?**

- A. I know who John Madden is because he coached the Oakland Raiders to their first Super Bowl victory
- B. I know who John Madden is because his name is on my favorite video game
- C. I know who John Madden is because he called eleven super bowls
- D. I know who John Madden is because my favorite player made the "All-Madden Team"

**7. To which of the following questions would “fear of flying” be the answer?**

- A. How did John Madden travel from city to city?
- B. Why did John Madden retire from coaching?
- C. Why did John Madden travel by train or bus?
- D. Why is John Madden so proud of his video game?

## Dr. Naismith Reading Comprehension

Name \_\_\_\_\_

James Naismith found himself in a tough position. He was working with an unruly class of fourteen-year-old boys at the YMCA in Springfield, Massachusetts, during a particularly harsh New England winter in 1891. The YMCA director of physical education, Dr. Luther Gulick, gave Naismith an ultimatum: invent an indoor game that could keep the rowdy group of boys occupied for the winter. Gulick gave Naismith fourteen days to implement the game.

Naismith's original idea was to make a game in which the only way to advance the ball was to pass it. Furthermore, to score, players would have to lob the ball into a basket that was placed well above the players' heads. Naismith reasoned that these rules would reduce the violence and body contact endemic to games at the time such as soccer, lacrosse, rugby, hockey and football. In the first ever basketball game at the YMCA, the players used a soccer ball. Each team also had nine players on the court at a time. Peach baskets were used as "hoops." Before the game, Naismith etched his immortal "13 rules" on the blackboard. In the original rules, each half was fifteen minutes long and there was a five-minute break between the halves. The rules described the roles of the umpires and referees, fouls, and a description of what constituted "traveling," among others. According to Naismith, the rules governing fouls and traveling were most important as they prevented the boys from tackling, kicking, mobbing, and punching each other. In the first basketball game, the concept of dribbling had not been established.

Naismith's game quickly became popular. The YMCA decided to spread the word about basketball beyond its walls. In 1893, Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, Tennessee, is thought to have fielded the first college basketball team. Two years later, the first intercollegiate game was played in Minnesota. In the meantime, Naismith earned a medical degree and joined the faculty at the University of Kansas, where he became the Kansas Jayhawks' first basketball coach. Naismith's record as a coach was a subpar 55 wins to 60 losses, making him, ironically, the only coach with a losing record in the history of Kansas basketball.

Despite his status as the undisputed inventor of one of the world's most popular sports, Naismith was uninterested in the fame or glory that typically accompany such an invention. In fact, he was more interested in pursuing the science of physical education. By the time he died in 1939, basketball was played throughout the world and was an Olympic event. Naismith was the first inductee into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall-of-Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1959. In 2010, Naismith's document describing the original rules of basketball were auctioned for a record \$4,338,000 dollars. It was the highest amount paid for an item of sports memorabilia in history. The rules were donated to the University of Kansas.

Today, over 300 million people are thought to participate in basketball, making it one of the world's most popular team sports.

**1. Which of the following describes a problem-solution text structure as discussed in this passage?**

- A. **Problem:** Naismith died in 1939. **Solution:** Basketball became an Olympic sport
- B. **Problem:** Naismith was the undisputed inventor of basketball. **Solution:** Naismith was uninterested in fame or glory
- C. **Problem:** The Boys of the Springfield YMCA were trapped inside during the winter. **Solution:** Naismith was forced to invent a new sport
- D. **Problem:** The University of Kansas needed a basketball coach. **Solution:** Naismith led the team to a record of 55 wins and 60 losses

**2. Why did Naismith decide that baskets would be placed well above the players' heads?**

- A. He thought it would reduce violence and body contact
- B. He thought it would increase player skill
- C. He thought it would enable players to score a lot of points
- D. He thought it would be a great use of peach baskets

**3. Why does the author use the word “immortal” in the following sentence?**

Before the game, Naismith etched his **immortal** “13 rules” on the blackboard.

- A. To emphasize how important the sport of basketball is
- B. To emphasize how important the 13 rules were in the development of basketball
- C. To emphasize that the rules would be changed later on in history
- D. To emphasize that the sport of basketball would become among the most popular sports in the world

**4. Which of the following is implied in the passage?**

- A. Basketball was really invented in Tennessee
- B. The boys who played in the first basketball game should have received as much credit as James Naismith in the development of basketball.
- C. If rules governing fouls and traveling were left out, it would be much less popular
- D. If rules governing fouls and traveling were left out, it would be much more violent



**5. What question is answered in the third paragraph?**

- A. Who was the most successful basketball coach in the University of Kansas history?
- B. Who was the only basketball coach with a losing record in the history of University of Kansas?
- C. Which team won the first college basketball game ever played?
- D. Who was the first coach at Vanderbilt University?

**6. Which is NOT true about James Naismith?**

- A. The original rules for basketball he wrote were donated to the University of Kansas
- B. He was not interested in becoming famous
- C. He was more interested in physical education than basketball
- D. He gave a speech when he was elected to the Hall-of-Fame

**7. Which of the following is the best description of this passage?**

- A. A biography about James Naismith
- B. A description about the popularity of basketball
- C. A description of the role the YMCA played in the invention of basketball
- D. A description of Naismith's role in the development of basketball



## **Jim Rice Saves a Life**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

On August 7, 1982, Tom Keane and his sons, Jonathan and Matthew, drove from their home in New Hampshire to Fenway Park in Boston so they could watch their beloved Red Sox play. They had great seats along the first base line, with a glorious view of the park's iconic Green Monster - the famous home run-robbing, 27-foot-tall left field wall. "It was a seat that everybody would dream of when they had little kids and you wanted to get them close to the action. It was just ideal." said Tom Keane.

The game was everything they had hoped for. It was tied 2-2 in the fourth inning as Dave Stapleton, Jonathan's favorite player on the Red Sox, came to the plate. Richard Dotson was pitching for the opposing Chicago White Sox. Stapleton saw a pitch he liked but was late with the swing, resulting in a pulsating line drive foul ball. The ball zipped into the stands so fast, that it was hard to tell where it went. Tom Keane, however, heard a sickening thud, and for a split second thought the foul ball had ricocheted off the wall of the Red Sox dugout. Then he heard a scream, saw blood flowing, and realized Jonathan had been struck in the head by the 100 + mile per hour foul ball.

Red Sox slugger Jim Rice was one of baseball's biggest stars. The 6'2" 205-pound all-star outfielder was known for his power, his strong throwing arm, and for his bad temper, especially toward reporters. Rice, who guarded his privacy intensely, also heard the horrific thud. He reacted immediately. Rice sprinted from the dugout and leapt into the crowd. He quickly corralled the bleeding child in his arms and hustled him into the dugout where he was immediately attended to by Red Sox Physician Dr. Arthur Pappas. It was a surreal scene that took less than a minute. Jonathan, however, was in serious condition. Dr. Pappas realized he had sustained a severe injury and needed emergency surgery. Jonathan was rushed to the hospital and surgery was performed to relieve the pressure on his brain. Five days later Jonathan left the hospital. It was clear that Jim Rice's quick thinking saved his life, but doctors couldn't be sure that John would ever fully recover.

Today, Jonathan has no recollection of the foul ball, but has indeed made a full recovery. He credits Jim Rice for saving his life. "He's a hero in my mind. He is somebody that saved my life, and I thank God for him being there." In a recent interview, Rice, who works as a baseball analyst, opened up about his heroism. "I see me carrying my kid. I see me being a parent, being a father, being someone that is able to think about others. If that was my child, I would want somebody to react the same way." Jim Rice was elected to the Major League Baseball Hall-of-Fame in 2009, in his final season of eligibility.

**1. According to Tom Keane...**

- a. He and his boys were driving from Massachusetts to see the Red Sox
- b. He and his boys were sitting next to the "Green Monster"
- c. He and his boys drove to New Hampshire to see the Red Sox
- d. He and his boys had great seats in which to watch the Red Sox

**2. Which is TRUE about the timing in which Jonathan was struck?**

- a. Richard Dotson was at bat
- b. The Red Sox were winning
- c. It was the fourth inning
- d. Dave Stapleton was pitching

**3. What paragraph gives background information about Jim Rice in 1982?**

- a. Second
- b. Third
- c. Fourth
- d. None of the above

**4. Who is to blame for what happened to Jonathan?**

- a. No one; it was a matter of bad luck
- b. Tom Keane; he was an irresponsible person
- c. Jim Rice; he should have acted faster
- d. Dave Stapleton; he should not have hit a foul ball

**5. Immediately following Jonathan's surgery...**

- a. doctors knew he would make a full recovery.
- b. doctors believed he would never recover.
- c. doctors weren't sure if he would recover.
- d. Jonathan returned home.

**6. Which of the following best summarizes Jim Rice's quote in the final paragraph?**

- a. There is more in life than baseball
- b. I would hope that someone would act in a similar way if my child was injured
- c. I always hoped that Jonathan would make a full recovery
- d. I'm just glad I was there to take care of Jonathan when he needed me

**7. What word could replace “recollection” as it is used below?**

Today, John has no **recollection** of the foul ball, but has indeed made a full recovery. He credits Jim Rice for saving his life.

- a. anger
- b. mystery
- c. problem
- d. memory

**Dot Richardson – Softball Star**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Dot Richardson was born on September 22, 1961, in Orlando, Florida. Richardson is one of the most decorated international softball players in the sport's history. Richardson is also a licensed physician.

Richardson began playing softball at an early age in and around the Orlando area. She enrolled at Western Illinois University before transferring to UCLA in 1980. She played softball at UCLA for four years. In 1982, she was part of UCLA's national championship team. She was an All-American softball player for each of her four years at UCLA and was named Most Valuable Player on her team three times. Following her collegiate career, she went on to play professional softball.

Following her professional career, Richardson went to medical school and earned her medical degree at The University of Louisville in 1993, thus, becoming Dr. Richardson.

Richardson became most famous when softball was added to the Olympics in 1996. That year, she slugged the game-winning home run that won the United States the gold medal. That same year, she was inducted into the UCLA sports hall-of-fame. In 1997, Richardson was awarded the Babe Zaharias Award for female athlete of the year. Once again, in the 2000 Olympics, Richardson was part of the American team that earned the gold medal. Following the 2000 Olympics, Richardson resumed her career as an orthopedic surgeon. She currently serves as the head coach of the Liberty University softball team.

**1. What is another way to write the sentence below?**

Richardson is one of the most decorated international softball players in the sport's history.

- A. Richardson was one of the first softball players in history
- B. Richardson was one of the best softball players in the sport's history
- C. Richardson was a softball star at UCLA
- D. Richardson hit the game-winning home run in the 1996 Olympics.

- 2. When was Richardson inducted into the UCLA Hall-of-Fame?**
- A. 1996
  - B. Before she earned her medical degree
  - C. After the 2000 Olympics
  - D. 1997
- 3. Which of the following is NOT true about Dot Richardson?**
- A. She played on two United States softball teams that earned gold medals
  - B. She is currently the softball coach at Liberty University
  - C. She earned a medical degree in 1993
  - D. She attended UCLA before she went to Western Illinois University
- 4. Who is Babe Zaharias?**
- A. A famous softball player
  - B. The passage doesn't tell
  - C. The passage doesn't tell, but we can infer she was a famous female athlete
  - D. The passage doesn't tell, but we can infer she won several Olympic gold medals
- 5. What is the text structure of the passage?**
- A. Cause and Effect
  - B. Problem and Solution
  - C. Chronological
  - D. Compare and Contrast
- 6. If each of the paragraphs had a heading, which of the following would be the correct sequence?**
- A. Introduction; Becoming Dr. Richardson; Collegiate Star; Olympic Gold
  - B. Introduction; Collegiate Star; Olympic Gold; Becoming Dr. Richardson
  - C. Introduction; Collegiate Star; Becoming Dr. Richardson; Olympic Gold
  - D. Introduction; Olympic Gold; Becoming Dr. Richardson; Collegiate Star
- 7. What is NOT described in the passage?**
- A. Dot's awards and medals
  - B. Dot's college softball career
  - C. Dot's success as an Olympian
  - D. Dot's childhood

## The Case of the Exploding Shoe

Name \_\_\_\_\_

College basketball experts, fans, and students had waited for the night of February 20th, 2019, for a long time. It was the long-awaited renewal of the timeless rivalry between Duke University and the University of North Carolina. Both teams were among the top ten in the country, and Duke's Zion Williamson, a 6'7" 285-pound phenom, was considered the top player in the nation, and likely the number one overall pick in the 2019 NBA draft. Tickets for the game reportedly spiraled to upwards of \$5,000 a piece. Former president Barack Obama and other celebrities traveled to Cameron Indoor Arena at Duke University to witness the titanic matchup, but mostly to watch Zion Williamson, who some call the next LeBron James, live!

It was a raucous scene at one of the nation's most iconic college basketball stadiums - that would abruptly deflate a mere thirty-six seconds into the game when Williamson pivoted and crumpled to the floor. As cameras zoomed in, it became apparent that one of his shoes had completely ripped apart. Williamson was able to leave without assistance and it was later revealed that he had sustained a mild knee sprain. Nonetheless, Williamson was ruled out for the remainder of the game and missed the next six games as well. Duke would fall to North Carolina 88-72, in what became a lopsided game without Duke's star player. Without Williamson, Duke would fall to Virginia Tech and North Carolina for a second time.

As word spread about Williamson's injury, people's fury turned toward Nike – the company that produced the shoes. In fact, on the day following Williamson's injury, Nike's stock dropped more than a billion dollars in value. People also blamed the rules that prohibited Williamson from making the jump right from high school to the NBA. Why should a player clearly ready to play in the NBA risk a catastrophic injury in college that could ruin his career and earning potential?

For Nike, however, the "collateral damage" of such a high-profile product failure could prove destructive to the brand. Would people stop buying Nike shoes? Would high school and college teams that wear Nikes demand answers? Would Nike's star endorsers continue to support the brand? These and others were legitimate questions. Immediately, Nike's crisis management team went to work. Their first step was to apologize and to ensure the public it was an isolated incident. Next, Nike sent a team of product designers and engineers to their shoe factories in China to oversee the production of shoes specifically designed for Zion Williamson.

Luckily for Nike, and for Duke, Williamson returned to the court wearing his customized Nikes on March 14 and scored 29 points (on 13-13 shooting) in its 84-72 victory over Syracuse in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament. For his part, Williamson harbored no hard feelings and even publicly thanked Nike for producing his new kicks. At least for now, it looks as if Nike has averted what could have become a complete disaster.

### 1. Which of the following best summarizes the introductory paragraph?

- The Duke-University of North Carolina would prove exciting
- There was a lot of anticipation for the Duke-University of North Carolina matchup
- Zion Williamson is one of the top college basketball players in America
- Barack Obama and other celebrities were in attendance



- 2. Which best describes the injury to Zion Williamson?**
- a. Relatively minor
  - b. Serious
  - c. Career-threatening
  - d. Totally insignificant
- 3. What was the effect of Williamson's injury on the Duke basketball team?**
- a. There seemed to be little or no effect
  - b. Surprisingly, they would win their next six games
  - c. They would lose their next six games
  - d. They were clearly a lesser team without him
- 4. For which of the following questions could the answer be "the company's stock value dropped more than a billion dollars?"**
- a. What was the effect of the exploding shoe on the company that made them?
  - b. What was the effect of the exploding shoe on college basketball?
  - c. What was the cause of the exploding shoe?
  - d. How did the company that produced the shoe react after it exploded?
- 5. Which of the following best describes the meaning of the phrase "collateral damage" as used in the first sentence of the fourth paragraph?**
- a. Causes and effects of the coming crisis
  - b. Physical injuries to those who wear the shoes
  - c. Financial losses as a result of the exploding shoes
  - d. Unintended side effects of the exploding shoe
- 6. Why did Nike send a team to China?**
- a. To propose a new shoe design for Zion Williamson
  - b. To open a new shoe factory for Zion Williamson
  - c. To close the factories that made the exploding shoe
  - d. To supervise the production of shoes made especially for Zion Williamson
- 7. Which of the following debates was revived following the shoe incident?**
- a. Should big brands such as Nike be able to sponsor college sports teams?
  - b. Should big brands such as Nike be held responsible when players get injured?
  - c. Should athletes be able to skip college and play in the NBA if they're ready?
  - d. Should big brands such as Nike make their shoes in foreign factories?

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## Deep Thought Questions

1. Following the exploding shoe incident, what do you think was Nike's worst-case scenario? What could have happened, that at least to this point, Nike seems to have avoided?
2. At age 18, Zion Williamson is clearly ready to play in the NBA. Do you agree with the rule that stipulates NBA players must play in college for at least one year? Why or Why not?
3. If you were Zion Williamson, how would have you reacted toward Nike? Would you have been as forgiving as he seems to be? Why or Why not?

## **“Shoeless Joe” Reading Comprehension and the Black Sox Scandal**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Joseph Jefferson Wofford Jackson was born in Pickens County, South Carolina, on July 16, 1888. When he was only six years old, he went to work at a textile mill sweeping cotton dust off the floors. Joe never learned to read or write because he had to work instead of going to school. Joe began to play baseball on a team called the Brandon Mill team when he was 13.

Joe started out as a pitcher on the mill’s team, but he threw the ball so hard that he broke the catcher’s arm. Joe was moved to the outfield where his incredible skills attracted attention. He could throw the ball more than 400 feet. The newspapers called Joe’s home runs “Saturday Specials,” his line drives “Blue Darters,” and his glove, “a place where triples go to die.”

Joe got his nickname in 1908 when he was playing semi-pro ball with the Greenville Spinners. He had a new pair of spikes that made blisters on his feet, so he began to play in just his socks. When he was running to third after he hit a triple, a fan yelled, “you shoeless son of a gun!”

Joe played professional baseball with the Philadelphia Athletics, Cleveland Naps (which became the Indians in 1915), and the Chicago White Sox. Many think he is the greatest natural hitter in the history of baseball. Joe’s lifetime batting average was .356, which is the third-highest in Major League Baseball history. Joe believed that bats had only so many hits in them, and when he went into a slump, he would discard his bat and get a new one. Joe had a name for all his bats. His favorite, and most famous, was Black Betsy. He also had Blond Betsy, Carolyn, Ol’ Genril, and Big Jim.

In 1919, however, members of the White Sox conspired to lose the World Series to the Cleveland Indians because they were unhappy with owner Charles Comiskey. The ensuing scandal came to be known as the Black Sox scandal. Joe is said to have admitted that he was involved. He was supposed to get \$20,000, more than three times his annual salary, but received only \$5,000. He later told *the Sporting News*:

*“Regardless of what anybody says, I was innocent of any wrong-doing. I gave baseball all I had. The Supreme Being is the only one to whom I’ve got to answer. If I had been out there booting balls and looking foolish at bat against the Reds, there might have been some grounds for suspicion. I think my record in the 1919 World Series will stand up against that of any other man in that Series or any other World Series in all history.”*

Joe hit .375 for the Series, the highest on either team; had twelve hits (a tie for the World Series record at the time); six RBIs and made no errors in eight games. He scored eleven of the Sox twenty runs and hit the only home run in the series. The extent of Joe’s part in the conspiracy remains controversial. Charles Comiskey came to believe that Joe was totally innocent.

Since Joe was banned from Major League Baseball after the scandal, he played, coached and managed various minor league and semi-pro teams. In 1933, he opened Joe Jackson’s Liquor Store. He would help local children learn how to play baseball. They knew him as Mr. Joe and never knew how famous he had been. Joe died on December 5, 1951, in Greenville, South Carolina.

- 1. Who gave “Shoeless Joe” his nickname?**
  - A. The Greenville spinners
  - B. Players on the Brandon Mill team
  - C. A fan
  - D. The Philadelphia Athletics
  
- 2. Why was Joe moved to the outfield?**
  - A. Because he was so fast
  - B. Because he threw so hard he hurt the catcher
  - C. Because the team needed outfielders
  - D. Because he could throw the ball 400 feet
  
- 3. Which of the following supports the idea that Joe WAS NOT involved in the Black Sox Scandal?**
  - A. He was angry at Charles Comiskey
  - B. After he was banned from baseball, he helped children learn the sport
  - C. He said he was innocent
  - D. He scored over half of his team’s runs and hit the only home run
  
- 4. Which of the following questions might someone who did not believe Joe Jackson was involved in the scandal ask?**
  - A. If Joe Jackson was involved in the Black Sox Scandal, why did he play so well against the Cleveland Indians in the 1919 World Series?
  - B. If Joe Jackson was involved in the Black Sox Scandal, why did he help teach kids the game of baseball after he was banned?
  - C. If Joe Jackson was involved in the Black Sox Scandal, why did he claim he had no involvement?
  - D. If Joe Jackson was involved in the Black Sox Scandal, why do people think he was one of the greatest baseball players of all time?
  
- 5. According to the owner of the Chicago White Sox...**
  - A. Joe Jackson was not involved in the Black Sox Scandal
  - B. Joe Jackson was probably involved in the Black Sox Scandal
  - C. Joe Jackson may have been involved in the Black Sox Scandal
  - D. Joe Jackson was definitely involved in the Black Sox Scandal

**6. What was the effect of the Black Sox Scandal?**

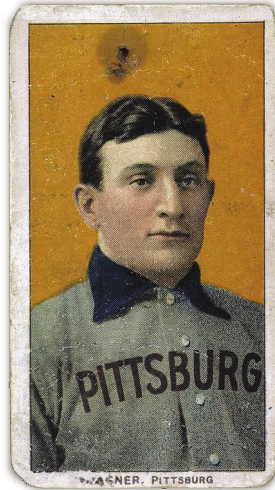
- A. Everybody thought that Joe was guilty
- B. Joe became known as "Shoeless Joe"
- C. Joe would never be allowed to play Major League Baseball again
- D. Joe's life was totally destroyed

**7. What question is answered in the final paragraph?**

- A. When was it proved that Joe Jackson was not involved in the Black Sox Scandal?
- B. What besides baseball did Joe Jackson do after the Black Sox Scandal?
- C. How did Joe Jackson die?
- D. What semi-pro teams did Joe Jackson play for and manage?

## Honus Wagner and the T206

Name \_\_\_\_\_



The T206 Honus Wagner is the world's most valuable sports card. It was issued as part of a series of cards that were inserted in packs of cigarettes produced by the American Tobacco Company (ATC) in 1909.

### Who was Honus Wagner?

Wagner was one of the best baseball players of his time. He played shortstop for the Pittsburgh Pirates between 1897 and 1917. Wagner, who was nicknamed "the Flying Dutchman" for both his running speed and his heritage, won eight batting titles during his career. Along with Babe Ruth, Wagner was one of the first five players elected to the Professional Baseball Hall-of-Fame.

### Why is the T206 card so valuable?

The T206 card is so valuable because Honus Wagner forced the American Tobacco Company to cease production of this card. Although his reasoning remains unclear, experts believe one of two theories: Wagner did not want kids to buy packs of cigarettes to obtain the card, or, that he wanted more compensation from the American Tobacco Company. Whatever the reason, only between 50 and 200 of the T206 cards were ultimately printed, packaged, and distributed.

### The Value of T206

Even in 1933, the T206 was regarded as the world's most valuable baseball card; although it was valued at a paltry \$50.00 by the *American Card Catalog*. As sports cards became more popular as collectors' items in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, prices of rare cards rose dramatically as they became more in demand. In 1991, Wayne Gretzky, widely considered the greatest hockey player of all time, purchased a professionally graded T206 card for \$451,000. It was later revealed the card was trimmed to improve its condition. In 2016, a different T206 card in poor, but unaltered condition, sold for over \$3,000,000! Several T206 cards have emerged over the past few decades, a few of which are thought to be authentic and several others that are thought to be counterfeit.

**1. Which is NOT true about Honus Wagner?**

- A. He played shortstop
- B. His nickname was “The Flying Dutchman”
- C. He was recently elected to the Hall-of-Fame
- D. He won eight batting titles

**2. Which of the following best describes the T206 card?**

- A. Very rare
- B. Fairly common
- C. Fake
- D. Non-existent

**3. Which of the following would be good advice to someone who was considering purchasing a T206 card?**

- A. You should probably wait a few years as they will become less expensive
- B. You should probably ask Wayne Gretzky if he thinks purchasing a T206 is a good idea
- C. You should probably make sure the card you are considering purchasing is authentic rather than fake
- D. You should probably buy a lot of packs of baseball cards and maybe you’ll get one

**4. Why is the T206 card so rare?**

- A. Because the card is so old
- B. Because Honus Wagner refused to buy cigarettes
- C. Because most people threw them out
- D. Because very few of the cards were produced

**5. Which of the following best describes why Honus Wagner refused to allow his cards to be packaged with American Tobacco Company cigarettes?**

- A. Because he wanted more money
- B. Because he didn’t like the idea that kids had to buy packs of cigarettes to get his card
- C. No one is sure, but the answer is likely A or B
- D. No one is sure, but the answer is likely A and B



**6. What does the word “distributed” mean as used in the following sentence?**

Whatever the reason, only between 50 and 200 of the T206 cards were ultimately printed, packaged, and distributed.

- A. borrowed
- B. destroyed
- C. sent out
- D. returned

**7. Over time...**

- A. prices for rare baseball cards rose.
- B. people lost interest in expensive baseball cards.
- C. Wayne Gretzky bought more T206 cards.
- D. it was discovered that the T206 card wasn't actually very rare.

Title	Apx. Grade Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Babe Ruth (456)	6+	A	D	C	B	D	D	B	D	D	B
Dot Richardson	4+	B	A	D	C	C	C	D			
History of Baseball	5+	D	B	B	D	A	C	A			
History of Basketball	6+	C	A	B	D	B	D	D			
Honus Wagner and the T206 card	5+	C	A	C	D	C	D	A			
Jackie Robinson 456	5+	D	D	D	A	C	D	D	B	B	C
Jackie Robinson Main Idea	5+	B	B	C	C	C					
Jackie Robinson Sequencing	5+	D	A	C	D	D					
Jackie Robinson Vocabulary	5+	D	D	C	A	B					
Jackie Robinson Details	5+	C	B	D	D	C					
John Madden	5+	D	B	B	B	D	B	C			
Jordan vs Lebron - Compare and Contrast	5+	B	C	A	A	B					
Manute Bol	4+	C	C	C	D	D	A	D			
Michael Jordan 456	5+	C	D	C	C	A	C	C			
Mickey Mantle (456)	6+	C	B	C	B	A	A	B	D	B, C	C
Muggsy Bogues	5+	B	A	C	D	A	B	A			
New York Yankees Legends - Compare and Contrast	5+	B, C	B	D	B	C					
Real-life Protagonists - Jim Rice Saves a Life	4+	D	C	B	A	C	B	D			
Roberto Clemente	6+	A	B	B	C	B	B	C			
Shoeless Joe Jackson	5+	C	B	D	A	D	C	B			
Zion Williamson and the Case of the Exploding Shoe	5+	B	A	D	A	D	D	C			