

Fact or Fiction?

Name: _____

Below is a biography on Michael Jordan. On the following page is a chart with ten statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

High School and College Star

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.

The Birth of Greatness

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.

The Jordan Way

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 film "Space Jam."

Three World Championships

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.

From Basketball to Baseball, and Back to Basketball

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.

New Challenges in the Nation's Capital

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.

	FACT	FICTION
Michael Jordan currently owns an NBA team.		
Michael's last game was against the Philadelphia 76ers		
Michael was cut from his high school team!		
After his senior year at the University of North Carolina, Jordan decided to enter the NBA Draft.		
Michael Jordan became the first forty-year-old player to score forty points in a game.		
The Bulls won their first NBA championship against the Detroit Pistons.		
Michael Jordan was forced to sit out the 1984-1985 season with a foot injury.		
Michael Jordan played baseball with a minor-league team affiliated with the Chicago Cubs.		
Michael Jordan was born in New York and grew up in North Carolina.		
When he played baseball, Michael Jordan briefly made it to the Major Leagues.		
In 1986-87, Jordan recorded his highest average point total per game.		

Answers:

	FACT	FICTION
Michael Jordan currently owns an NBA team.	X	
Michael's last game was against the Philadelphia 76ers	X	
Michael was cut from his high school team!	X	
After his senior year at the University of North Carolina, Jordan decided to enter the NBA Draft.		X
Michael Jordan became the first forty-year-old player to score forty points in a game.	X	
The Bulls won their first NBA championship against the Detroit Pistons.		X
Michael Jordan was forced to sit out the 1984-1985 season with a foot injury.		X
Michael Jordan played baseball with a minor-league team affiliated with the Chicago Cubs.		X
Michael Jordan was born in New York and grew up in North Carolina.	X	
When he played baseball, Michael Jordan briefly made it to the Major Leagues.		X
In 1986-87, Jordan recorded his highest average point total per game.	X	