

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.”