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This story is about a sports legend who was also a civil rights activist. Read the story. Then answer the questions that follow.



Jackie Robinson

“Peanuts...popcorn—buy them hot!” Pretend that it is the late 1940s. Vendors are selling snacks. Fans are yelling. They cheer for the players—“Go Robinson, you can do it!” CRACK! The bat hits the ball. The player runs to first base. He slides into second. Who is this player? It is Jackie Robinson. He was the first African American baseball player to play in the majors. On April 15, 1947, he played his first Major League Baseball (MLB) game. He played for the Brooklyn Dodgers. It was an important event.

Before this, African Americans could not play in the Major League. They had to play in their own baseball league. It was called the Negro League. Jackie Robinson ended that. He was the first African American to play professional sports. He helped end 60 years of *segregation* in baseball.

He still worked to end it off the field. When fans and players called him names, he did not fight back. The pressure was enormous. “He knew he had to do well. He knew that the future of blacks in baseball depended on it,” said his teammate Duke Snider. Later in his career, Jackie did speak up about his rights. These same nonviolent actions were used by others during the Civil Rights movement. This movement began in the 1950s and 1960s. Many said he inspired them.

Jackie was born in 1919 in Cairo, Georgia. His mother’s name was Mallie. When he was 1 year old, his mother moved the family to Pasadena, California. She raised Jackie and his four siblings as a single mother. Robinson attended college at the University of California—Los Angeles. He was a great athlete. At UCLA, he was the first athlete to win varsity letters in four sports. These were baseball, basketball, football, and track.

He started playing baseball in the Negro League in the mid-1940s. He joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He played second base. The first year he played he was the MLB Rookie of the Year. That year he led the league in base stealing. He had 29 steals. He also had 12 home runs.

In 1949, he won the National League Most Valuable Player award. During his career, he played in six World Series. He also played in six All-Star games. In 1955, he helped the Dodgers win a World Series Championship. Jackie played 10 seasons for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

In 1957, he retired from baseball. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962. On October 15, 1972, Jackie threw out the ball to open the 75th World Series. It was also the 25th anniversary of his first season in the Major League. He died seven days later.

He was honored again in 1997. It happened on the 50th anniversary of his first Major League game. His uniform number was retired across all Major League teams. No Major League baseball player would ever wear the number 42 again.

Jackie once said, “A life is not important except in the impact it has on others.” Jackie did have an impact on others. He is a true sports legend.





Understanding the Story

Here are some questions about the story that you just read. Read each one and then fill in the circle beside the best answer. If you're not sure, go back and look at the story again.

1. What year was Jackie Robinson born?

- (A) 1909
- (B) 1919
- (C) 1929
- (D) 1930

Factual

2. *Segregation* refers to

- (A) putting people together in one group
- (B) separating people into different groups
- (C) playing baseball together
- (D) placing people in one straight line

Critical Reasoning

3. Jackie Robinson won the National League MVP Award in

- (A) 1947
- (B) 1949
- (C) 1951
- (D) 1955

Factual

4. What happened in 1997?

- (A) Jackie Robinson retired.
- (B) Jackie Robinson received a new uniform number.
- (C) Jackie Robinson's uniform number was retired.
- (D) Jackie Robinson was honored in the Hall of Fame.

Factual

5. Which of the following events happened first?

- (A) The Dodgers won a World Series Championship.
- (B) Jackie Robinson was MLB Rookie of the Year.
- (C) Jackie Robinson retired from baseball.
- (D) Jackie Robinson's uniform number was retired.

Inference

6. Which of the following is not true?

- (A) Jackie Robinson fought to end segregation.
- (B) Jackie Robinson earned four varsity letters.
- (C) Jackie Robinson only played 10 seasons.
- (D) Jackie Robinson played in five All-Star Games.

Inference

7. Which of the following would least likely describe Jackie Robinson?

- (A) leader
- (B) activist
- (C) follower
- (D) trailblazer

Critical Reasoning

8. Jackie Robinson retired from baseball in

- (A) 1957
- (B) 1955
- (C) 1951
- (D) 1947

Factual

9. The Civil Rights movement was an attempt to

- (A) gain equal rights for all people
- (B) gain equal rights for all baseball players
- (C) gain equal rights for all men
- (D) keep segregation

Critical Reasoning

10. The Dodgers were from

- (A) Brooklyn
- (B) Boston
- (C) Baltimore
- (D) Brookville

Factual

SAMPLE



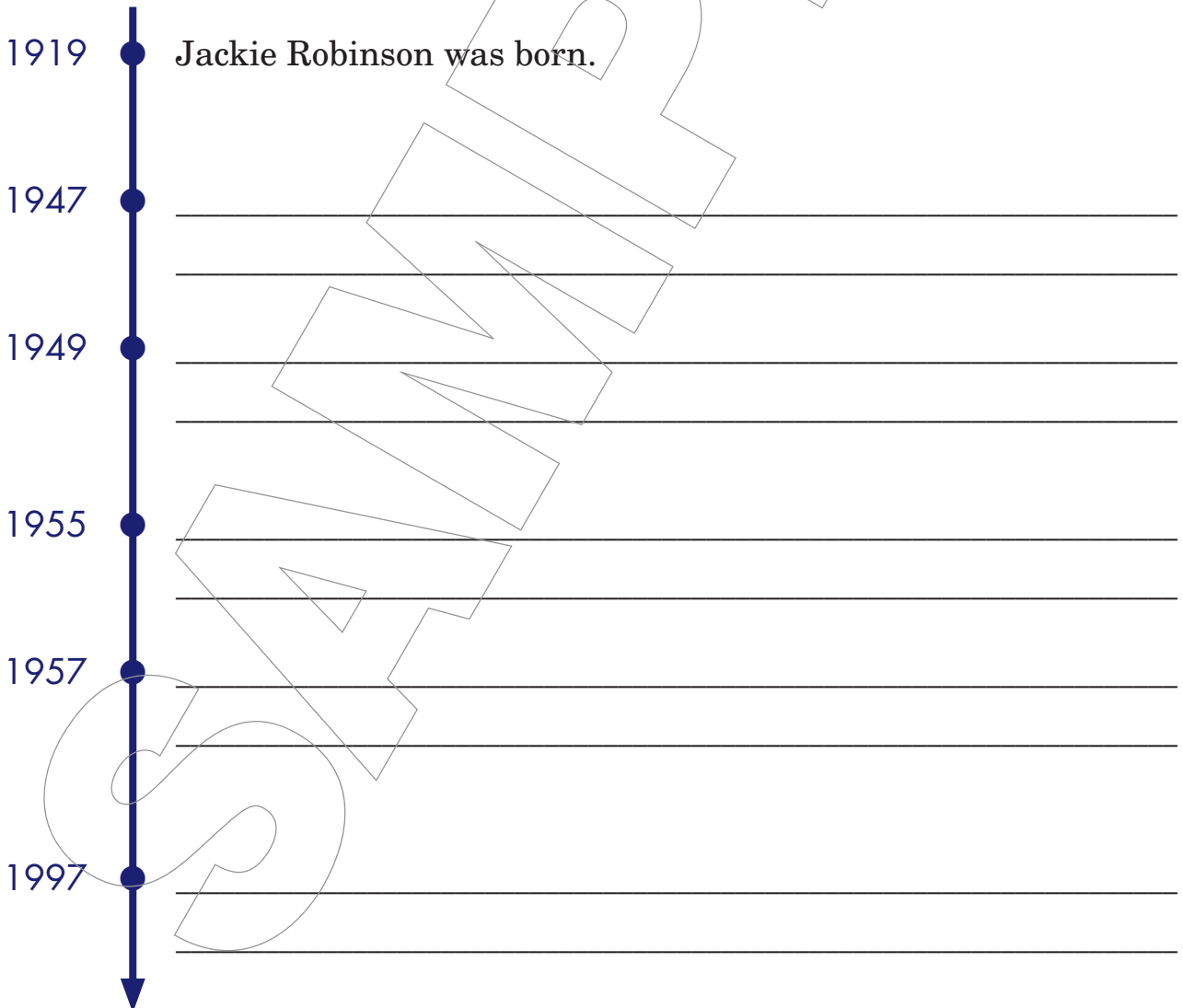
Summing it Up



Time lines help you remember events in the order in which they happen. A time line for Jackie Robinson has been started below. The first event has been done for you. Sort the events listed below in the correct order on the time line.



- Jackie Robinson was named the MLB Rookie of the Year.
- The Dodgers won the World Series Championship.
- Jackie Robinson won the National League MVP award.
- Jackie Robinson’s uniform number was retired across all Major League teams.
- Jackie Robinson retired from baseball.





Write About It

When you write, you have to make it clear when things are happening. The order in which things happen is call the **sequence of events**. There are words that you can use to help the reader understand this sequence. Some of these words are *first, next, then, after, soon, before, afterward, once, later, earlier, today, the day before, and finally*. Pretend that you were asked to write a paragraph about Jackie Robinson. The paragraph will be framed and featured in the Baseball Hall of Fame. The paragraph should highlight his sports career in order.

WRITING AREA

Handwriting practice lines with a large watermark reading "WRITING AREA" diagonally across the page.