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Jackie Robinson playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1954

## Biography

# Jackie Robinson

**Jackie Robinson** was one of the first African Americans to play in Major League Baseball in the United States. He had a significant impact on the civil rights movement as well.

**Directions:** This biography of Jackie Robinson is missing some sentences. Read it all the way through, then cut out the missing details on page three and place them into the part of the story where you think they fit best.

Jackie Robinson was born on January 31, 1919 in Cairo, Georgia, then moved with his family to California.

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In high school, he joined his school sports teams.

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He went to college, then joined the military in 1942.

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After leaving the military, he went back to college. While he was there, the Kansas City Monarchs asked him to play for them. The Monarchs were a team in the Negro Leagues, a league that was set aside just for African Americans.

He played one season with them when Brooklyn Dodgers manager Branch Rickey asked him to join his team.

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Jackie's first day as a Dodger was April 15, 1947.

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As time went on, fans could see Jackie wasn't your ordinary ball player.

The 1947 Dodgers became league champions.

Soon, more and more African American players began joining major league teams. Many of them went on to become stars. Jackie began to use his celebrity for good: he started speaking out against injustice and racism. He wrote a book about his life so that people could understand how hard it was to be judged by the color of your skin.

Jackie's baseball career lasted ten years. In the time he played, the Dodgers were unstoppable: they won six pennants and a World Series. In 1956, the Dodgers moved to California, and they planned to send Jackie to the New York Giants.

He retired from the sport.

After leaving baseball, he worked in business, wrote a newspaper column, and started a bank. In 1962 he joined the Baseball Hall of Fame. By then, the civil rights movement was in full swing. Many African Americans were speaking out about unfair laws that existed in many parts of the country. Jackie joined the fight. He and his family went to the March on Washington, and were there in the crowd to hear Martin Luther King, Jr. give his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

Jackie Robinson died in 1972.

**“The most luxurious possession,  
the richest treasure anybody  
has, is [their] personal dignity. ”**

– Jackie Robinson

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**Directions:** Cut out the missing details below and place them into the biography where you think they should appear.

There had not been an African American player on a major league team since 1889. Branch wanted to change that. He wanted to find a player that was not only a great athlete, but had a strong and courageous character. He knew that, in the face of racism, Jackie would stay calm.

Growing up, Jackie felt like he didn't fit in. He and his friends were often looked down upon because of the color of their skin.

Jackie played football, basketball, and baseball, and also ran track. In almost every sport he played, he won awards for his talent.

He was a respected officer, but he experienced discrimination because of his race.

Thousands of people watched his funeral. Jackie Robinson was not only a hero to baseball fans, but a hero to everyone who felt mistreated. His courage, his talent, and his determination to make the world a better place still inspires people to this day.

The road to becoming a champion was not easy. Many cities would not let Jackie sleep in hotels or eat in restaurants because he was African American.

He was nervous! He was worried that baseball fans would be angry at him or even try to hurt him. Fans and other players called him names, and some of his other teammates asked him to leave the team simply because he was African American. Sometimes he wanted to quit, but he knew he wasn't just playing that day for himself or even for the Dodgers — he was playing for freedom. When he needed courage, he thought of his grandmother, who had been enslaved. He thought of the awful things she had been through, and how strong she had been.

Though he still loved the game, he decided that ten great years was enough for him.

They loved the way Jackie stole bases and kept the other team guessing!