



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 5: Module 3A: Unit 3: Lesson 4**

## Research: Close Read of Text 2 for Each Expert Group



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can write an opinion piece that supports a point of view with reasons and information. (W.5.1)

a. I can create an organizational structure in which I group together related ideas.

b. I can identify reasons, facts, and details that support my opinion.

I can use several sources to build my knowledge about a topic. (W.5.7)

I can explain what a text says using quotes from the text. (RI.5.1)

I can accurately synthesize information from multiple texts on the same topic. (RI.5.9)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can continue to build background knowledge about my athlete by using one of several sources.
- I can identify evidence from the text about how an athlete broke barriers and created a legacy.
- I can revise my opinion about an athlete's legacy based on evidence.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Journals (gist statement, graphic organizer with revised opinion)
- Students' coded Text 2



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Homework Review (5 minutes)</li> <li>B. Engaging the Reader (5 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Work Time               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. First Read: Building Background Knowledge about My Athlete (15 minutes)</li> <li>B. Second Read: Identifying Evidence to Support an Opinion (15 minutes)</li> <li>C. Synthesizing: Chalk Talk (10 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Closing and Assessment               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Revising My Opinion Based on Evidence (10 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Homework               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. On your index card, write a response (at least three sentences) to the following question: “How has your athlete contributed to the struggle for equality?” Support your answer with at least two pieces of evidence from the two articles you have read about your athlete.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This lesson follows a similar pattern to Lesson 2. In expert groups, students read a second article about either Roberto Clemente or Althea Gibson to find additional evidence and provide reasons to support their opinion about the athlete’s legacy.</li> <li>• Note that students receive a task card that is very similar, but not identical, to the task card in Lesson 2. For each new research texts the groups work with, the task cards for each text are adapted based on which text is easier for students to read on their own first, vs. which text needs teacher support.</li> <li>• Students work in expert groups, yet still need teacher support to build their literacy skills. During work time, as one group works independently, circulate to support the other group. Review Work Time Parts A, B, and C in advance, to envision the flow of activities.</li> <li>• Students will not record a new opinion about their athlete in Lessons 4–7; rather, they will revise their opinions as they gain more knowledge about how their athlete broke barriers and created a legacy.</li> <li>• As in Lesson 2, students participate in a Chalk Talk. The purpose is to help them begin to synthesize information from multiple texts on the same topic (RI.5.9). In this lesson, and in Lesson 6, students do the Chalk Talk during work time, as a scaffold toward more independent synthesis and writing.</li> <li>• In Advance: Post the Roberto Clemente and Althea Gibson Chalk Talk Charts (from Lesson 2) in different areas of the room so students can add their ideas to them during Work Time B. Add a ring to the chart (see supporting materials for an example). Students will star (*) ideas they encountered in previous texts and then add new ideas to the charts in the outer circle. This supports students’ ongoing revision of their opinion: they must first recognize key repeated ideas, then synthesize new information from each text before refining or editing their opinion statements.</li> <li>• Review: Milling to Music and Fist to Five strategies, and Chalk Talk protocol (Appendix).</li> </ul>



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>continue, build background knowledge, annotate, evidence, barriers, legacy, revise, opinion</p> <p>Vocabulary from the text (to be addressed more in Lesson 5) Althea Gibson group, based on “Notable Southerners”: (to) be somebody, repression, adversity, banned (1), racial bias, honor, prejudice, challenged outdated beliefs (2)</p> <p>Roberto Clemente group, based on “Roberto Clemente”: minorities, relegated, (racial) slurs (2), berated, (was) realized, memorial, cultivate, waived (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Journals</li> <li>• “Novey/Notable Southerners” article (one per each student in the Althea Gibson group)</li> <li>• “Roberto Clemente” article (one per each student in the Roberto Clemente group)</li> <li>• Expert Group Norms anchor chart (from Lesson 2)</li> <li>• Althea Gibson: Identifying Evidence task card (new; one per student or per group studying Althea Gibson; see Teaching Notes)</li> <li>• Roberto Clemente: Identifying Evidence task card (new; one per student or per group studying Roberto Clemente; see Teaching Notes)</li> <li>• Chalk Talk Chart Example (for teacher reference)</li> <li>• Roberto Clemente Chalk Talk chart (new; teacher-created; one per pair of groups studying Roberto Clemente)</li> <li>• Althea Gibson Chalk Talk chart (new; teacher-created; one per pair of groups studying Althea Gibson)</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Revising My Opinion task card (one per expert group)</li> <li>• One index card (per student, for homework)</li> </ul>



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Homework Review (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to take out their homework index card with a response to the last journalist question from <i>Promises to Keep</i>, page 25.</li> <li>• Remind students of the Milling to Music strategy.</li> <li>• Allow students 3 minutes to move throughout the room and share their homework with at least two other students, one student studying the same athlete and one student studying a different athlete.</li> <li>• Collect students' homework index cards. Review for a clear response to the question and the specific details students use to support their answers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentionally partner ELL students with other students who speak the same L1 language for the Milling to Music strategy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Engaging the Reader (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct students to pair up with a student who is studying a different athlete than they are (students may join in a group of three if there is an uneven number of students). Ask students to think about then discuss with this partner:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “What barrier(s) did your athlete break?”</li> <li>– “How did breaking a barrier help to shape the athlete’s legacy or influence our society?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Invite several students to share out. Listen for ideas such as: “Althea Gibson broke the color barrier in tennis; she left a legacy that influenced our society by ‘paving the way’ for other African American tennis players like Venus and Serena Williams,” “Roberto Clemente faced the barrier of racism; because of his skills he was the first Hispanic to be voted into baseball’s Hall of Fame, and this helped to create opportunities for other Hispanic athletes,” etc.</li> <li>• Tell the class: “You have read one article about your athlete to help you begin to build your background knowledge about how either Roberto Clemente or Althea Gibson broke barriers and created a legacy. Today, you will continue to build your understanding of how these extraordinary individuals faced life’s challenges and made an everlasting impact on our societal values.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide sentence stems (e.g., “A barrier my athlete broke is _____.” Breaking this barrier changed society because _____.”) for students who may have difficulty with language.</li> <li>• Post all questions asked to students, and the answers they provide, for students to refer to throughout the lesson.</li> </ul>



	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. First Read: Building Background Knowledge about My Athlete (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to take out their <b>journals</b> and join their expert groups (from Lessons 2 and 3).</li> <li>• Be sure all students have access to the article about their assigned athlete: “<b>Novel/Notable Southerners</b>” for students in expert groups studying Althea Gibson, or “<b>Roberto Clemente</b>” for students in expert groups studying Roberto Clemente.</li> <li>• Review the learning target: “I can continue to build background knowledge about my athlete by using one of several sources.” Ask students to think about, then share the meaning of the word <i>continue</i>. Listen for: “Keep on; persist; go on with.”</li> <li>• Cold call several students to share out what they recall about the meaning of <i>build background knowledge</i> (learn about something new; learn facts and information about a topic I don't know a lot about).</li> <li>• Ask students to share out what they often do when they encounter a new text. Listen for: “Read for the gist.”</li> <li>• Remind students that a good strategy to use for determining the gist of the article is to make annotations about the gist of individual sections, or chunks, as they read. Ask them to recall and share out the meaning of the word <i>annotate</i>. Listen for: “Make notes in the margin, next to chunks or sections of the article.”</li> <li>• Refer students to the <b>Expert Group Norms anchor chart</b> and ask them to briefly review these norms before they begin reading their new articles.</li> </ul> <p><b>Roberto Clemente Groups: Read Independently</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students studying Roberto Clemente to take 8 to 10 minutes to independently read their article. Ask them to make annotations about the gist for each of the five sections in this article:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Early Life</li> <li>2. The Road to Excellence</li> <li>3. The Emerging Champion</li> <li>4. Continuing the Story</li> <li>5. Summary</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students may need the passage read a second time to determine the gist.</li> <li>• Struggling writers may need to dictate their gist to a partner or teacher.</li> <li>• List for students the five sections of the Roberto Clemente article so that they can refer to them as they work.</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b><i>Althea Gibson Groups: Read Aloud and Guided Practice</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bring together the groups studying Althea Gibson. Explain that because this text is difficult, the first read will be aloud. Ask students to have their eyes on the text and read silently in their heads. Begin with the title, “Notable Southerners.” Pause at the end of each paragraph for students to annotate for gist.</li></ul> <p><b><i>All Groups</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After about 10 minutes of work time, prompt students from both groups to take 1 or 2 minutes to think about and discuss with their group members:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– “What is the gist of this article?”</li><li>– “How did the athlete break barriers and create a legacy?”</li></ul></li><li>• Direct students to turn to a new page in their journals to record the gist of their article.</li><li>• Cold call a few students to share what they have written. Listen for: “Althea Gibson was born into a world where African Americans were banned from all major sports, but she challenged racial bias to become a pioneer for future African American athletes,” “Roberto Clemente had to listen to racial slurs from other players, but he persevered and through his skill came to be known as ‘The Great One’ by both fans and other players,” and similar ideas.</li></ul>	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Second Read: Identifying Evidence to Support an Opinion (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the learning target: "I can identify evidence from the text about how an athlete broke barriers and created a legacy."</li> <li>Ask students to recall then share out the meaning of the words <i>evidence</i> (facts; specific details; information), <i>barriers</i> (obstacles; difficulties; ways to keep separate), and <i>legacy</i> (what people think about someone after their death; a person's influence on society after she or he is no longer living; a person's reputation).</li> <li>Remind students that during Lesson 2 they developed an opinion based on the evidence they identified to help answer this question:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* "How did my athlete break barriers and create a legacy?"</li> </ul> </li> <li>Tell students that during this part of work time they will reread their article and mark evidence that supports and helps them to further refine the opinion they developed in Lesson 2.</li> <li>Emphasize that as students read and learn more about their athlete, they will encounter information that feels familiar: evidence that reinforces or clarifies what they read in the previous text. They may also encounter evidence that is either totally new or causes them to adjust the opinions they formed earlier. As they read today, they should think about how the new evidence they encounter provides support for their opinion or how the evidence helps them to refine their opinion. They will have an opportunity to clarify and revise their opinions near the end of the lesson (Work Time C).</li> <li>Ask students to briefly review and discuss with their group:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* "What opinion about your athlete did you write down on your graphic organizer during the previous lesson?"</li> </ul> </li> <li>Tell students to keep this opinion in mind to help them focus as they read today: they should be looking for additional evidence that either confirms or causes them to revise their opinion.</li> <li>Distribute the <b>Althea Gibson: Identifying Evidence task card</b> to each group researching Althea Gibson. Read the steps aloud and clarify directions as necessary.</li> </ul> <p><b>Althea Gibson Groups: Independently and Discuss Focus Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give students 8 to 10 minutes to complete their task cards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide nonlinguistic symbols for <i>evidence</i> (a check mark), <i>barriers</i> (walls; blockade), and <i>legacy</i> (monuments; bridges with a person's name).</li> <li>Strategically assign chunks of text to groups. Assign ones referencing more known events to students who may struggle more with grade-level text.</li> <li>Consider allowing students who struggle with reading to find only one piece of evidence instead of two.</li> </ul>





Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>Roberto Clemente Groups: Read Aloud and Chunk the Text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First work with the students studying Roberto Clemente. Distribute the <b>Roberto Clemente: Identifying Evidence task card</b> to each group researching Roberto Clemente. Read the steps aloud and clarify directions as necessary. Reread the article aloud for group(s) of students who may struggle with this text. Pause after each paragraph and ask students to underline and text code evidence related to both “barriers” and “legacy” as they follow along silently.</li> <li>• Direct students in the Roberto Clemente groups to take 2 to 3 minutes to discuss the evidence about barriers and legacy that they identified as well as the focus questions on their task card. As these groups discuss, move to support the students reading about Althea Gibson.</li> </ul> <p><b>All Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After 8 to 10 minutes, refocus students whole group. Cold call members from each group to share out the evidence they identified to describe the barriers each athlete faced.</li> <li>• Listen for ideas similar to: “Althea Gibson was born at a time when African Americans were banned from all major sports; she was refused entry into events held by the United States Lawn Tennis Association,” or “Roberto Clemente was put on Montreal’s farm team because management feared fan reaction to more minorities joining Major League Baseball teams; he heard racial slurs from other players.”</li> <li>• Next, cold call members from each expert group to share out what they learned about their athlete’s legacy. Listen for ideas such as: “Althea Gibson ‘chipped away’ at racism with her aggressive style,” “She was a pioneer who broke racial barriers and challenged outdated beliefs,” “She became a world tennis champion,” “Roberto Clemente became known as ‘The Great One,’” “Gifts received after his death made it possible to build the Ciudad Deportiva for Puerto Rican boys to be guided by professional athletes,” and “He was the first Latin American player to be admitted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.”</li> <li>• Remind students that one of the big ideas for this module is that “individuals are shaped by and can shape society.” Say: “These athletes were shaped by the challenges they faced, and they created legacies that have helped to shape our society.”</li> <li>• Ask students to recall then share out what it means to shape society (change society for the better; affect society; influence society).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you intend to call on a student who struggles with language to share out, consider letting the student know beforehand so s/he has time to prepare.</li> <li>• Alternatively, let the group contribute points they would like to share and then choose a spokesperson to deliver the information to the class.</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>C. Synthesizing: Chalk Talk (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the <b>Althea Gibson Chalk Talk charts</b> and <b>Roberto Clemente Chalk Talk charts</b> posted around the room. Tell students that they are again going to do a Chalk Talk. Read the Chalk Talk chart questions aloud:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “How has Roberto Clemente broken barriers and created a legacy?”</li> <li>* “How has Althea Gibson broken barriers and created a legacy?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Say something like, “As we read to learn more about a topic, often we encounter ideas that are similar to ones we found in other texts. Information that is repeated in a variety of texts tends to indicate that these are important or key ideas related to the topic. Today in your Chalk Talks you will first identify the ideas that are repeated in the texts, in order to help you recognize or ‘zoom in’ on key information. This will help you as you refine and edit your opinion statements to ensure important ideas are included.”</li> <li>• Point out the charts around the room. Focus on the outer ring that has been added. Tell them that this circle is to indicate a new layer of learning—like ripples in the water when you throw a rock into a pond. Learning grows and changes the more you read.</li> <li>• Give directions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reread and briefly discuss the ideas you wrote in the inner circle (Text 1) during Lesson 2.</li> <li>2. Are any of the ideas <u>already</u> on your chart the same or similar to what you read today? Put a star (*) next to ideas that are the same or similar.</li> <li>3. What new learning do you have? In the new outer ring on your chart, record new ideas that you learned from today’s reading that help to answer the question at the top of the chart.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Distribute <b>markers</b>. Ask student groups to pair up with those same groups and move to their designated Althea Gibson Chalk Talk chart or Roberto Clemente Chalk Talk chart.</li> <li>• Allow students 7 to 8 minutes for their Chalk Talks. Circulate to support as needed.</li> <li>• Invite several students to share out the ideas, both similar and new, from their Chalk Talks. Listen for: “They challenged and changed people’s racist beliefs about athletes of color,” “They gave back to their communities,” and similar ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post, or write, the Chalk Talk protocol steps for group work on the white board for students to reference as they work with their groups.</li> <li>• List for students the directions for identifying similar ideas and adding new ideas to the outer circle during the Chalk Talk so that they can refer to them as they work.</li> <li>• Struggling writers may need to dictate their Chalk Talk ideas to a partner or teacher.</li> </ul>



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Revising My Opinion Based on Evidence (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to return to their seats. Tell them that now that they have had a chance to read and talk more, it is time for them to add to their own understanding in writing.</li> <li>• Review the learning target: “I can revise my opinion about an athlete’s legacy based on evidence.”</li> <li>• Ask students to recall and share out the meaning of the words <i>revise</i> (improve; correct; change; alter) and <i>opinion</i> (WHAT I believe; point of view; judgment).</li> <li>• Explain to students that they will not develop a new opinion after reading each new article about their athlete. They will, however, have an opportunity to revise the opinions they recorded, based on both key (repeated) details they identified during the Chalk Talk and the new information they learn about their athlete.</li> <li>• Distribute the <b>Revising My Opinion task card</b>. Read the steps aloud to students and clarify any directions as necessary.</li> <li>• Direct students to take 6 to 7 minutes to complete the task card steps. They should be writing individually, but may talk with their groups for support. Circulate to support as needed.</li> <li>• Invite several students to share their revised opinions whole group. As students share, pose the following questions:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “How did you revise your opinion based on new evidence?”</li> <li>* “What specific words or phrases did you change to make the opinion clearer?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tell students they will come back to these articles during Lesson 5 to review their evidence and refine their reasons and paraphrased evidence.</li> <li>• Ask students to keep their articles for the next lesson. Distribute one <b>index card</b> and ask students to refer to the two articles they have read about their athlete (Lessons 2–4), for homework.</li> <li>• Collect students’ journals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a sentence stem or starter for students that may struggle with language for the Debrief. (e.g. “I learned my athlete overcame the barrier(s) _____. My athlete created a legacy of _____.”). Note that most students should be able to compose their own sentences, which will lead to less stilted responses.</li> <li>• Provide non-linguistic symbols for opinion (an exclamation point.)</li> <li>• Some students may need the portion of text reread a 2nd time in order to revise their opinion.</li> <li>• Struggling writers may need to dictate their revised opinion to a partner or teacher.</li> </ul>



Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On your index card, write a response (at least three sentences) to the following question: □<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– “How has your athlete contributed to the struggle for equality?”</li></ul></li><li>• Support your answer with at least two pieces of evidence from the two articles you have read about your athlete. □</li></ul> <p><i>Note: Students will need their articles from today's lesson for use in Lesson 5. Review students' homework index cards to determine their ability to respond to a question and support the answer with specific details. Review students' text coded articles and journals to determine their ability to identify evidence to support an opinion and their ability to revise an opinion based on both key (repeated) and new information.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider prewriting the focus question on an index card for students who struggle with writing.</li><li>• Students who struggle with language may need to dictate the answer to their focus question and supporting evidence to someone at home.</li></ul>



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# Grade 5: Module 3A: Unit 3: Lesson 4

## Supporting Materials



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Novel/Notable Southerners

Althea Gibson

Althea Gibson

Althea Gibson summed up her life with the title of her autobiography—I Always Wanted to be Somebody. She was born August 25, 1927 into an environment of racial repression, a world where as an African-American, it was very difficult to “be somebody.” Only sixty years prior, the last African-American slaves had been freed. Just six years prior, an anti-lynching bill had been defeated by filibuster in the United States Congress. Althea, born to sharecropper parents on a cotton farm in the small town of Silver, South Carolina, faced a future of adversity and uncertainty. She began life in a world where African-Americans were banned from all major sports (the term “African-American” did not even exist), yet her life ended in a world where African-Americans not only participated in all major sports, but dominated many of them. She was instrumental in making this happen.

In 1930, her family moved to Harlem New York. Life in Harlem during the depression was difficult. Young Althea disliked the regimen of school and was often truant. During this time, she discovered paddle tennis. She soon became the paddle tennis wizard of the local public recreation center and caught the eye of local musician and Police Athletic League coach, Buddy Walker.

Walker bought Althea a second-hand tennis racquet and brought her to the Harlem River Tennis Courts where she began to learn the basics of the game.

“I just found that I had a skill at hitting the ball,” said Gibson in 1965 to a biographer. And she did. She was a quick, enthusiastic student. She competed in tournaments held by the American Tennis Association (ATA), the nation’s oldest African-American athletic organization. In 1942, she won the ATA New York girl’s singles tournament.

In 1946, Althea moved to Wilmington, North Carolina to work on her tennis game and re-enroll in high school. One year later, she won the first of ten straight woman’s ATA titles. During her decade of dominance over the world of African-American woman’s tennis, she completed high school and went on to graduate from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee.

Although Althea’s talents were difficult to ignore, she was initially refused entry into events held by the United States Lawn Tennis Association, the sanctioning body for white tennis players.

Althea did not consider herself a crusader for equality, she was an athlete, and as an athlete, she wanted to compete against the best in the world.

In 1950, thanks in part to a letter written to American Lawn Tennis Magazine by Alice Marble, a respected white U.S. Open Champion, Gibson received an invitation to the U.S. Open.



**Novel/Notable Southerners**

Althea Gibson

August 28, 1950, Althea Gibson became the first African-American, male or female, to compete in the U.S. Open. With her aggressive style, she attacked the ball as well as racial barriers. Her thundering overheads reverberated through the crowd like sledgehammers against the Berlin Wall. With every stroke, she chipped away at racial bias. She defeated Barbara Knapp 6-2, 6-2, on court fourteen at the prestigious West Side Tennis Club in Forest Hills, New York. Although Althea was later defeated in the second round by former Wimbledon champion Louise Brough, the real victory had already been won.

Althea continued to improve her game and gain the respect of her peers, both black and white. In 1957, the black daughter of a sharecropper won her first major title: the French Open. She returned to the United States, not defined by her race, but embraced as an American. Ticker tape blanketed the streets of New York in her honor.

Althea went on to win many tournaments, and in doing so, continued to challenge racial prejudice. In 1971, the spunky girl from Silver, South Carolina was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame, but her achievements extend far beyond the court. She was a true pioneer who broke down racial barriers and challenged outdated beliefs, and she did it simply for the love of the game. We are proud to call her one of our own. Althea, you really “are somebody.” In her usual understated manner, perhaps Althea said it best herself: “Ain’t that a blip, that a Harlem street rebel would go on to become a world tennis champion?”



Roberto Clemente

### **Early Life**

When Roberto Clemente y Walker was born on August 18, 1934, the small town of Carolina, Puerto Rico, was dominated by one industry: sugar. Residents toiled to harvest the cane; few other opportunities existed.

Yet, Roberto's parents were industrious and lived reasonably well according to the standards of the time and place. His father, Melchor, became a foreman for the local sugar company, and his mother, Luisa, went to work at the plantation house. Melchor also sold meat and later purchased trucks that enabled him to enter the construction trade on a part-time basis. The couple's children proved to be hard workers, too.

The Clementes valued education; they wanted their youngest child to be an engineer. A good student, Roberto nevertheless was destined for other spheres of activity. He frequently engaged in poor person's baseball practice: hitting tin cans with a stick. Roberto also habitually bounced rubber balls off the walls and clutched them very tightly to strengthen his arm.

### **The Road to Excellence**

High school passed quickly for Roberto. In addition to baseball, he pursued track and javelin throwing to the extent that he was considered to be a potential Olympic competitor.

Many judged Roberto to be a natural athlete. Others claim that he purposefully used diverse sports to develop his baseball skills; javelin throwing may have aided his powerful arm. Theories aside, the young man demonstrated a supreme love of baseball while aiming for excellence in every chosen endeavor.

Baseball is a cultural treasure for Puerto Rico. The Winter Leagues, founded in 1938, drew professionals to the island during the off-season. Many cities also sponsored teams, and spectator enthusiasm fueled fierce competition and recognition of talented players.

Roberto's entry into the sport occurred when local businessman Roberto Marin spotted the fourteen-year-old whacking tin cans. Roberto was recruited for Marin's Sello Rojo Rice softball squad and then was acquired by the Juncos, a Double-A amateur baseball team.

Marin continued to be Roberto's unofficial publicist. The lad was unbelievable, he told his friend Pedrin Zorilla, Brooklyn Dodgers scout and owner of the Puerto Rican league team, the Santurce Crabbers. Soon afterward, Zorilla happened to watch a Juncos exhibition game. He inquired about one of the players and was surprised to discover that this was Marin's protege.





Roberto Clemente

Roberto signed on with the Santurce Crabbers for a four-hundred-dollar bonus and forty dollars a week. Breaking into the 1952-53 lineup proved to be his biggest obstacle, as many of the players already were major league stars. Yet, the youth watched, learned, and constantly strived to improve his considerable talent. By the 1953-54 season, he had become a regular, and nine professional ball teams approached him with contract offers that winter. Roberto chose the Brooklyn Dodgers; his ten-thousand-dollar bonus was far above that of any other Hispanic professional.

### **The Emerging Champion**

It had been seven years since the major leagues—specifically, the Dodgers—integrated baseball with the hiring of Jackie Robinson. Five African Americans currently played for Brooklyn, and the management feared fan reaction if more minorities joined the roster. Therefore, Roberto was relegated to the Montreal farm team.

According to baseball regulations of the time, his high bonus made him eligible for draft in the following year. The Dodgers wanted to keep Roberto, however, so they attempted to hide his talents. During his first week, he hoisted a truly phenomenal home run. He was benched the next day. His errors resulted in more playing time, his successes yielded inactivity. The result was confusion and frustration.

Yet, Roberto's skills again managed to surface. The Pittsburgh Pirates, a perennial losing team, were searching for young talent upon which to build a respectable club. By virtue of their last place standing, they were entitled to a first-round draft pick. Roberto Clemente was their choice.

His first season in Pittsburgh was one of transition. During the preceding winter, he had been involved in an automobile accident that permanently displaced three disks in his back. Although he was a regular player by his second week with the Pirates, he felt a deep loneliness.

Roberto barely spoke English, and Pittsburgh did not have a Hispanic community. When the rookie heard racial slurs against opposing players, he knew that similar comments also were being directed at him. Roberto combated such attitudes throughout his career.

Nor was Forbes Field, the Pirates' cavernous ball park, accommodating to home runs. Roberto adapted himself accordingly, becoming a stellar line-drive hitter. His batting average rose from .255 in 1955 to .311 in 1956. The Pirates slowly acquired new, more capable players, and the right fielder began to build his reputation as one of the game's strongest and most versatile talents.



Roberto Clemente

### **Continuing the Story**

During the 1960 season, the Pirates beat all odds to emerge as World Series champions. Roberto had been an All-Star team member that year. He batted .314 for the season, .310 in the Series. He had helped the Pirates win critical games. Yet, the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award eluded him, and he felt berated by the press.

Roberto sustained physical—as well as emotional—injuries throughout his career: the car crash, two severe household-related accidents, and a bout with malaria. When he demanded to sit out, he often clashed with the stoical Pirate manager, Danny Murtaugh.

On the field, however, Pirate Number 21 erased all doubts. Announcer Vin Scully said, "Clemente could field a ball in Pennsylvania and throw out a runner in New York." He robbed his opponents of home runs, barehanded high flies and colliding into stadium walls. Many of his triples were simply doubles extended through sheer speed and hustle.

In 1966, Roberto won the MVP award, an unusual tribute considering that the Pirates placed third in their division. The "Great One," as Pittsburgh fans called him, gradually turned an insular pride into team spirit. On May 15, 1967, he hit three home runs and a double, yet it was not his best game, he said, because the Pirates lost.

Roberto went home to Puerto Rico after each season. There, he met the beautiful Vera Zabala and married her in 1964; they had three sons. He continued to play in, then manage, Puerto Rican league teams. His charitable acts were legendary. Citizens asked Roberto to run for Mayor of San Juan, and in Pittsburgh, he was a mentor to young Hispanic ballplayers.

### **Summary**

Roberto Clemente's 3,000th hit came on September 30, 1972; it was to be his last. An earthquake ravaged Managua, Nicaragua, that December. As honorary chair of the Nicaraguan Relief Committee, he decided to go there himself, in a small plane loaded with food and supplies. Shortly after takeoff, the craft sank into the Atlantic Ocean, killing everyone aboard.

One of Roberto's greatest dreams was realized through the tragedy. Thousands of memorial gifts arrived, generating enough money to build the Ciudad Deportiva, where Puerto Rican boys could cultivate their talents under the guidance of professional athletes. The National Baseball Hall of Fame also waived its rules to "prematurely" admit Roberto on August 6, 1973. He was the first Latin American player so honored.

By Lynn C. Kronzek. Great Athletes (Salem Press), 2001.



Althea Gibson: Identifying Evidence Task Card

1. On your own, reread the article about Althea Gibson.
2. Underline at least two pieces of evidence that describe barriers she faced or overcame. Write a “B” above underlined evidence related to barriers.
3. Underline at least two pieces of evidence that describe Althea Gibson’s legacy. Write an “L” above underlined evidence related to her legacy.
4. With your group, discuss the evidence you identify.
5. Think about then discuss the following focus questions with your group members:
  - What barriers did Althea Gibson have to overcome?
  - What is Althea Gibson’s legacy?



Roberto Clemente: Identifying Evidence Task Card

1. Follow along silently as the article is read aloud in chunks.
2. Underline at least two pieces of evidence that describe barriers Roberto Clemente faced or overcame. Write a “B” above underlined evidence related to barriers.
3. Underline at least two pieces of evidence that describe Roberto Clemente’s legacy. Write an “L” above underlined evidence related to his legacy.
4. With your group, discuss the evidence you identify.
5. Think about then discuss the following focus questions with your group members:
  - What barriers did Roberto Clemente have to overcome?
  - What is Roberto Clemente’s legacy?



Chalk Talk Chart Example  
(For Teacher Reference)

How has Roberto Clemente (or Althea Gibson) broken barriers and created a legacy?

**Text #2**

**Text #1**



Revising My Opinion Task Card

In expert groups:

1. Review and discuss the evidence you underlined and text coded in the article you read today.
2. Review your original opinion (from Lesson 2) and discuss with group members:
3. Does the key (repeated) information and new evidence I identified relate to my opinion?
4. Think about then discuss with group members:
5. How can I revise my original opinion to more clearly refer to my athlete's barriers or legacy?
6. What are the specific words or phrases I can use to refine my opinion about how my athlete broke barriers and created a legacy?
7. Record your revised opinion next to or above the original opinion you recorded on the graphic organizer in your journal.
8. Discuss with your group members HOW and WHY you revised your original opinion.