

Robinson Brothers

Have you heard of Jackie Robinson? He was the first Black player in Major League Baseball. He was a gifted athlete and a six time All-Star.

But Jackie wasn't the only athlete in his family. His older brother Mack was also very talented. His sport was track and field.

In 1936, Mack went to the Olympics. He broke the Olympic record in the 200-meter sprint. He finished second behind Jesse Owens and won the silver medal.

Jackie and Mack were born in Georgia. They had two other brothers and a sister. In 1920, the siblings and their mother moved to California.

Growing up, the brothers were very competitive. They were always playing games with each other. Each one wanted to win. The drive to be the best served them well in the world of sports.

But sports were not the only thing Jackie and Mack had in common. They were both involved in the fight for civil rights for Black people. They experienced racism when they were young and wanted to leave a different world for their own children.

As the first Black person in Major League Baseball, Jackie broke barriers. He went on to become the first Black television analyst and the first



Black Vice President of a major company. He helped open a Black-owned bank that served people in Harlem, New York.

Mack competed in the Olympics in Germany when Hitler was in power. While there, he experienced extreme discrimination. After winning his medal, Mack stayed involved with the Olympic Committee. He volunteered with the Special Olympics, too.

When he came back to California, Mack worked to improve communities there. He went to City Hall to advocate for education and libraries. He fought to clean up parks and pools and open them to Black children.

Jackie and Mack left a legacy in sports and in life. Their children carry on their work fighting for equal rights. “Not everyone can be a star athlete,” they say, “but everyone can make the world around them a little better for others.”



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Which sport did Mack compete in?
 - a. Baseball
 - b. Track and field
 - c. Basketball
 - d. Swimming

2. Which job did Jackie NOT do?
 - a. Baseball player
 - b. Vice President of a company
 - c. Bank teller
 - d. Television analyst

3. How did being brothers help Jackie and Mack with sports?
 - a. They fought for civil rights
 - b. They lived in California
 - c. They played sports with their sister
 - d. They learned to compete to be the best

4. Why did Mack experience discrimination at the Olympics?
 - a. Because he was Black
 - b. Because he ran track
 - c. Because Jackie was his brother
 - d. Because he advocated for education

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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