Josh Gibson

by Guy Belleranti

Born in Georgia in 1911, Josh Gibson was often called the "black Babe Ruth". When he was 12, his family moved to Pittsburgh where his father found work in a steel mill. By the time Gibson was 16 he'd made quite a name for himself playing sandlot baseball for amateur teams in the city. A few years later in 1030 the

Homestead Grays of 1 him up as a catcher.

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Two years later Over the next few year was the great pitcher

Gibson then re long run of Negro Le of the team called Gi our years of following

Josh Gibson co League batting titles.

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sburgh Crawfords. Among his teammates

ental in the team's owner and manager hat we have seen in all

ning several Negro produced tape-

measure home runs (many over 500 feet) at an unbelievable rate. Gibson would often roll up his sleeves and make his biceps bulge to goad an opposing pitcher.

Records weren't the most carefully kept by the Negro League, but all place Gibson's career batting average in the high .300's. Everyone also agrees that he hit over .400 several times. As for his power hitting, Negro League history books credit him with

Name:	
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smashing 800 plus career home runs.

However, Gibson wasn't just a great hitter. He ran the bases with speed and was one of the top Negro League catchers. He rifled throws with great accuracy and blocked the plate with the best of them. Fans flocked to see him play. It wasn't uncommon to see 30,000 to 40,000 people at a game.

Tragically, baseball had a color line during Josh Gibson's playing days. This discrimination prevented him from playing in the Major Leagues. However, he did often

play Negro League gathit the longest home
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New York Polo ground
Some insist that in or

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Giants in the Major Leagues said, a played with white mays and against Hank Aaron. They were tremendous players, but they were no Josh Gibson. You saw him hit, and you took your hat off.... You tell people how great he was, they think you're exaggerating." Roy Campanella, Leo Durocher and others had similar things to say about Gibson's prowess.

Indeed, baseball's color line denied many great black ball players recognition alongside their Major League peers. It might have prevented Josh Gibson from being

recognized as the greatest player of all time.

As the 1930's turned into the 1940's Gibson began suffering from frequent headaches, his catcher's knees ached more and more and he started drinking heavily. In 1943, he was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Yet he played on, still winning batting and home run titles.

In January of 1947, Josh Gibson died of a stroke. It was probably brought on by

the tumor, but some painkillers and drugs the Major Leagues. In color barrier was fina Brooklyn Dodgers.

In 1972, Josh G inducted into the Ma 1996, during black hi General Mills put on i



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Josh Gibson

- 1) Apart from making the reader well-aware of how consummate a baseball player Josh was, the author is also trying to shed some light on.
 - a) How the color line cast a shadow over the careers of many great black players
 - b) True champions don't bother about the opportunities they are denied, but just focus on the ones that they have
 - c) If you have a will, you'll find a way, no matter how adverse the world around you is

d) The more illustrians your career becomes the more problematic it is to deal with its cha **PREVIEW** Point out the irc Gain complete access to the largest collection of worksheets in all subjects! Members, please Not a member? Please sign up to log in to download this gain complete worksheet. access Josh Gibson wa ubstantiate this using evidence from t www.mathworksheets4kids.com

		Josh Gibson	
4)	What in your opinion could be the most probable cause (of the causes mention for Gibson's demise? Why do you think so?		
5)	Write a few lines explain for what favorite player a	Cain complete access to the largest collection of worksheets in all subjects! Members, please log in to download this worksheet. Not a member? Please sign up to gain complete access. www.mathworksheets4kids.com	port) player and nilarities between you er.