**Roberto Clemente: Hero and Friend**

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Personal Connection:

Who are your heroes?

Why are they a hero?

**Roberto’s Early Life.**

Vocabulary

dream

Puerto Rico

poor

baseball

Roberto

hero

determined

Roberto was born on August 18, 1934. He was

born on the island of Puerto Rico. Roberto’s

family did not have much money. They were

poor. Roberto’s dad worked very hard to take

care of his family. Roberto did not have enough

money to buy a real baseball and bat. He

played baseball with his friends using a stick and

can.

**Roberto would be a baseball player one day.**

Roberto loved to play baseball. He dreamed of

being a baseball player. He thought baseball

players were heroes. He decided that he would

try hard. He was determined. Determined means

that he was not willing to change his mind.

**Roberto would be a baseball player one day.**

In high school, Roberto joined the baseball team.

Roberto was the fastest runner on the team. Roberto

knew he needed strong arms to throw the ball fast. To

make his arms stronger, he joined the track team. He

ran and practiced everyday. After lots of practice,

Roberto became one of the best players on the team.

**Roberto would be a baseball player one day.**

**Roberto in the minor leagues.**

Vocabulary

scout Dodgers

team prejudice

graduate Pirates

One day, Roberto was playing baseball. A scout

was watching him play. A scout is someone who

watches new players to see if they are good enough to

be on a team. The scout’s name was Zorilla. Zorilla

wanted Roberto to play baseball for the Brooklyn

Dodgers, minor league baseball team. Roberto was

good enough and started to play for the Dodgers. This

was Roberto’s first baseball job, and he didn’t make

very much money.

**Roberto is a baseball player.**

Roberto was still in high school. He tried out for

the major league baseball team. He was so fast

and could hit the ball so far, the league wanted

him to play with them. Roberto had to graduate

from high school first. In 1954, Roberto joined a

minor league baseball team in Canada to get

ready and practice.

**Roberto is a baseball player.**

Even though the Dodgers wanted Roberto to play with

them, there was prejudice. Prejudice is when

people are treated unfairly. There was prejudice

against Roberto because of his skin color. Baseball

**> 4** teams didn’t want to have more than four black

players. The Dodgers already had four black players.

The Dodgers didn’t want to lose any good players, so

they kept Roberto a secret.

**Roberto is a baseball player.**

A scout from the Pittsburgh Pirates found Roberto.

The scout saw what a great player he was. The

Pirates’ team asked Roberto to play baseball for them.

In 1955, Roberto joined the Pirates. The Pirates were

one of the worst teams. They had lost 100 games.

They needed a good player. Roberto was a great

player!

**Roberto is a baseball player.**

**Roberto’s career with the Pirates.**

Vocabulary

Catch people

World Series MVP (Most Valuable Player)

Roberto played baseball very hard. He would catch

balls in the air and against the wall or fence. He did

whatever he needed to catch the ball. He hit the

balls far and hard. When he was not playing with the

Pirates, he went to Puerto Rico to play. On his break,

Roberto played baseball in Puerto Rico. He never

took a break. He wanted the people of Puerto Rico to

see him play baseball too. In 1966, an article said,

“Every Puerto Rican is a Roberto Clemente fan.”

**Roberto was a baseball hero.**

In 1960 and 1971, Roberto took the Pirates to the

World Series. The World Series is for the best

baseball teams in the United States. The Pirates won

both times. Roberto was chosen as the MVP (most

valuable player). The team loved Roberto. On

September 1972, Roberto hit his 300t h baseball.

**Roberto was a baseball hero.**

**Roberto was still setting dreams.**

Vocabulary

dreams Sports City

earthquake Nicaragua

airplane help

Roberto had dreamed of being a baseball player! Now

Roberto was a real baseball player. Roberto had

money now, and he wanted to build a CUIDAD

DEPORTIVA (Sports City) for the children of Puerto

Rico. He wanted other children to have dreams.

**Roberto is a hero.**

On December 23, 1972 there was an earthquake in

Nicaragua. Roberto had visited Nicaragua and met a

little boy there named Julio. Julio had been hurt in a

car accident and lost his legs. Roberto was going to

help him get artificial legs. Roberto was worried

about Julio and wanted to make sure he was ok.

**Roberto is a hero.**

On December 31, 1972, Roberto filled an airplane

with food and supplies to help the people in Nicaragua.

Roberto was going to fly to help them. The airplane

was very old, and it was not working well. Roberto’s

family did not want him to fly in that airplane. They

were worried, but Roberto wanted to go help the

people, so he left. The airplane crashed into the

ocean, and Roberto died.

**Roberto is a hero.**

In 1973, he was the first Hispanic to be voted into the

Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame is a place to

remember great baseball players. Today, Roberto is

remembered as a great athlete. There are many

schools and parks in the United States and Puerto Rico

named after Roberto Clemente.

**Roberto is a hero.**

In Carolina, Puerto Rico, where Roberto was born,

there is a big statue of him. A statue is a drawing

made out of a rock. The statue is at the entrance of

the Roberto Clemente Sports City. That was

Roberto’s final dream come true!

**Roberto is a hero.**

**Questions**

**Where was Roberto born?**

Canada Puerto Rico Nicaragua

**What sport did Roberto play?**

basketball soccer baseball

**Why did people love Roberto?**

helpful loud good singer