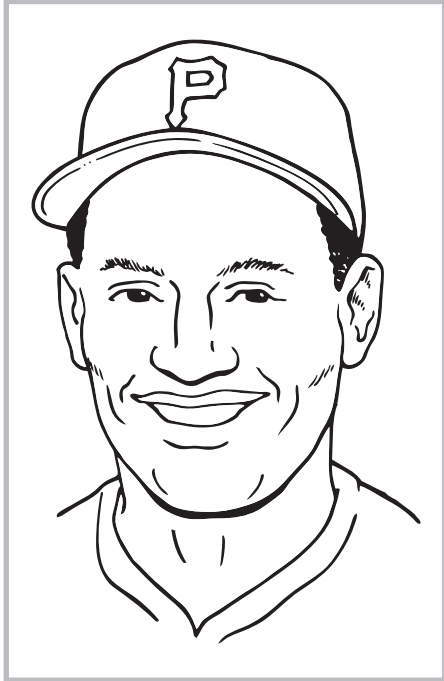


A Baseball Great



A scout asked Roberto Clemente to join a baseball team. Why did the scout ask Roberto to join the team? The scout had not seen Roberto hitting a ball with a bat. Roberto did not have a ball or a bat. The scout had seen Roberto hitting empty tomato cans. Roberto was hitting the cans with a stick. The scout was impressed by how far Roberto could hit the cans.

Roberto was born on August 18, 1934. He was born in Puerto Rico. Growing up, Roberto could not afford real baseball equipment. He did not have the money. Instead, Roberto made his own equipment. He wrapped an old coffee sack around his hand. That was his glove. He tied a wad of rags together. That was his ball. He carved a stick from a tree. That was his bat. Sometimes Roberto would be so busy playing baseball that he would forget to eat.

Roberto went from the scout's team to play for the Pittsburgh Pirates. One time, Roberto complained about a sore foot before a game. During the game, Roberto scored by running all the way from first base to home plate on a pop-up single. What did Roberto say about scoring? He said, "My foot was sore. I ran all the way home so I could rest it on the bench."

The Vertical Race

Max lived in an apartment building with an elevator. If Max and his mother needed to go up or down, Max's mother would use the elevator, but Max wouldn't. Instead, Max would wait for the doors to close. Then he would race the elevator!

Max would run up or down the stairs as fast as he could. He would try to get up to his apartment floor or down to the lobby before his mother got there.

One time, a neighbor saw Max racing up the stairs. The neighbor was a track coach. The neighbor said, "Max, you are fast! If your mother says it is okay, you can run in the 'Go Vertical Chicago' race with me." Max knew that when something is vertical, it goes straight up and down. Max didn't know how a race could be vertical, but he said he'd run.

What was the "Go Vertical Chicago" race? It was a race to the top of the Sears Tower! It was up 2,109 steps! Max finished, but he did not win. Max said, "I liked feeling like I was running straight up so much that I'm going to race again next year. I'm going to try and beat this year's winning time. I'm going to try and climb all those steps in less than 13 minutes and 42 seconds!"



Show What You Know

*Answer the questions on “A Baseball Great” and “The Vertical Race.”
You may look back at what you have read if you need to.*

- You could tell that Roberto really liked to play baseball because**
 - he scored on a pop-up single.
 - he was born in Puerto Rico in 1934.
 - he could hit empty cans far with a stick.
 - he would forget to eat when he was playing.
- What time will Max try for next year out of the scores below in the “Go Vertical Chicago” race?**
 - 13 minutes and 41 seconds
 - 13 minutes and 42 seconds
 - 41 minutes and 13 seconds
 - 42 minutes and 13 seconds
- What do Roberto and Max have in common?**
 - They both grew up in an apartment building in Puerto Rico.
 - They both raced home, trying to get there before their mothers.
 - They both could not afford proper equipment so they made their own.
 - They both were asked to do something because of what another person saw them doing.
- If Roberto had run the ‘Go Vertical Chicago’ race, most likely, he would have**
 - stopped and rested on a bench.
 - practiced on any stairs he could find.
 - only practiced on the Sears Tower stairs.
 - wanted to go slower than the winning time.
- The story about the vertical race is fiction. It is made up, but it has real life facts in it about the ‘Go Vertical Chicago Race’. What answer is least likely to be a real life fact?**
 - The race is up 2,109 steps.
 - The race takes place in the Sears Tower.
 - The race started when the elevator doors closed.
 - The winning race time was once 13 minutes, 42 seconds.

Show What You Know (cont.)

6. Fill in the chart about Roberto's equipment.

Equipment	Made from	How made
ball		
bat		
glove		

7. List in order what happens in the story. Use the numbers 1 to 5. Put 1 by what happened first. Put 5 by what happened last.

- _____ Max decides to race again next year.
- _____ Neighbor asks Max to run in race.
- _____ Max races the elevator.
- _____ Max runs up 2,109 stairs.
- _____ Neighbor sees Max running up stairs.

Write two or more sentences that tell what each story is about.

8. "A Baseball Great" _____

9. "The Vertical Race" _____

10. Think about how Roberto and Max practiced for baseball and the race. Write one paragraph telling how you can practice for a sport on your own.
