

The Home Run King

When you think of baseball and all the famous people that have ever played the game, there is really only one man that is considered baseball's finest player: Babe Ruth. Outstanding as a pitcher and home run hitter, he helped the New York Yankees celebrate many World Series victories and left the Boston Red Sox with the "Curse of the Bambino". To this day many of his records remain unbroken.

George Herman Ruth, Jr. was born in 1895 in Baltimore, Maryland. His parents worked long hours and had little time for their son who was growing up with a most unhappy childhood. Eventually, at the young age of seven, George's parents took him to live at St. Mary's School for Boys, a place that could offer George a better life. He lived there for twelve years but developed a reputation of being **rebellious**. Ruth was introduced to baseball here, and it soon became very **apparent** to everyone that George Herman had an immense talent for the game.

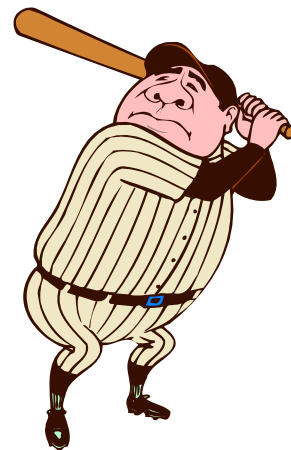
Ruth's baseball career began when he was just nineteen. Jack Dunn, a minor-league baseball team owner in Baltimore, visited St. Mary's to sign Ruth to a contract. Since Ruth was to live at St. Mary's until he was twenty-one, Dunn had to **adopt** him as his own son in order to get him on his team. Dunn's 'baby' became "Babe", and this nickname stayed with Ruth his whole life.

Babe played minor-league baseball for Dunn for only five months when the major-league Boston Red Sox team purchased his contract. Although most people remember Babe Ruth by his incredible number of home run hits, he actually began his amazing career by pitching nearly perfect games for the Red Sox. He took them to two World Series victories in the short time he played there. The World Series is a series of baseball games played to determine the championship of professional baseball teams. Baseball's highest honor is to win the World Series.

In 1919 the new owner of the Red Sox decided to sell Ruth to the New York Yankees, another professional team. Little did anyone know that this would be one of the worst sports business decisions of all time. This trade began what is called "The Curse of the Bambino." Bambino is the Italian word for "Babe". After Ruth moved to New York, Boston did not win another World Series until 2004.

New York immediately knew they had made a great deal for \$125,000, but they had no idea that Babe Ruth would eventually begin a tradition of excellence for the Yankees, as this team has gone on to win twenty-six World Series titles. Ruth's success on the field filled the stands with loving fans that did not want to miss a game. In 1923 the famous Yankee Stadium was able to be built and is still known today as the "House that Ruth Built".

Babe Ruth had a twenty-two year **career** that included being the home run king with 714 home runs (broken by Hank Aaron in 1974), hitting the most home runs in a single World Series, and winning the most games by a left-handed pitcher. After he retired from baseball, Babe donated his time to children by visiting hospitals and orphanages. His talent changed the history of baseball forever. Ruth was just a boy who grew up to be an American hero.



1. Babe Ruth's young years were —
 - A. Happy and carefree
 - B. Spent working with his parents
 - C. Disobedient and rebellious
 - D. Spent excelling in school

2. Why did George live at St. Mary's?
 - A. His parents could not care for him.
 - B. His father worked there.
 - C. He wanted to play baseball there.
 - D. Answer not here.

3. What is an antonym for rebellious?
 - A. Stubborn
 - B. Cautious
 - C. Obedient
 - D. Loud

4. Why did Jack Dunn adopt Ruth?
 - A. Dunn did not have a son.
 - B. Ruth's father had died.
 - C. Ruth would not be able to leave St. Mary's and play for Dunn.
 - D. Dunn adopted all his players.

5. What was the first major-league team Babe Ruth played for?
 - A. The Boston White Sox
 - B. The New York Yankees
 - C. The Baltimore Orioles
 - D. The Boston Red Sox

6. How many World Series did the Boston Red Sox win with Babe Ruth?
 - A. Four
 - B. Five
 - C. Two
 - D. None

7. Why did Babe start playing for the Yankees?
 - A. He was traded by Jack Dunn.
 - B. He wanted to move to New York.
 - C. His contract was sold to the Yankees.
 - D. Answer not here.

8. Yankee Stadium is said to be —
 - A. The Curse of the Bambino
 - B. The House that Ruth Built
 - C. Dunn's Baby
 - D. The World Series Capital of the World

9. What is the World Series?
 - A. Games played by Babe Ruth
 - B. Championship baseball games
 - C. Games between Boston and New York
 - D. A series of world events

10. What happened in 1919 to change the history of baseball?
 - A. Babe Ruth was born.
 - B. Babe Ruth hit his first home run.
 - C. Ruth's contract was bought by the New York Yankees.
 - D. Babe Ruth was allowed to pitch.

11. What is a synonym for apparent?
 - A. Obvious
 - B. Difficult
 - C. Doubtful
 - D. Generous

12. What was the "Curse of the Bambino"?
 - A. Babe Ruth's home run record
 - B. Yankee Stadium
 - C. Ruth's childhood
 - D. Selling Ruth to the New York Yankees