International School of Monterrey

Junior High School **__th Grade**

Trimester ___ **Literature**

Name _____ **Date** _____ **List #____- ____**

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage, then answer the questions. (10 pts.)

BABE RUTH

George Herman, "Babe Ruth", was born February 6, 1895, in Baltimore, Maryland. His parents owned a saloon near the current site of Camden Yards in Baltimore. They were of German descent and taught him to speak German fluently. George was actually somewhat of a petty criminal as a young boy. By age seven he was already involved in drinking alcohol and chewing tobacco. Because he was too difficult for his parents to control, George was sent away to a Catholic school. It was here where Brother Matthias taught him baseball.

As a teenager, George became the team's catcher and then pitcher. At the age of 19, Jack Dunn, a scout for the Orioles, discovered George's baseball talents and promptly signed him to a contract. After performing well as a pitcher and a batter for the Orioles during spring training, George made the team. Because he was such a young talent, he earned the nickname "Babe."

On April 22, 1914, Babe pitched a shutout against the Buffalo Bisons in his Major League debut. Because the Orioles were in poor financial shape, Jack Dunn was forced to sell off his best players. Babe was sold to the Boston Red Sox in 1914 for an amount between $20,000 and $35,000.

After pitching for the Red Sox minor league club in Providence, Rhode Island, Babe was called up to the Majors permanently toward the end of the 1914 baseball season. After the season, he married Helen Woodford. In 1915, Babe secured a spot in the Red Sox starting pitching rotation. That year, the Red Sox won the World Series. Babe pitched to a record of 18 wins and 8 losses. He also batted .315 and hit four home runs. He pitched even better in 1916, going 23–12 with nine shutouts. The Red Sox again won the World Series and Babe pitched a shutout in Game Two. In 1917, Babe went 24–13, though the Red Sox failed in their bid to win a third consecutive World Series.

In 1917, because of his success at the plate, Babe began playing the outfield more and pitching less. In 1918, he led the Major Leagues with 11 home runs. Once again, Babe led the Red Sox to the World Series title, even though the season was shortened by World War I. In 1919, Ruth set the Major League record by hitting 29 home runs in a season. He had become the best player in baseball. Babe became an attraction wherever he went, and large crowds gathered to watch him play. Many believe he was the driving force behind the increased popularity of baseball. Despite his on-the-field success, Ruth began to wear out his welcome with the Red Sox. He frequently argued with management and had a reputation for partying late in the night and consuming large amounts of alcohol. His marriage to Helen Woodward also deteriorated. Because he was the biggest star in baseball, he demanded higher salaries from management even though the team was in a terrible financial position. On

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January 3, 1919, the Boston Red Sox sold Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees. The sale would become one of the most infamous transactions in sports history and became forever known as "The Curse of the Bambino." After selling Babe Ruth, the Red Sox would endure 15 consecutive losing seasons and would not win another World Series until 2004.

Babe Ruth would become the biggest star in sports history as a New York Yankee. In 1920, he had the best season in baseball history. He hit (a then unheard of) 54 home runs and batted .376! Amazingly, only one TEAM hit more home runs than Babe Ruth in 1920. Ruth immediately became a national icon and the pride of New York City. He was not only the most popular athlete in the United States, but the most popular person! In 1921, Babe enjoyed the greatest statistical season in baseball history—still no one has matched it. He hit 59 home runs and batted .378. He also knocked in 177 runs and amassed 857 total bases. His 857 total bases in a season remains a record today. Although he led the Yankees to the World Series, he injured his arm in Game Five, and the Yankees were defeated in seven games. Ruth had a subpar year (for him) in 1922, and again, the Yankees were defeated in the World Series.

1923 was the inaugural season for the new Yankee Stadium, which would later be nicknamed "The House that Ruth Built." Babe batted .393 and hit 41 home runs. In 1923, the Yankees won the World Series, and Babe Ruth hit three home runs. Ruth would go on to lead the Yankees to World Series titles in 1927, 1928, and 1932. The 1927 Yankees, with Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, went 110–44. Many historians say it was the greatest team in baseball history. That year, Ruth hit a record 60 home runs (it was broken by Roger Maris in 1961). In the 1928 World Series, Ruth batted .625 and hit three home runs! In 1932, the Yankees beat the Chicago Cubs four games to none. The 1932 series, however, will forever be remembered for one of the most legendary events in sports history. In Game Three of the series at Chicago's Wrigley Field, Babe Ruth allegedly pointed to the center field bleachers as a declaration of where he would hit the next pitch. Amidst the screaming fans and taunting gestures of the Cubs players, Ruth deposited the pitch in the center field bleachers some 440 feet away. The home run, perhaps the most celebrated in baseball history, became known as Babe Ruth's Called Shot. Today, experts are in disagreement as to whether Ruth actually called his home run or was simply pointing at the pitcher. Several grainy videos and pictures exist but still don't show conclusively what Ruth was pointing to. After this home run, the Curtiss Candy Company posted a huge billboard overlooking Wrigley Field advertising their Baby Ruth candy bars. Three years before, in 1929, Babe Ruth married Claire Merritt. He would remain with Merritt, who is credited with helping Babe clean up his personal life, bad habits, and diet, until his death.

After the 1932 series, however, Ruth's career began coming to end. The 1934 season was his last as a Yankee. He signed with the Boston Braves in 1935 and played less than half the season. He hit his last home run at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh on May 25, 1935. It was his 714th home run. Today, Babe Ruth is third on baseball's all-time home run list. Ruth's career was perhaps the greatest in baseball history. In 1936, he was one of the first five players inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. In June of 1948, the Yankees retired his number "3." Unfortunately, his reckless lifestyle caught up with him quickly after this retirement. On August 16, 1948, Babe Ruth died of throat cancer. He was only 53. Nearly 10,000 people attended his funeral, and tens of thousands more lined up along the streets of New York to pay their respects. Babe Ruth remains an icon today and one of the most recognizable sports personalities in history. His birthplace in Baltimore has been converted into the Babe Ruth Museum.

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___ **1.) Where was Babe Ruth born?**

A) Baltimore.

B) Boston.

C) New York.

D) Pittsburgh.

___ **2.) Which of the following is NOT true about Babe's childhood?**

A) Babe drank alcohol.

B) Babe was difficult to control.

C) He could speak German.

D) He was homeschooled.

___ **3.) What was Babe's record as a pitcher in 1916?**

A) 18 wins, 8 losses.

B) 23 wins, 8 losses.

C) 23 wins, 12 losses.

D) 12 wins, 8 losses.

___ **4.) What happened second?**

A) Babe pitched a shutout against the Buffalo Bisons.

B) Babe was sold to the Boston Red Sox.

C) Babe was sold to the New York Yankees.

D) Babe pitched a shutout in Game 2 of the 1916 World Series.

___ **5.) Which of the following happened before 1930?**

A) Babe Ruth hit his last home run at Forbes Field.

B) Babe Ruth turned 53.

C) His last season with the New York Yankee.

D) His marriage to Claire Merritt.

___ **6.) Which of the following is a record (stated in the passage) that still stands today?**

A) Babe Ruth's 714 home runs

B) Babe Ruth's 60 home runs in a season

C) Babe Ruth's three World Series championships with the New York Yankees

D) Babe Ruth's 857 total bases in one season

___ **7.) What was "The House that Ruth Built"?**

A) Fenway Park

B) Yankee Stadium

C) Forbes Field

D) New York City

___ **8.) Which of the following occurred last in Babe Ruth's baseball career?**

A) The 1928 World Series Championship with the Yankees.

B) 60 home runs in a season.

C) The 1927 season in which the Yankees went 110–44.

D) Babe's "Called Shot".

___ **9.) Which of the following describes "The Curse of the Bambino"?**

A) The Curse of the Bambino refers to the Orioles after they sold Babe Ruth to the Red Sox.

B) The Curse of the Bambino refers to the Yankees after they bought him from the Red Sox.

C) The Curse of the Bambino refers to his reckless behavior, which included drinking alcohol and chewing tobacco.

D) The Curse of the Bambino refers to the Red Sox after they sold him to the Yankees.

___ **10.) What is an "icon" as used in this passage?**

A) A symbol on a computer.

B) A person who is very famous and recognizable.

C) A person who doesn't want attention.

D) A person who has a troubled life.

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