Name_____

Pelé

Edson Arantes do Nascimento is known to the world as Pelé. He is considered by many experts to be the greatest soccer player in history. Pelé was named the Co-Player of the Century in 1999 by FIFA.

Pelé was born in Brazil and played professionally there for two decades. His performance in the 1958 World Cup made him a soccer legend. The national team won three World Cups during the time he played with them. Later in his career, Pelé joined a team in the North American Soccer League.

His father struggled to earn a living as a soccer player. That didn't stop Pelé from trying the game, even after growing up in poverty. No one knows for sure how he got the nickname "Pelé," but he had the name from the time he kicked a sock filled with rags in the streets.

While playing on a youth team in Brazil, his coach suggested he try out for the Santos professional soccer club. Pelé was 15 and scored his first goal within the year. He went on to score many more goals for his team. Based on his performance, he was recruited to play for the national team. Pelé was a key player in Brazil's World Cup win in 1958, and he also helped the team win even more championships.

After Pelé joined the New York Cosmos, he helped make soccer more popular in the United States. His final game was an exhibition game between New York and Santos. In that game, he competed for both sides. Over the course of Pelé's career, he scored 1,283 goals!

Since retiring from soccer in 1977, he has continued to stay busy. Pelé has served as Brazil's Minister for Sport, and he has been a United Nations ambassador for ecology and the environment. In 1975, Pelé also won the International Peace Award for his work with UNICEF.

It's easy to see why at one point in his career, Pelé was named Brazil's "national treasure."

Text Questions

1. In what year did Pelé help the Brazilian team win the World Cup?
   a. 1940
   b. 1958
   c. 1974
   d. 1977

2. Which factor has probably <u>not</u> contributed to Pelé's popularity?
   a. He used to kick a sock filled with rags in the streets.
   b. Pelé joined the New York Cosmos, which helped make soccer more popular in the United States.
   c. In his final exhibition game between New York and Santos, Pelé competed for both sides.
   d. Over the course of Pelé's career, he scored over 1,200 goals.

3. How much time does two *decades* represent?
   a. two years
   b. ten years
   c. twenty years
   d. forty years

4. In which paragraph can you read about Pelé's contributions to humanity?
   a. in the first paragraph
   b. in the second paragraph
   c. in the fourth paragraph
   d. in the sixth paragraph

5. What can you learn from this inspirational sports figure?

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