

Directions: Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

Babe Didrikson, Champion Athlete

1 The neighborhood boys who played baseball with Mildred Didrikson gave her a nickname. Because she batted so well, they called her “Babe” after the famous baseball player Babe Ruth. Didrikson did not become famous for hitting home runs. Her athletic achievements did, however, help her set records in several other sports.

2 Mildred Ella Didrikson was born in Texas on June 26, 1911. Her parents had moved to America from Norway. Her father worked as a seaman and carpenter. In the family backyard he built gymnastic equipment for his seven children. Both parents encouraged their children to develop their athletic skills.



3 Babe played basketball for Beaumont High School’s Miss Royal Purple team. She was only five feet five inches tall, yet her height did not hold her back. Babe shot well, and she ran fast. Her team never lost a game while she played with them.

4 Next, Babe played for a women’s basketball team called the Golden Cyclones. Led by Babe, they made it to the finals twice. In 1931 they won the national title. While playing for this team, Babe earned All-American honors—three years in a row!

5 Soon Babe was introduced to track and field. At her first track meet, Babe took first place in four events. In 1932 she entered the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Championship, a national track and field meet. Babe was a one-person team! Within three hours she competed in eight different events and won five of them. In addition, she set several new records. These were in the javelin throw, high jump, baseball throw, and hurdle race. Babe won the championship title all by herself. She earned 30 points. The second place team had 22 points. They also had 22 athletes!

6 In the 1932 Olympics, women were allowed to enter no more than three events. Babe took part, winning two gold medals. She also broke two world records. She threw the javelin 143 feet 4 inches. She ran the 80-meter hurdle race in 11.7 seconds. In the high jump, Babe tied the world record with another athlete. They both jumped 5 feet 5¼ inches. However, Babe jumped with her head going over the bar first. The judges considered this a foul. Because of this, Babe was given the silver medal for the high jump. Today there are no rules against this type of jump.

- 7 The following year, Babe began taking golf lessons. She could drive the ball 250 yards. Babe won the second golf tournament in which she played. In 1946 and 1947 Babe had a winning streak that included seventeen tournaments in a row. Altogether Babe won fifty-five tournaments. She also helped establish the Ladies Professional Golf Association.
- 8 Babe played basketball and golf and participated in track. She played tennis, volleyball, baseball, and handball. She could bowl, dive, skate, and swim. In 1950 Babe Didrikson's exceptional athletic abilities earned her a one-of-a-kind honor. Babe was voted and named "the Woman Athlete of the Half-Century."

14 Read these sentences from paragraph 2.

In the family backyard he built gymnasticic equipment for his seven children. Both parents encouraged their children to develop their athleticic skills.

In which word does -ic have the same meaning as it does in gymnasticic and athleticic?

- F** atticic
- G** topicic
- H** artisticic
- J** panicic

15 In paragraph 8, what does the word exceptional mean?

- A** remarkable
- B** helpful
- C** imaginary
- D** average

16 How did Babe overcome her lack of height in basketball?

- F** She tried to win national awards.
- G** She played as a one-person team.
- H** She shot well and ran fast.
- J** She chose to play other sports.

17 Babe's victory in the AAU Championship was especially amazing because she —

- A** was the shortest athlete there
- B** played against both men and women
- C** won alone against a team of twenty-two
- D** had never played golf before

18 The information given in paragraphs 5 and 6 shows that Babe —

- F** enjoyed running most of all
- G** was the only athlete in her family
- H** refused to have any teammates
- J** was very successful in the 1930s

19 In the 1932 Olympics, Babe broke the world record in —

- A** high diving and bowling
- B** the javelin throw and the hurdle race
- C** the high jump and the baseball throw
- D** gymnastics and tennis

20 When two high jumpers reached the same height, Babe was given the second-place award because —

- F** she had already won two first-place awards
- G** the other athlete introduced an interesting new style
- H** the other athlete claimed that Babe had bumped her
- J** she jumped in a way that was not yet allowed

21 In the late 1940s, Babe helped establish an association for women who —

- A** enjoyed swimming
- B** ran in races
- C** played basketball
- D** played golf

22 Which question is answered in the article’s last paragraph?

- F** In which sports did Babe participate?
- G** How many awards were given to Babe?
- H** What was Babe’s favorite sport?
- J** How long did Babe live?

23 If the author added a sentence at the end of paragraph 8, which of these would fit *best*?

- A** Someone who might have been proud of her was Babe Ruth, a famous baseball player.
- B** The story begins in Texas, where many children, including Babe, played baseball.
- C** Babe was a shining example for anyone who sets and achieves goals.
- D** Only one woman athlete, Babe, deserved to win the award.

24 What was the author’s main purpose in writing this article?

- F** Informing readers about an amazing sports figure
- G** Entertaining readers with a lively story about swimming, running, and other activities
- H** Amusing readers with funny stories about a real person who lived long ago
- J** Listing facts and details for the reader to remember

25 Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

Mildred Ella Didrikson was born in Texas on June 26, 1911.

This sentence establishes the passage as —

- A** folk tale
- B** biography
- C** autobiography
- D** historical fiction

26 To find the names of other award-winning female athletes in 1930, a student would look in —

- F** an almanac
- G** a thesaurus
- H** a dictionary
- J** an atlas