

Name _____

Willie Mays: The Say Hey Kid's Remarkable Journey

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Willie Mays's versatility as both a hitter and fielder made him stand out because he could impact the game on multiple fronts. His exceptional fielding skills made him one of the best outfielders in history, and his ability to hit for both power and average made him a complete player. This versatility allowed him to excel in all aspects of the game and set numerous records.
2. Willie Mays faced racism and discrimination as one of the first African American superstars in baseball. However, he used his platform to break down racial barriers by demonstrating his incredible talent on the field. He inspired young Black athletes by showing them that they could succeed in baseball despite the challenges they faced. He also actively supported the Civil Rights Movement, speaking out against racial injustice and inequality.
3. Willie Mays's legacy continues to influence young athletes and the sport of baseball today by serving as a role model for dedication, sportsmanship, and passion for the game. His achievements on and off the field show that with hard work and determination, anyone can reach the pinnacle of their chosen field. He remains a symbol of breaking down barriers and making a positive impact.
4. Willie Mays is remembered not only for his incredible skills but also for his impact on the community and the world outside of baseball because he used his fame and influence to promote positive change. He stood up against racism and inequality, inspiring others to do the same. His sportsmanship and joy for the game made him a beloved figure, transcending baseball and leaving a lasting legacy of excellence and activism.

