

Vocabulary in Context

Read the following passage, in which some of the words you have studied in this unit appear in **boldface** type. Then complete each statement given below the passage by circling the letter of the item that is **the same** or **almost the same** in meaning as the highlighted word.

The Oldest Rookie

In the 1930s and 1940s, the **legendary** Leroy "Satchel" Paige was one of the best pitchers in baseball. The astounding Alabama-born right-hander first gained national attention in the 1920s as one of the leading players in the Negro Leagues. Many factors contributed to Paige's huge popularity with fans. He had a casual and humorous manner and often engaged in crowd-pleasing **banter**. He had an easy-to-remember nickname, and his pitching style was unusual. (5)

However, the primary reason for Paige's fame was his **bountiful** athletic talent. Sportswriters recognized him as one of the finest pitchers in the history of the game. He had a blazing fastball, flawless control, and a **durable** arm that served him well for an amazing number of years. Joe DiMaggio said that Paige was "the best and fastest pitcher" he ever faced. (10)

In 1947, Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier. The following year, Satchel Paige took the mound for the Cleveland Indians, becoming the first African American pitcher in the American League. At age forty-two, he was also baseball's oldest rookie. (15)

Some critics tried to **minimize** the importance of Paige's move to the American League. They accused Indians owner Bill Veeck of signing Paige for the publicity. Veeck replied that the right-hander was "the best available player" to help the team win the pennant. (20)

In 1965, at the age of fifty-nine, Paige pitched for Kansas City, becoming the oldest player ever to take part in a major-league game. His last public appearance was for the Atlanta Braves in 1969. In 1971, Satchel Paige took his rightful place in baseball's Hall of Fame. Fans and players alike **venerate** the memory of this great African American athlete. (25)



Satchel Paige on the mound in 1965

1. The meaning of **legendary** (line 1) is _____ . The meaning of **venerate** (line 12) is _____ .