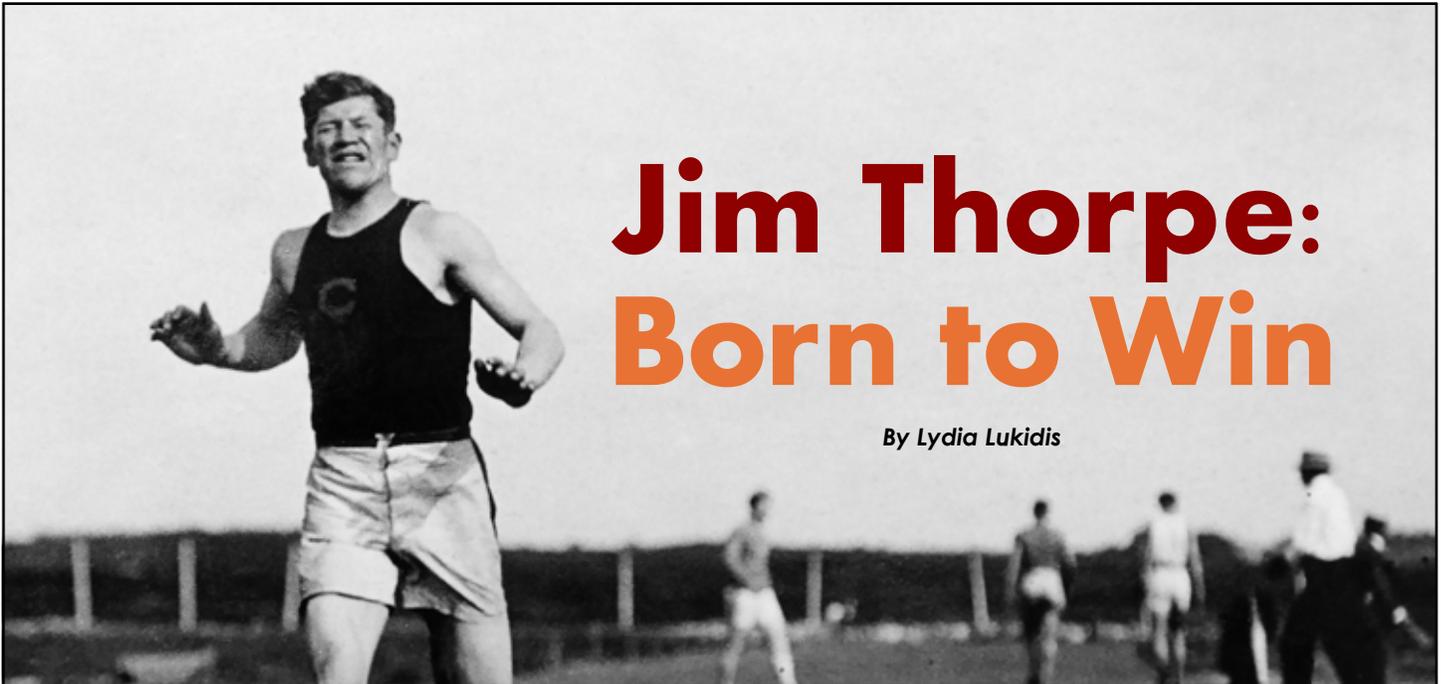


Name: _____



Jim Thorpe: Born to Win

By Lydia Lukidis



Preview

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Have you ever wondered what it takes to be one of the best athletes in history? Jim Thorpe showed the world with his strength and determination.

Jim was born in 1887 in what is now Oklahoma. He was a member of the Sac and Fox Nation. His Native American name was Wa-Tho-Huk. It means "Bright Path," like the path made by a bolt of lightning.

As a child, Jim loved to run long distances for fun. He even chased wild horses to see if he could keep up. He loved other activities too. He could run,

jump, and throw better than almost anyone his age.

In 1912, Jim went to the Olympics. Before one event, someone stole his shoes! But that didn't stop him. He found a mismatched pair in the garbage. He put them on and competed anyway. Even with the wrong shoes, Jim still ran and jumped better than everyone else. He won two gold medals. They were for the decathlon and pentathlon competitions. They were the first gold medals a Native American won for the United States.

Name: _____

Running wasn't the only sport Jim excelled in. Jim became one of the first stars of the NFL, or National Football League. He helped make it popular. He could play almost every position in football. He was famous for long, powerful runs. He also played professional baseball and basketball. He didn't need much coaching. It was rare to be good at so many things. Many people say he was the best athlete of the 20th century.



he was just as skilled and smart as non-Native athletes.



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the Olympics. Many people thought it was partly because he was Native American, and most Native Americans weren't seen as U.S. citizens. The medals and titles weren't fully given back until 2022, long after his death. In football and baseball, he sometimes faced racism from players, coaches, and fans. Jim had to work harder than others to show



him. He is remembered as a symbol of strength and determination.

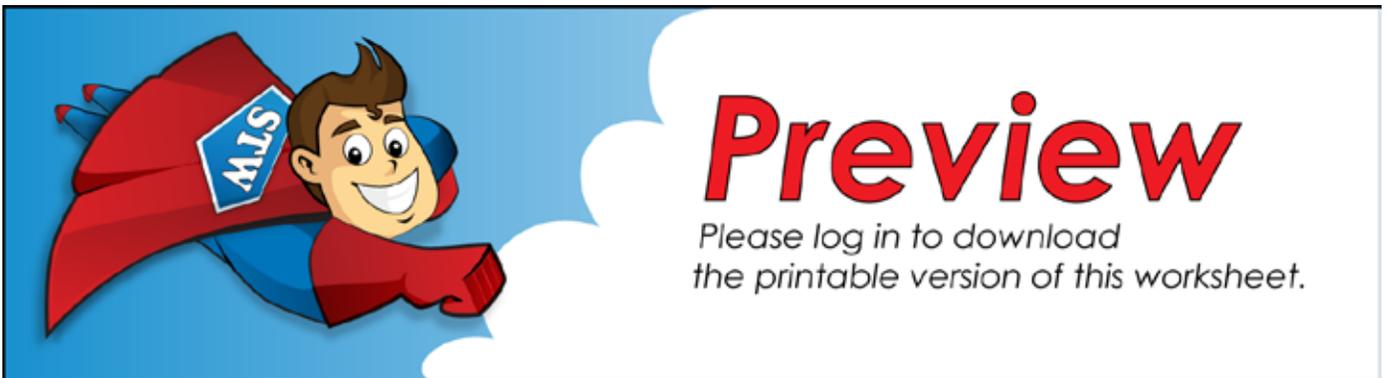
Kids can learn a lot from Jim. He showed us it's important to be proud of who we are and keep trying even when things are hard. His life inspires us to believe in ourselves. Jim Thorpe's story also reminds us that hard work and courage can make anyone a hero, no matter what challenges we face.

Name: _____

Jim Thorpe: Born to Win

By Lydia Lukidis

1. Of the following activities Jim Thorpe competed in, which did he do professionally?
 - a. basketball
 - b. lacrosse
 - c. ballroom dancing
 - d. tennis
2. Based on information in the text, which was true of the Olympics in 1912?
 - a. Athletes could only compete in one type of event.
 - b. Only nonprofessional athletes were allowed to compete.
 - c. Native Americans were not allowed to win medals.
 - d. All races and nations were treated completely equally.

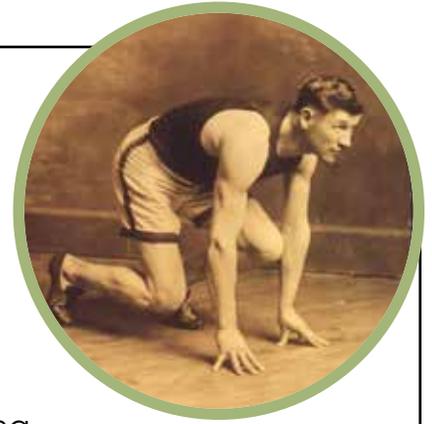


4. Use at least one example from the text to explain why Jim Thorpe "is remembered as a symbol of strength and determination."

5. Why might people think Jim Thorpe was the best athlete of the 1900s?

Name: _____

Jim Thorpe: Born to Win



The following terms are vocabulary words from the article.
Match the vocabulary word with its correct definition by writing
the corresponding letter on the line.

1. ____ competition a. something that represents or stands for something else
2. ____ symbol b. unfair treatment due to the belief that



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3. ____ rare e. done at a level where one is paid
6. ____ inspires f. very uncommon
7. ____ racism g. quality of seeing something through to the end, no matter what
8. ____ professional h. names showing rank or honor
9. ____ determination i. members of a state or nation, especially those with full rights
10. ____ citizens j. sporting event made up of ten smaller athletic events

Name: _____

Jim Thorpe: Born to Win

In the article, "Jim Thorpe: Born to Win," you read about Jim Thorpe, who loved and was skilled in many sports. You also read about some challenges he faced that required strength and determination to overcome.

On the lines below, describe something you do that you love or are developing skills in. Then describe challenges or difficulties you have faced while doing it, including how you overcame or are overcoming them.



ANSWER KEY

Jim Thorpe: Born to Win

By Lydia Lukidis

1. Of the following activities Jim Thorpe competed in, which did he do professionally?
- a. basketball**
 - b. lacrosse
 - c. ballroom dancing
 - d. tennis



Answers will vary. An example is: Some people think Jim Thorpe was the best athlete of the 1900s because he was very skilled in many sports, which is rare.

