

SELECTION 1: Little League Now and Then

1 Carl Yastrzemski, Tom Seaver, Nolan Ryan, and Cal Ripken were all great baseball stars. They have all been voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. What else do they have in common? It's not the team that they were on. It's not that they wore the same number on their baseball shirts, either.

2 What they have in common is that they all first got their start playing baseball in the Little League!® Carl Yastrzemski, in fact, was the first Little Leaguer to make the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY.

History

3 The Little League has a long history. Over the years, it has become central to the lives of many youngsters all over the world.

4 About 70 years ago, in 1938, the Little League got its start in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. This town earned a permanent place on the map with Little League. The league gained the support of local companies and three teams were formed. Their first uniforms were paid for with a \$35 donation. One year later, the first Little League game was played.

5 After that, the Little League program started to spread to neighboring states. In 1947, the first non-Pennsylvania league, located in Hammonton, New Jersey, became an official Little League. Little League programs became enormously popular. By 1950, there were 307 leagues across the United States. By 1955, at least one Little League program existed in every state. It also spread around the globe. Today, more than three million boys and girls between the ages of 5 to 18 in 105 countries around the world play ball through a Little League program.

Growing Pains

6 Little League's huge success came with a lot of growing pains. One problem was the exclusion of girls from the program. It wasn't until 1974 that the Little League ended its prohibition against allowing girls to play. At that time, separate leagues were created. But this happened only after lawsuits were brought against Little League and the program was subjected to bad publicity.

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7 Even before the rules were changed, a few girls played in the all-boys' Little League. Recently, Kathryn Johnston Massar shared her memories of disguising herself as a boy named "Tubby" in order to join a Little League team. She wanted to play on her brother's team. Kathryn told of how she cut her braids off, tried out, and made the King's Dairy team in her hometown, Corning, NY. That happened in 1950 and prompted the Little League rule that girls would not be allowed to play in the Little League program. The rule was known as the "Tubby rule."

8 When word got out that Kathryn was a girl, she confessed to her coach. Surprised, he told her, "You know, you're a darn good player." She played the rest of the season as a girl.

9 Of course that is all history now, with girls an active part of the Little League program.

Museum

10 Today, many Little Leaguers and their parents enjoy visiting the Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum, where distinguished graduates of the Little League are permanently enshrined as recipients of Little League's highest honor. The Little League Museum is filled with pictures, displays, films, and exhibits about the players, equipment, history, and rules of Little League. It even has an interactive game where you can watch the growth of the Little League through the use of fiber optics.

11 Fittingly, the museum is located in South Williamsport, overlooking the Howard J. Lamade Stadium and Little League Volunteer Stadium, which is home to the Little League Baseball World Series each August.



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SELECTION 2: Little Leaguers Shine in Ohio

Local Post-Gazette

1 Ohio is strongly represented in the Little League. More than 42,000 ball players, boys and girls between 5 and 18, play regularly in these games. They attract great crowds all through the state. More than 750,000 spectators attend each year.

2 Ohio teams are among the best in the world. Every year in August the Little League holds an international contest. It is called the World Series. Only the strongest teams are invited.

The World Series

3 It is very difficult to get into the World Series because of the fierce competition. Many countries, such as Venezuela, Mexico, and Japan, also love baseball and have excellent teams. They also want to make it to the World Series. There are many players practicing hard and trying to win. They are supported by coaches and parents who are proud of their team.

4 All the teams that play in this championship have beaten the other teams in their state and in other parts of the world. Ohio teams have made it into this elite competition nine times. Their teams have always had a fine record of strong performance.

5 Way back in 1949, the Canton, Ohio, team played in this championship and recently, in 2007, Hamilton made it.

6 Ohio has excellent teams but only one team in the world wins the World Series. The final game of the Series is broadcast on national television and receives a huge audience.

7 Many teams would love to win the flag that marks you as the best. Even though they play with determination, no Ohio team has ever won the championship. With so many teams, it's extremely difficult to predict the final winner. All we can know for sure is that Ohio Little Leaguers will keep doing their state proud.

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Use **SELECTION 1** and **SELECTION 2** to answer questions 9 – 18.

9. In SELECTION 1, what was the author's main purpose?

- A. to tell which states have Little League teams
- B. to suggest that Little League players seldom make it to the Major Leagues
- C. to persuade the reader to watch more Little League games
- D. to inform the reader about the history and growth of the Little League

10. Identify two pieces of information about the Little League that are mentioned in both SELECTION 1 and SELECTION 2.

Write your answer in the **Answer Document**. (2 points)

11. Which statement best describes the author's viewpoint in SELECTION 2?

- A. Ohio can be proud of its history with the Little League World Series.
- B. Ohio is likely to win the Little League World Series next year.
- C. The Little League World Series is too competitive for Ohio to ever win.
- D. Ohio has always had the best teams in the Little League.

12. In SELECTION 1, which organizational tool would most clearly show when events happened?

- A. a timeline
- B. a Venn diagram
- C. a cause-and-effect chart
- D. a line graph

13. "Even though they play with **determination**, no Ohio team has ever won the championship."

Which word is an antonym of the word **determination** as used in the sentence above?

- A. destiny
- B. devotion
- C. humor
- D. apathy

14. The section in SELECTION 1 titled "Growing Pains" includes which information?

- A. when the Little League was first organized
- B. the problems that the Little League has faced
- C. how many young people play in the Little Leagues in America
- D. what items are found in the Little League museum

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15. Use the main idea and headings to create a summary of SELECTION 1.

Write your answer in the **Answer Document**. (4 points)

16. What is the most important difference between SELECTION 1 and SELECTION 2?

- A. SELECTION 1 has a lot of numerical information and SELECTION 2 does not.
- B. SELECTION 1 discusses when Little League allowed girls to play and SELECTION 2 does not.
- C. SELECTION 1 talks about the Little League in Ohio and SELECTION 2 does not.
- D. SELECTION 1 discusses the keen competition for the World Series and SELECTION 2 does not.

17. "What they have in common is that they all first got their start playing baseball in the Little League!®"

What does the symbol ® mean?

- A. per
- B. registered trademark
- C. and
- D. exclamation

18. "It is very difficult to get into the World Series because of the fierce competition."

Identify the cause and effect relationship in this sentence from SELECTION 2 and describe how it impacts the Little League World Series.

Write your answer in the **Answer Document**. (2 points)

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