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# Jackie Robinson

Today we're going to talk about Jackie Robinson...in just a minute.

Jackie Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia. This was the era of Jim Crow, when segregation restricted almost every aspect of daily life for Black Americans in the South. Robinson would go on to break one of those barriers as a professional athlete.

Robinson excelled at sports from a young age. In 1939 he became the first UCLA student to letter in four varsity sports. As a soldier during World War II, he engaged in his first act of peaceful resistance when he was arrested for refusing to move to the back of a segregated bus.

After the war, Robinson played baseball in the Negro Leagues. The "color barrier" in American baseball banned Black players from the Major Leagues. Branch Rickey, the manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, wanted to break that barrier and thought Robinson was the perfect person to do it.

On April 15, 1947, Robinson played his first game at Ebbets Field, becoming the first Black Major League Baseball player in the 20th century. He endured harassment and discrimination from all sides, including racism from his own team. Robinson persevered, helping the Dodgers win the National League pennant and earning Rookie of the Year in his first season.

Over the years, Robinson won a World Series and became a fan favorite. He retired in 1957, but he continued to fight for civil rights as part of the NAACP.

How can stories like Jackie Robinson's lead to social change?