

Process Paper

Choosing a topic this year was surprisingly easy. Last year I chose Glenn Cunningham as my History Day topic, and I knew that I wanted to have another sports-related topic. I decided that I wanted to do something related to inequalities in women's sports. I asked my gifted facilitator if she had any ideas, and she suggested Maria Pepe. I had never heard of her, so I did some initial research to see if I would like to focus on her as a project. I found her story very interesting and she most definitely broke barriers, so I decided that she would be the perfect topic for me.

My topic this year is not from Kansas, so when we went to the Kansas History Museum as a class I wasn't successful at finding sources. Our class also went to the Topeka Public Library to do more research, but I couldn't find any books about my topic there either. So, I turned to the internet. While doing my research I decided to focus on the overall effect Pepe had on the sport of baseball, rather than focusing on the court case. However, I did do general research on the case in order to expand my knowledge of the topic. One source I read on the case was especially useful because it helped me with my overall analysis of Pepe's effect on baseball. After spending time figuring out Pepe's side of the story, I decided to research why the Little League didn't feel girls should play with boys to learn their point of view. It was very eye-opening and taught me more about gender stereotypes.

I decided to make a website for my project this year because I also made one last year, and I thought that it would display my research in the best way. I found it more challenging to make a website this year because the platform we were allowed to make our websites on had

changed from Weebly to NHDWebCentral. This meant that I had to take time to learn how to use all of the elements of the website builder before I could actually create my website. I knew I would like making a research project online because, personally, I'm interested in technology.

In 1972, there were not many opportunities for girls to play organized baseball until 12-year-old Maria Pepe came and changed everything by **breaking the gender barrier**. Pepe joined a boys team just for fun, but the National Little League organization in Williamsport told her that she couldn't play, only because she was a girl. Because of this, the National Organization for Women filed a gender discrimination lawsuit on her behalf. The final ruling that **broke the gender barrier** allowing girls to play in Little League came in 1974. Although Pepe was too old to play in Little League by this time, she paved the way for hundreds of thousands of girls to play youth baseball today.