

The theme for this year's National History Day is Debate and Diplomacy. I chose the topic Jackie Robinson, because I was interested in learning more about him. In the 1940s, Major League Baseball owners debated about the integration of African Americans into professional baseball, because they did not think white audiences would want to watch African Americans play. Branch Rickey, the general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, signed Jackie Robinson. This made Branch Rickey the first person to successfully end segregation and draft an African American into the league. Through diplomatic speeches and letters, Robinson was able to change the views of many people and show them that African Americans are equal to everyone else and should be allowed to play in the Major Leagues.

I started researching using websites, which I found on google. These websites provided good information, but not the kind I was looking for. I was looking for primary sources on Jackie Robinson, describing who he was as a person, and autobiographies. I went to the Minneapolis Public Library and found many books that were exactly what I was looking for. My most useful book out of all the ones I got was, *I Never Had It Made*, by Jackie Robinson and Alfred Duckett. This gave me a lot of Primary information on Jackie Robinson since it was written by him.

This year, I chose to present my project as a website, since I couldn't find many videos on him. This was also my first year doing History Day, so I thought that a website would be easier. At the beginning of the project, it was very hard to use the website because I had no prior experience with the website builder. I learned how to use the website builder much better than I had at the beginning of the project. I also learned many useful skills in the process of creating my National History Day website.

The topic of Jackie Robinson had much controversy when he first joined the league and broke the color barrier. Many people were outraged with the idea of an African American in Major League Baseball. The white audiences and baseball owners also saw this as a loss of revenue because when the MLB teams were on the road, they rented out their stadiums to negro leagues for games. If baseball started to integrate, they knew that the best Negro League players would get pulled up to the Major Leagues, which could end the Negro Leagues entirely. After Jackie was in the League for a few years and Jackie Robinson teammates started to welcome him, the white audiences began to like him. Jackie Robinson was one of the most debated baseball players ever. He will forever be one of the greatest baseball players ever.