

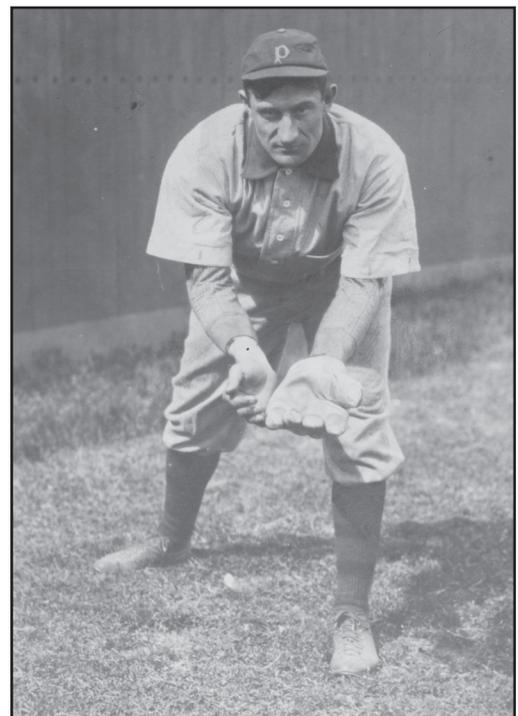
**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.
Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

Honus Wagner, Baseball Legend

- 1 Some 12-year-olds dream about the kind of job they'll have when they get older. At the age of 12, Johannes Peter "Honus" Wagner was already working with his father and brothers in the coal mines near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Wagner would load about 2,000 pounds of coal onto a cart each day, earning 70 cents for a day's hard labor. But Wagner didn't plan to work in the coal mines forever. He had a different dream: to become a professional baseball player.
- 2 As children, Wagner and his brothers spent all their free time playing baseball. One of his older brothers noticed Wagner's skills. He encouraged Wagner to practice playing each of the nine positions on a baseball team.
- 3 Wagner fell in love with the sport. He walked several miles to see the home games of the nearest professional baseball team, the Pittsburgh Pirates. He would watch the team play while sitting in a tree just outside the ballpark. Wagner's love for the game would help him become one of the greatest baseball players of all time.

Looks Can Be Deceiving

- 4 As a young adult, Wagner began playing for various area baseball teams. In 1895 he was recruited to play for a minor league team. He hoped his talent would soon earn him a spot on a major league team.
- 5 Though powerfully built, Wagner was an awkward figure on the baseball field. Some major league managers were not impressed. Wagner's bowed legs and long arms made him look clumsy. His left hand appeared too large for his baseball glove. And Wagner used a glove with a hole in it. Wagner made the hole himself because he thought the ball was easier to hold in his glove that way.
- 6 However, coaches quickly learned to appreciate Wagner's ability to hit the baseball and play any position. His gawkiness didn't matter. In 1897 Wagner

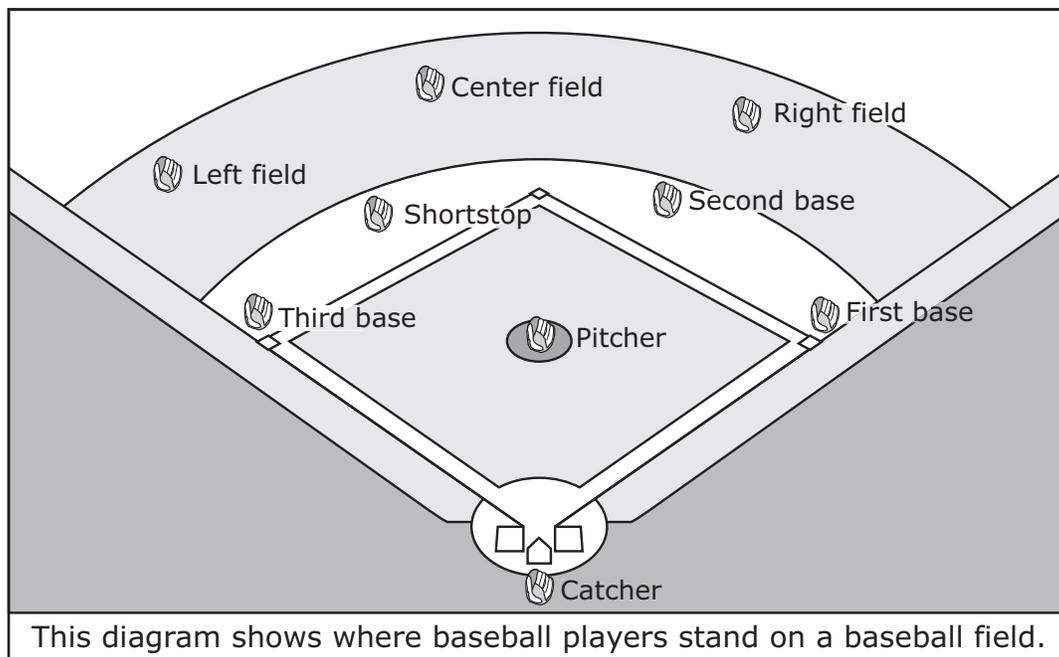


Honus Wagner in His
Pittsburgh Pirates Uniform

joined a major league team in Louisville, Kentucky. He was a shining star there until 1900, when he was asked to join the Pittsburgh Pirates. At last Wagner was playing for his home team!

A Hometown Favorite

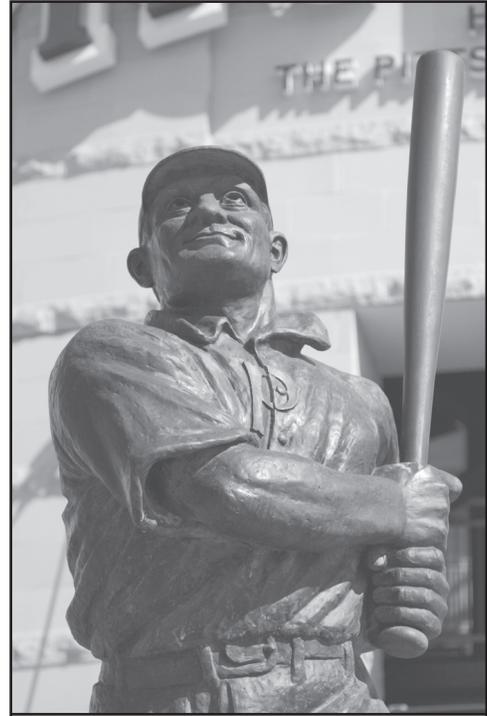
- 7 Wagner's power, speed, and talent led to success with the Pirates. Thunderous applause greeted the fan favorite at every home game.
- 8 After playing several positions with the Pirates, Wagner earned a consistent role as the team's starting shortstop. A shortstop plays between second and third base. More balls are hit to the shortstop than to any other position. A shortstop must also have a strong throwing arm to quickly throw the long distance to first base. Game after game, Wagner had success playing this difficult position.
- 9 Wagner's long arms and large hands helped him with batting as well. He was able to hit almost any ball pitched to him. In the early 1900s Wagner was one of the National League's best players. Many other teams wanted him to play for them, but he remained loyal to his home team.



- 10 Wagner played for the Pirates for 17 years. For much of that time, he was the best hitter in the National League. Arthritis pain in his legs slowed him down, though. Wagner tried to retire, but his coaches persuaded him to keep playing because they believed the team benefited from his leadership. In 1917 Wagner played his last game for the Pittsburgh Pirates. But he wasn't finished with the team just yet. Wagner became a coach for the Pirates some years later, serving his team again from 1933 to 1951.

Honoring Excellence

- 11 Wagner is considered by many to be the greatest shortstop of all time. He was one of the first five players selected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. At the time of his death in 1955, Wagner still held many National League records. Wagner worked hard to become a professional baseball player. His journey continues to motivate young people who aspire to be professional athletes.



A statue of Honus Wagner stands in front of the Pittsburgh Pirates stadium.

Robert Pernel, used under license from Shutterstock.com

40 In paragraph 11, the word aspire means to —

- F** encourage a friend
 - G** arrange a meeting
 - H** design a project
 - J** seek a goal
-

41 What do the details in paragraph 5 help the reader understand about Wagner?

- A** He was underestimated because of his appearance.
 - B** He was unhappy with his performance on the minor league team.
 - C** He lacked the patience that coaches of major league teams expected of players.
 - D** He needed the proper equipment before a major league team would select him.
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42 Which sentence from the selection shows that Wagner was a positive influence on others?

- F** *Wagner would load about 2,000 pounds of coal onto a cart each day, earning 70 cents for a day's hard labor.*
- G** *Wagner's love for the game would help him become one of the greatest baseball players of all time.*
- H** *For much of that time, he was the best hitter in the National League.*
- J** *Wagner tried to retire, but his coaches persuaded him to keep playing because they believed the team benefited from his leadership.*

- 43** By including the details in paragraph 3, the author most likely hopes to convey that Wagner —
- A** took time to explore a professional career that was not related to baseball
 - B** had a real passion for baseball from an early age
 - C** settled for playing with the Pittsburgh Pirates because the team played close to his childhood home
 - D** enjoyed interacting with players during the Pittsburgh Pirates home games
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- 44** What is the primary theme in the selection?
- F** Family members should offer support to one another.
 - G** Kindness often leads to friendship and admiration.
 - H** People should take the time to pursue their interests.
 - J** Dedication can help a person achieve great success.

45 Which phrase from paragraphs 5 and 6 helps the reader understand the meaning of gawkiness in paragraph 6?

- A** *bowed legs and long arms*
 - B** *play any position*
 - C** *didn't matter*
 - D** *learned to appreciate*
-

46 The photograph of the statue of Wagner conveys the message that —

- F** Wagner's accomplishments are still respected today
- G** the Pittsburgh Pirates are successful today because of Wagner
- H** people can still learn from Wagner's life story
- J** Pittsburgh Pirates fans believe that Wagner is the best coach of all time

