

Read the passage and answer the questions below.

In recent years, Venus and Serena Williams have dominated professional women's tennis, and professional men's golf has been led by Tiger Woods. All three of these champions are of African-American descent and, not that long ago, all three would have been banned from professional sports because of their color. These famous athletes owe at least a small debt of gratitude to a remarkable woman named Althea Gibson for breaking racial barriers in professional sports. She was the first African-American to play professional tennis or professional golf in the United States—and she played them both.

Althea Gibson was born in 1927 in Silver, South Carolina. Her parents, Daniel and Annie Gibson, were sharecroppers. They decided to move their family to New York City when Althea was three years old. Althea grew up in Harlem in the 1930s, during the Great Depression. She loved to play basketball and other sports with the boys in her neighborhood. After Althea won a paddleball tournament sponsored by the Police Athletic League, one of the supervisors who watched her play suggested that she try her hand at tennis, so she did.

In the 1940s, Althea Gibson began taking tennis lessons and winning tennis tournaments. From 1947 onward, she won ten straight national championships of the all-black American Tennis Association (ATA). But she was prohibited from playing in the all-white tennis events sponsored by the U.S. Lawn Tennis Association (USLTA). For several years, many athletes lobbied on behalf of Althea Gibson, including former Wimbledon and U.S. National champion Alice Marble. Finally, on August 28, 1950, Ms. Gibson was allowed to play in the U.S. National Championship at Forest Hills in New York. She was the first African-American female to compete in that or any other USLTA event. That year she won her first match, but lost in the second round.

Althea Gibson continued to dominate ATA tournaments for several years and began playing more USLTA competitions. In 1955, she traveled throughout Southeast Asia playing tennis on the Goodwill Tour sponsored by the U.S. government. When she returned for the 1956 season, she won 16 USLTA matches and the French Championship. With that victory, she became the first African-American to win a major title in singles tennis.

In 1957, Gibson made sports history by winning the All-England Tennis Championship at Wimbledon. When she returned from England, New Yorkers welcomed her with a ticker-tape parade and the medallion of the city. Soon afterward, she won the U.S. National Championship and became the top-ranked women's tennis player in the world. She also became the first African-American woman to win both of these championships and was chosen Female Athlete of the Year by the Associated Press. In the following years she won both tournaments again and then decided to retire from tennis.

Althea Gibson was a marvelous athlete and had become a celebrity at age 31, but she was just getting started. In 1958, she wrote her autobiography, *I Always Wanted to be Somebody*. In 1959, she made a record album, *Althea Gibson Sings*. She also acted in a movie called *The Horse Soldiers*. In 1960, she traveled with the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. Then she decided to take up professional golf. In 1964, she joined the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) and became the first African-American woman to play in an LPGA event. In the course of seven years, she played in 171 golf tournaments, winning one of them.

In later years, Althea Gibson worked as a tennis teacher. She also served as the athletic commissioner for the state of New Jersey. She was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1971. In 1980, she entered the International Women's Sport's Hall of Fame. Perhaps more important than her many awards, however, was what Althea achieved as a pioneer in sports, as a woman, and as an African-American. In the course of her remarkable career, she broke many barriers that had prevented others from competing in both amateur and professional sports. Her achievements helped to pave the way for many outstanding athletes, including Arthur Ashe, Zina Garrison, the Williams sisters, and Tiger Woods.

1. The purpose of this passage is to -

- A. to inform readers of Gibson's achievements
- B. to entertain readers with a sports story
- C. to persuade readers that Gibson was a great athlete
- D. to convince readers to be dedicated athletes too

2. Based on the passage, in what ways are Althea Gibson and Serena Williams alike?

- A. Both grew up in South Carolina
- B. Both have played tennis and golf professionally
- C. Both dominated their sports in the 1950s
- D. Both are African-American champions

3. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A. Gibson's greatest achievement was winning the first all-black ATA championship.
- B. Gibson broke barriers for African-American athletes.
- C. Gibson expanded her career to singing and acting.
- D. Gibson traveled on tour with the Harlem Globetrotters.

4. What caused Althea to become interested in tennis?

- A. Her parents encouraged her to try out every sport.
- B. She grew up watching stars like Alice Marble.
- C. Her talent was spotted by a physical education teacher at her school in Harlem.
- D. A supervisor of the paddleball tournament she won suggested she try tennis

5. What does the highlighted word above "pioneer" most likely mean in this passage?

- A. To settle a new country
- B. To begin something new
- C. To end something
- D. To celebrate because of success