

Name _____ Date _____

The Golden Runner

One of the greatest Olympic runners ever was Wilma Rudolph. She was fast and graceful. Her long legs seemed to glide along the track. Wilma broke many records. She helped increase interest in women's track events. After her running career, Wilma helped young African Americans train for track and other sports.	12 25 36 47 51
Wilma's road to greatness was not easy. She had to overcome many physical problems. Her courageous struggle to compete and win still inspires people today.	63 74 76
As a child, Wilma often became ill. Her left leg was strapped to a metal brace. By the time she was twelve, her leg was strong again. She could walk without the brace. She would finally have a chance to play like other children.	91 105 119 120
Wilma joined the girls' basketball team at her school. She also found time to run track. She was naturally fast and liked to run. In the summer of 1956, Wilma went to Philadelphia for her first important meet. There she won every race she ran, including two sprints and a relay race.	132 148 160 172
Wilma was asked to try out for the United States Olympic team. She traveled to the Olympic Games in Australia. She won a bronze medal in the 400-meter relay. She was only sixteen years old.	184 197 207
Four years later, at the 1960 Olympics in Rome, Wilma won her first gold medal in the 100-meter race. She won a second in the 200-meter race. In the 400-meter relay, Wilma ran the last leg of the race. She used all her speed to pass two other runners. Rudolph's team won the race by less than a second. With that victory, Wilma became the first American woman to win three gold medals in a single Olympic Games.	221 236 252 266 278 285

