Pitcher Perfect

Katie Brownell is in a league of her own. Not only is Katie the only girl in the Oakfield-Alabama, N.Y., Little League, but she is believed to be the only female Little League pitcher to throw a perfect game.

In a game on May 14, 2005, she shut down the opposing team, giving up no hits, walks, or runs. In fact, Katie won the game in a style that would make Pedro Martinez, the ace pitcher for the New York Mets, cheer. She struck out all 18 batters she faced in the six-inning shutout victory.

That feat caught the attention of the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y. In July, officials put Katie's jersey on display in the same building that houses items that once belonged to legends "Babe" Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, and Hank Aaron.

"This has been a great time," said Katie. "I'd like to thank God, my parents, Little League, and all my fans. It's a real honor. It's really cool."

Katie's mother, Denise Bischoff, says her daughter has been playing baseball since she was six. "She had older brothers and we were always outside, so the minute she could pick up a ball, she was [playing]," she told The Daily News of Batavia, N.Y.

Katie's accomplishments caught the attention of sportswriters around the country. There were so many requests for interviews that her mom refused most of them.

Katie, who is in sixth grade at Oakfield-Alabama Middle/High School, also pitched a one-hitter in the first game of the season. She struck out 14 batters in the five innings she pitched. Then she fielded a grounder for the 15th out.

"She's been pitching for three years, but she's really come on and excelled this year," Jeff Sage, the team manager, told reporters. "She bats really well. She's a solid, all-around ballplayer."

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1 feat: a deed notable especially for courage
2 grounder: a ground ball—a batted baseball that rolls or bounces along the ground
“Pitcher Perfect” Questions

1. One remarkable thing about Katie’s own words is that she
   a. compares herself to Pedro Martinez.
   b. gives credit to others instead of herself.
   c. explains why she is so consistent.
   d. tells how she learned to be such a good pitcher.

2. Calling Katie an “ace pitcher” implies that Katie
   a. is an excellent pitcher.
   b. loves being a pitcher.
   c. plays cards as well as she pitches.
   d. works hard as a pitcher.

3. There is evidence in the passage to suggest that Katie learned to play ball so well partly because
   a. of her own determination.
   b. her team manager encouraged her.
   c. she’s even better at batting than at pitching.
   d. she practiced so much with her brothers.

4. Katie’s mother seems to be
   a. focused more on her family than on making money.
   b. embarrassed about the fame of her daughter.
   c. interested in promoting her daughter’s success.
   d. delighted by the Baseball Hall of Fame’s honoring Katie.

5. What qualities does Katie have that might make her a role model for other kids?

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"Pitcher Perfect" Answer Sheet

C __ 1. One remarkable thing about Katie’s own words is that she
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   a. focused more on her family than on making money.
   b. embarrassed about the fame of her daughter.
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C __ 5. What qualities does Katie have that might make her a role model for
   other kids?

   Answers will vary but might include that she is determined, goal oriented,
   and a hard worker.

Suggested Additional Vocabulary: fielded, shutout victory