

Manute Bol Reading Comprehension

Name _____

Manute Bol was the tallest player in the history of the National Basketball Association (NBA). At 7'7" Bol towered over even the tallest players in the NBA. Born in the African nation of Sudan, Bol's mother was said to be nearly seven feet tall and his father was 6'8" tall. Bol claimed his great grandfather was 7'10" tall! Bol played soccer as a child but switched to basketball at age 15 when he grew too tall for soccer.

Bol came to the United States in 1993. He played college basketball at Bridgeport State University in Connecticut where he averaged 22.5 points per game, 13.5 rebounds, and 7.1 blocks. In 1985, Bol was drafted by the Washington Bullets in the second round. Although he did not finish college, Bol said he entered the draft to earn enough money to ensure his sister could leave war-torn Sudan. Interestingly, in 1987, the Bullets drafted the 5'3" point guard Muggsy Bogues, resulting in the NBA's tallest player in history playing at the same time as the NBA's shortest player in history.

As a player, Bol was limited by his lack of mobility and strength and never became a force on offense. Bol did, however, excel on defense. Bol once blocked eleven shots in a single half, and twice blocked eight shots in a single quarter. In a game against the Orlando Magic in 1992, Bol blocked shots on four consecutive possessions. In his career, Bol blocked 2,086 shots and is the only player in NBA history to have more blocked shots than points scored. He retired from the NBA in 1995 after suffering a knee injury.

Over the course of his basketball career, Bol contributed nearly all of his earnings to Sudanese causes and advocated Sudan-related causes. He was well-respected by his teammates and was said to be a practical joker. He forged close friendships with NBA stars Charles Barkley and Chris Mullin. On July 10, 2006, Bol died of kidney failure. He left behind ten children. One of his sons, Bol Bol, is considered a top college basketball recruit and plays for the Oregon Ducks (as of 2018).

1. Which of the following is listed from tallest to shortest?

- A. Manute Bol >> Manute's great grandfather >> Manute's mother
- B. Manute's great grandfather >> Manute's mother >> Manute Bol
- C. Manute's great grandfather >> Manute Bol >> Manute's mother
- D. Manute's great grandfather >> Manute's father >> Manute's mother

2. Why did Manute Bol enter the NBA draft?

- A. Because he didn't want to finish college
- B. Because he wanted to play for the Washington Bullets
- C. Because he needed money to help his sister escape from Sudan
- D. Because he thought he'd become a big star

3. Which would be an accurate description of Manute Bol's professional basketball career?

- A. Manute was a highly effective offensive player and defender
- B. Although Manute was not effective as a defender, he was very effective as an offensive player
- C. Although Manute was not effective as an offensive player, he was highly effective as a defender
- D. Manute was neither effective as an offensive player or defender

4. For which of the following questions would “because he was too tall” be the answer?

- A. Why did Manute Bol retire from basketball?
- B. How did Manute Bol die?
- C. Why was Manute Bol ineffective as a basketball player?
- D. Why did Manute Bol quit soccer?

5. Which of the following made Manute Bol unique among NBA players?

- A. He was very tall
- B. He did not finish college
- C. He averaged 22.5 points per game in college
- D. He finished his career with more blocks than points

6. Which of the words used in the third paragraph means “ability to move?”

- A. mobility
- B. consecutive
- C. possessions
- D. retired

7. Which is NOT true about Manute Bol?

- A. He played with the shortest player in NBA history
- B. Manute's mother was taller than his father
- C. Sadly, Manute died of kidney disease in 2006
- D. Manute's son, Bol Bol, plays in the NBA