Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \*I can interpret information that is presented in a timeline

and explain how it helps to add a better understanding of a text.

**First Lady of Swimming**

Thousands of people cross the channel of water between France and England every day in planes, ferries, and even trains. An American athlete, Gertrude Caroline Ederle, however, used a different method. She was the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

Gertrude was born in New York City. She dedicated herself to the sport of swimming at an early age and enjoyed great success. Before long, she was on her way to becoming one of the most famous American swimmers of her time. When she was sixteen, Ederle broke seven records in one day at a swimming competition in New York. Two years later, she represented the United States at the Olympic Games, winning a gold medal in the 400-meter freestyle relay.

After the Olympic Victory, she looked for an even greater challenge. One of the most difficult swims is to cross the 21-mile English Channel. The seas in the channel can be rough, and the water is cold. In the past, the feat had only been accomplished by male swimmers. Most people believed that the swim was too difficult for a woman, but Ederle wanted to prove them wrong. She didn’t make it on her first attempt, but she tried again. Leaving from the coast of France, Ederle had to swim even longer than planned because of heavy seas. She went an extra fourteen miles and still managed to beat the world record by almost two hours. This accomplishment made her an instant heroine at the age of twenty.

After her triumph, Ederle traveled around the United States as a professional swimmer, delighting spectators of all ages. Unfortunately, a severe back injury kept her out of the pool for four years. It wasn’t for a while that she swam in public again, until a swimming show at the New York World’s Fair.

Later in life, Ederle worked as a swimming instructor for hearing-impaired children. She was also appointed to President Eisenhower’s Youth Fitness Committee. Her dedication to the sport of swimming has made Gertrude a role model for athletes ever since. Because of her willingness to accept enormous challenges, she is a good example for anyone who wants to excel.

In 1926, Gertrude broke a world record swimming the English Channel.

In 1924, Gertrude won an Olympic gold medal.

Gertrude was born in **1906** in New York City.

1900 1905 1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1940

In 1939, recovered from a back injury and swam in the New York World’s Fair.

At age 16 in 1922, Gertrude broke 7 records in one day.

The author of this passage wrote about the history of an American athlete and included a timeline to visually represent information. Use information in both the timeline and the text to answer the following question.

1. Describe Gertrude’s accomplishment in 1926.
2. Explain how the information presented in the timeline helps you to better understand the text.

