

# THEY MADE A DIFFERENCE

*G. Beauchamp 1997*  
©*Mobile Ed Productions 1997*

Revised 1/2022

## THEY MADE A DIFFERENCE

*For the first part of the program, the actress should be costumed as Clara Barton in a white blouse, long dark skirt, apron, and wig if necessary. Slides will accompany the program, though no actual reference to them will be made by the performer.*

*Enter after using the Mobile Ed Time Machine as Clara Barton*

**INTRODUCTION:** (4 min)

Hello everybody! **(TITLE SLIDE)** My name is Clarissa Barton, but you can call me Clara for short. I just time-traveled to your school all the way from 1850. What year is it now?

*(wait for response)*

Oh wow! That was about 170 years ago! I worked hard throughout my whole life, and to some, I suppose, I am famous. But how many of you have ever heard of me before?

*(Wait for students to raise hands)*

All right, how many of you have heard of Abraham Lincoln? Or George Washington?

*(Wait for students to raise hands)*

My, oh, my! Look at all those hands. *(Place fingers over eyebrows and scan the crowd for hands.)* There are many famous men that we've learned and heard about in our classes, but there have also been some very important women throughout history that have made a wonderful impact on our world, and I think we should talk about those women today, I being one of them.

**DELIVER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BASED ON AGE AND AUDIENCE:**

**K-3:** A long time ago, people thought that women were just born to be mothers and house cleaners. Can you guys believe that? (*dramatic laugh*) All of us wouldn't be gathered here if that were still true, learning together, playing together, and making new friends.

**4-8: (QUOTE SLIDE)** Let me read something to you: "A well-bred young lady need not concern herself with the pursuit of higher education, as her life, devoted exclusively to raising her children and maintaining the household of her husband, will not require nor admit the need of any such frivolities. Rather, the daily activities of a young woman should conspire to imbed within her only those skills necessary to fulfill her household duties. Education of any kind should only be pursued in so far as it will allow her to discourse pleasantly with her husband and his guests." (*dramatic laugh*) Isn't it strange that people once thought that women shouldn't go to school? I wouldn't be standing in this building if we still thought this way!

In your time, (**WOMEN TODAY SLIDE**) women can become doctors, pilots, lawyers, astronauts, soldiers, politicians, and all sorts of other things. Of course, many women are mothers and homemakers, and there is nothing wrong with that, not even a little. But back in the 1800s, women weren't permitted to be anything but those things. Women simply were not allowed to work in most professions unless they were poor, and then they were forced to take jobs that men didn't want, and for which they were paid so very little compared to men who worked the same job. Women weren't even allowed to vote. Can you believe that? It took a very long time to allow women to help make decisions in our country through voting. To start making

these changes that we have now, it took a heap of courage and hard work of several brave women, and you'll get a chance to meet those women today!

**CLARA BARTON:** (17 min)

I was born in Massachusetts in 1821, that was about...let me think...200 years ago! (**CLARA BARTON SLIDE #1**) Now, I mentioned that I was famous when I was growing up about 200 years ago! In my job, I helped a lot of people who desperately needed help. Can anyone guess what type of job I had?

*(Await answers from the audience)*

Yes! You're right: I was a nurse, helping people who were very sick in hospitals and on the battlefield during the war. I was a very famous nurse who helped a lot of sick people, but I can't say that when I was young, I knew that would happen. Tell me what you guys want to do when you get older. Does anyone know what they want to be or have an idea?

*(Await answers from the audience)*

Wow! Those are all fantastic ideas, thank you for sharing. Well, when I was growing up, I had two brothers and two sisters, all much older than me. I felt like I had six parents! But they all taught me different things, and I got a very good education because of it. Oh, but I was so shy when I was young. I had no one my own age to play with. But one year, my brother David, who had taught me how to ride horses when I was three years old, became ill. He fell from the top of our barn, and he was injured badly. He was sick for a long time, years in fact. I took care of him for two years, and I even stopped my schooling so I could tend to my brother. I learned to give him the care that the doctors prescribed, and I didn't even realize it then, but I was becoming a

nurse. It made me feel useful, and when I was working, I felt less shy and nervous. In fact, I became quite confident in myself doing something that I loved.

Eventually, a specialized doctor would visit our home and David would get well. But now I needed something else to do. My parents were worried about me because I didn't have much of a purpose anymore and began to grow quiet again. Well, one night, I woke up to hear voices in the next room. My parents were discussing something with a man who was visiting our home. They were talking about me! I will never forget what I heard the man say. He said, "She will always be sensitive. She will never assert herself for herself; she will suffer wrong first. But for others, she will be fearless. Give her responsibility." He said I should become a teacher. In my heart, I knew he was right. Well, that is exactly what I did.

I was a teacher for more than ten years. Yes, I told you I was a nurse, but hold on a little longer! Oh, but in the beginning, I was so frightened. I got my first teaching job in New Oxford, Massachusetts when I was seventeen, and some of the boys in the class I was teaching were the same age as I was. But somehow I survived, and I suppose I must have been a pretty good teacher because many of my pupils wrote to me later in life and told me so. I have always believed that everyone should be able to go to school and be able to learn new knowledge and new skills. But when I moved to Bordentown, New Jersey with one of my friends, it turned out that the students had to pay to go to school and that there was no school at all for the children in poorer families. I didn't think that was right, so for months, I asked them to let me open a free school. Well finally, against their will, the City Council gave me an old building in which to

teach school for the children who couldn't afford to pay. The City Council laughed and thought I would fail. On the first day I had only six students, and to be very honest with you guys, I was very disappointed. I wanted to teach as many students as possible. But can anyone guess what happened the next day?

*(Wait for students to guess)*

That's right! The next day there were more students, more than in this room. Can anyone guess how many students there were?

*(Wait for students to guess)*

Great job, everyone! By the end of the school year, I had 200 students. Two years later, the school board voted to build a new two-story schoolhouse with eight classrooms. Everyone was so proud of the new school. But when it was time to choose a principal for the new schoolhouse, they chose someone else instead of the person who founded the school, and they offered to make me his assistant. And he would be making double the money that I would be! To put it simply, I quit that job. I was absolutely outraged that they wouldn't let me lead the school that I created. Those children were so precious to me, too. I was feeling really hurt at the time and quite frustrated. I wanted a new life, so I moved to Washington, D.C, (**CAPITAL BUILDING SLIDE**) our country's capital city!

When I got to Washington D.C., I got a new job! I was so excited. Can anyone guess what kind of job I got?

*(Wait for students to guess)*

Those are great guesses! I worked in an office for the government. And guess what? I loved it! This job paid a lot better than teaching. I worked hard, but some of the men in my office didn't like me. I was one of the first women to work in a government office, and some men didn't like that. They didn't think it was proper that a woman should be working in an office, doing "men's work". They also didn't like the fact that I was being paid as much money as they were. They thought a woman should be paid less money simply because she wasn't a man, even though she was doing the same job. They were very mean to me, and bullied me, but they couldn't get me fired because my boss supported me and knew how hard I worked in my job. But in 1857, a new man replaced my boss, and I did lose my job. It remains that I had been one of the first women to work on an equal footing with men in a government office.

Three years later, a war broke out in this country called the Civil War. Has anyone heard of it before? *(Waits for hands to raise)* The Civil War **(CIVIL WAR SLIDE #1)** was fought between the people in the North and the people in the South of our country, and it started for many reasons, but the sole reason is that the people in the South owned slaves and wanted to continue slavery while those in the North did not. **(CIVIL WAR SLIDE #2)** Well, in 1821, just as I was born, another woman was born who would change the world around this same time. Her life was about as different as can be from mine, and yet she was such a marvelous woman in different ways. Her name was Harriet Tubman, and she was born a slave in Maryland.

**DELIVER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BASED ON AGE AND AUDIENCE:**

**K-3:** Harriet (**HARRIET SLIDE #1**) had to work as a slave when she was very young, scrubbing floors and cleaning her owner's house. Her family lived in a broken-down shack with a dirt floor and rarely had enough food to eat. Her owners were extremely mean to Harriet and her family. Her mean owner once threw something heavy at her after she didn't follow the orders of her owner. She almost died! She got better, but Harriet lived the rest of her life with bad headaches and fainted often.

**4-8:** Harriet (**HARRIET SLIDE #1**) was forced to begin working as a slave when she was only six years old, scrubbing floors in her owner's house. Harriet and the rest of her family lived in a drafty, run-down, windowless shack with a dirt floor, just out of sight of the big house where her owner lived. She was often beaten by her owners and rarely had enough to eat. As a girl, her owner threw a two-pound metal weight at her for refusing an order. She nearly died. For the rest of her life, she suffered from headaches and fainting spells.

In 1849, with the help of others, Harriet Tubman escaped to the North where she could be free. The North was safe for slaves. But Harriet missed her family. Many people in the North and across the country knew that slavery was wrong, and they were willing to help slaves escape. Across the land that bordered the slave states, there were homes where the people would assist fleeing slaves. The system connecting them was called "The Underground Railroad", and the safe homes along the escape route were called "stations". Some of the people living at the "stations" had helped Harriet to escape, and now she wanted to help others. The biggest reason more slaves did not try to escape was fear of failing. The owners sent out slave hunters to track them down, and if the slaves were captured, the runaway slaves were punished terribly. Most

slaves had little knowledge to help them find their way North as it was against the law in slave states to teach a slave to read. But guess what? Harriet now knew the way to the North and wanted to help others.

In 1850, she secretly returned to the plantation she had lived on in Maryland; she wanted to help her brothers escape. Her father who they called "Old Bill" refused to look at her or hear the plan because he knew that he would be asked later, and he wanted to say that he had "seen nothing". Harriet helped her brothers out of Maryland, and then came back later for her aging parents! She was **(HARRIET SLIDE #2)** now a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad. Word of her appearances spread among the slaves. The slave owners around the South learned of her too. They posted large rewards for her capture. Each trip was incredibly dangerous. She moved through swamps and rivers, often at night, hiding in "safe" homes and barns along the way. She once said, "On my underground railroad I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger". Can anyone guess what Harriet meant by: "She never ran her train off the track?"

*(Wait for answers)*

That's right! Harriet meant that she was never caught, and every slave she found was brought to freedom safely. By the end of her life, Harriet led more than 300 slaves to freedom over nineteen trips to the North.

When the Civil War began in our country, Harriet no longer conducted the underground railroad but was a spy for the Union army, making trips into southern territory. She served in the army for three years and once helped soldiers to free more than 750 slaves from southern prisons.

Around this time, I was in Washington D. C. In the beginning of the war, when President Lincoln called for volunteers to fight in the war, I wanted to become a soldier. But they wouldn't let me, which made me so angry because it seemed so unfair. I wanted to help in the fight against the South, so why couldn't I? Well, that's because I'm a woman, and men didn't think that women should do the same things as men back then. But I'll let you in on a secret, come closer everyone: *(wave everyone to lean forward)* *In a whisper voice:* I didn't give up, just like Harriet. I knew of a woman who was saving many lives through nursing, and she inspired me to not give up. Her name was Florence Nightingale.

**(FLORENCE SLIDE #1)** A baby girl was born to English parents who happened to be living at that time in Florence, Italy. Naturally, the parents named their daughter after the city in which she was born. They named her Florence. Florence Nightingale. **(ITALY SLIDE)** Florence grew up in a world of fine ladies and gentlemen. A world in which it was expected that all young women would spend their time attending balls and family gatherings, until of course, they were married. Well, when Florence was only sixteen, she wrote in her diary: "God spoke and called me to his service." She was determined to do something useful with her life, but it wasn't until years later that she would know what that task would be.

As a young woman, Florence **(FLORENCE SLIDE #1)** was attractive, and men proposed to her many, many times. But Florence refused to marry because she knew that would mean a life devoted to only be a wife, and not anything else. To Florence, she couldn't imagine not following

the call she was feeling to serve others. So her answer was simple each time a fellow proposed to her: “No.” She remained unmarried.

**DELIVER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BASED ON AGE AND AUDIENCE:**

**K-3:** Florence decided at the age of thirty that she wanted to be a nurse, and her parents were shocked! (**HOSPITAL SLIDE**) Hospitals at this time were overcrowded with sick patients, and the doctors didn’t know how to keep hospitals clean. Sickness was everywhere and could quite easily spread to the nurses and doctors.

**4-8:** At the age of thirty, Florence shocked her parents by declaring that she wanted to become a nurse. A nurse of all things! They were horrified! Do you know why? In England at that time, hospitals were terrible places to be. (**HOSPITAL SLIDE**) They were incredibly dirty, overcrowded, and disease-ridden. Sick patients were packed together in enormous, overcrowded wards where the walls were frequently splattered with blood and filth. Doctors worked under horrible conditions with no regard for sanitation. And the nurses were nothing like the nurses you know today. They were typically untrained women who were outcasts of society. Many of them were drunkards.

To prepare herself for nursing, Florence had been secretly reading medical books for years. She traveled to Germany to attend a school for nurses: the Institute of Deaconesses, and it was run along strict religious lines. The hours were long, the work was hard, and the food was poor. And the training Florence received wasn't very good, but it was better than she could have gotten anywhere else. Florence remained in Germany for three months. She then decided the school had

little else to teach her. Florence returned to London and took a position as Superintendent of the Institute for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen and began new systems of operating and organizing a hospital. She insisted on cleanliness, organized a new hot water system, and instituted several other changes to improve the effectiveness of her operation. Because most nurses were undertrained, Florence did a lot of the work around the hospital by herself to make sure it was up to her health code. But then she began to train nurses herself, as it was almost impossible to find any nurses already trained to her high standards. Working at this hospital was tough, changing how it was run so that her patients would get the best care possible, but Florence was living her calling.

In 1854 England, France and Turkey went to war against Russia. English soldiers were sent to the Black Sea to fight against the Russians. The battles they fought there were terrible, and many men were badly injured on the battlefield. The British army had brought almost no medical supplies and the few doctors they did have were very poorly organized. But you won't believe this! The British government asked Florence to take a group of nurses to Scutari, a town in the country of Turkey, to start a hospital there for the wounded and sick soldiers. **(FLORENCE #2)** When she and her nurses arrived in Turkey, they were just horrified. The building they had been given for a hospital was filthy and gloomy with miles of hallways. Worse, it had been built over the top of open sewers and smelled terrible. When she arrived, the place was already crowded with wounded men, and more soldiers were arriving daily. There was no place to cook, and there was very little water. The haunting sounds of men crying in pain could be heard throughout the whole building.

Even though the hospital was dirty and she was overwhelmed with her new duty, Florence went to work. Florence had brought some supplies with her, and what she didn't have, she managed to find. Florence and her team painted and cleaned the building. She rented a house and set up a laundry to begin washing the sheets. Kitchens were organized. She worked endlessly, and yet, every night she found the time to take her lantern and walk from one end of the hospital to the other, nearly four miles long. **(FLORENCE #3)** Wow! Four miles is a long walk. Your school isn't even four miles long. Through the halls, every inch of space was filled with sick and wounded men. She comforted them as she could, talking to them, cheering them up, writing letters for some, and sometimes just sitting with some, holding his hand as he passed away. To the men, she seemed like a saint, and she became famous as the "lady with the lamp". *(hold up a lamp and walk slowly around the stage)*

Florence's teachings helped to change the way hospitals were run not just in England, but all over the world! Most importantly, Florence Nightingale began a school for nurses. The school, Nightingale Nurses, became famous throughout the world, and as a result of her work, the profession of nursing became respectable, and hospitals became the clean, pleasant places we know today.

If Florence could become a nurse, I could too! **(CLARA #2)** I spent a lot of years as a teacher, but I knew about nursing from looking after my brother David when he got sick, and I thought maybe I could use my skills for the soldiers. Our soldiers needed help badly. **(CIVIL WAR**

**SLIDE #3)** We weren't prepared for the Civil War, and when the first volunteers arrived, we saw that they had been attacked on their way to Washington and some were wounded and hurt. Our army was just getting organized and wasn't ready yet to assist them.

I went home and packed up all the food, soap, and candles I could find. I ripped up my bedsheets to make bandages. (*Rip up cloth or show cloth to students*) It took five men to carry all the boxes I brought back of supplies. But it wasn't enough. I wrote letters to everyone I knew, and soon supplies began to arrive from homes all over the North. I knew that on the battlefields there were men suffering and dying every day, without proper care of any kind. It took me a long time to get permission from the government to go to the battlefield and work as a nurse. They said women didn't belong on a battlefield, but I knew that wasn't true. Who remembers the name of the female nurse who came before me? (*wait for answers*) Yes! Florence Nightingale! In 1862 I was finally given a military pass to the front lines.

At the first battlefield to which I arrived, the army doctor had just run out of bandages, and as I drove up with a wagon filled with supplies, he said he felt that heaven had sent him an angel.

**(CLARA #3)** Well, someone heard him and put it into a newspaper, and before long, people all over the country were calling me the Angel of the Battlefield. I went from battlefield to battlefield, doing everything I could to help.

**DELIVER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BASED ON AGE AND AUDIENCE:**

**K-3:** It was dangerous out on the battlefield, and there were some moments when our enemy stormed the battlefield while I was trying to heal the men in our army. I even took care of one of my students that I had all those years ago. His arm was hurt badly, and I even joked with him and said he wouldn't be able to carry all those textbooks I gave him. *(laugh loudly)* I helped heal his wounds, but I also made that soldier smile, and it brought me so much joy knowing that I was making a difference for our country and for that young man.

**4-8:** Though I wasn't a soldier fighting physically in a battle, I was fighting the sickness and wounds, and fear that was on that battlefield. And it was dangerous to be a nurse in the Civil War. As I was tending to the wounds of a boy, a bullet pierced the sleeve of my blouse and killed the boy as I held him. It was horrific. In Virginia, my experiences as a teacher and a nurse would come together. I treated a young man who had been one of my students when I was teaching. His arm had been removed from a blast. When he asked me if his arm would be alright, I told him sadly that he wouldn't be able to carry my books anymore as he had done years before. The young man smiled and said he would have to use the other arm. *(laugh loudly)* I helped heal his wounds, but I also made that soldier smile, and it brought me so much joy knowing that I was making a difference for our country, and for that young man.

It's crazy to think that I was once a quiet, shy young girl, afraid of the world, yet I was almost shot on the battlefield of the Civil War trying to save lives through medicine. And the craziest part of it all is that when I was standing on those battlefields treating the wounded soldiers, I scarcely remember feeling any fear. There was just too much work to be done, and too many

lives that might be saved. I had to stay focused. Letting fear control me wouldn't have let me help those men in war.

After working so hard in the war, I went to Europe to rest, and while traveling in Europe, a man named Louis Appia came to see me. He had heard of my work on battlefields and wanted me to know about a new organization that had been started in Europe. The group had started in Switzerland in 1863 (**RED CROSS SLIDE #1**) and was called The International Red Cross. Have you guys heard of this organization before?

*(wait for answers)*

Does anyone know what they do? Take a wild guess if you don't know!

*(wait for answers)*

That's correct! They offer medical assistance. Many people in Europe were horrified at the lack of medical care for soldiers in wartime, so this new organization had been formed to train groups of volunteers in peacetime so that in wars, there would be someone ready and prepared to give medical assistance to soldiers from both sides. Before I could leave to return home, I got a chance to see just how this worked. Another war had begun between France and Germany. I went out to see if I could help and found myself assisting again on the front lines. Almost accidentally, I had become the first American Red Cross volunteer. You see, the United States was the only major country that had not joined the Red Cross. When I returned home, I set out to change that.

In 1878, I took a letter from the President of the International Red Cross to the office of the President of the United States, President Hayes. **(HAYES SLIDE)** But he and the rest of our government refused to join. Together with some friends, in 1881, we founded the American National Red Cross. I was made the President of the American Red Cross, **(RED CROSS SLIDE #2)** and in that same year, a massive forest fire in Michigan devastated large parts of the state, and this was the perfect time to show what we could do. We sent volunteers and \$80,000 worth of supplies to help. A year later, the new President, Chester A. Arthur **(ARTHUR SLIDE)** asked to see me. He was ready to allow the country to officially join the international organization. In his office that day, I confess I did something I never do: I broke down and cried with happiness. Today the American Red Cross has almost 600 chapters and 35,000 employees. It is responsible for helping people all over the world.

**ANNIE OAKLEY (4 min)**

***Costume change: Remove the apron and replace it cowboy hat to become Annie Oakley.***

*(Mobile Ed Time Machine)*

Hey, y'all! How's everyone doing? Did you guys get to meet my friend Clara? Isn't she incredible! Nursing out on the battlefield: I think she did incredible work. Does anyone want to be a doctor when they grow up?

*(wait for answers)*

That's incredible, everyone! But what about an actor? Any of those here?

*(wait for answers)*

Wow! Look at that! Now, I'm happy to tell you that I'm an actress myself. And seeing that I'm standing on a stage right now, I can't resist telling you that there was a time, hundreds of years ago, when women weren't even allowed to be actresses. There were no movies and no television in those days, but there were plays. How many of you have seen a play?

*(wait for answers)*

That's just lovely! What plays have you seen?

*(wait for answers)*

I love those too!

Have any of you heard of a man named **(SHAKESPEARE SLIDE)** William Shakespeare?

*(wait for hands)*

He wrote some of the most famous plays that have ever been written, but in his time, all the women's parts were played by men because women were not allowed on stage. Shortly after Mr. Shakespeare died, women were allowed on stage for the first time, and people must have liked how women impacted performances because there have been actresses ever since.

However, one of the most famous woman entertainers was not an actress. Just before the Civil War began, a girl was born in 1860 on a farm near Cincinnati, Ohio. **(ANNIE OAKLEY SLIDE #1)** When she was young, her father died suddenly, and because her mother couldn't manage without him, this girl lived in an orphanage and then later with some cruel foster parents. She never forgot those terrible experiences. When she was reunited with her mother, she tried to help the family by taking her father's rifle and hunting for food. She grew to be a fine shot. So fine

that men eventually convinced her to give shooting exhibitions. I'll tell you guys a secret: Her name was Annie Moses, and that was me!

I started to get pretty famous if I do say so myself, and when I married Frank Butler, we were asked to join one of the largest traveling shows in the world. It was a Wild West Circus owned by the famous cowboy Buffalo Bill Cody. I changed my name to Annie Oakley, (**ANNIE OAKLEY SLIDE #2**) and with this show, I traveled all over the world, amazing people everywhere with my ability to shoot a gun better than almost anyone, including men around me. Let me show you one of my acts! (**PLAY ANNIE VIDEO**). I learned to do amazing things with a rifle. One of my best tricks was to aim my rifle over my shoulder using a mirror to see where I was shooting, and in this way, shoot a cigarette out of the mouth of my husband. For twenty years or more, I was one of the biggest stars in the world, but everywhere I went, I always remembered my time in the orphanage, and my heart always went out to poor children everywhere. I constantly gave free show tickets to orphans and put on special shows to raise money for them.

While I was entertaining people with my marksmanship, other women were changing the world with one act of bravery at a time, redefining roles for women in society. During the nineteenth century, science was a field dominated by men. In Paris, a Polish woman named Marie Curie, (**MARIE CURIE SLIDE #1**) working quietly with her husband in a small shed behind a university, was leading the world of science into the twentieth century. Born in Poland in 1867, Marie moved to Paris in 1891 to study at the great Sorbonne school in Paris. She earned degrees

in Physics and another in Mathematics, (**MARIE CURIE SLIDE #2**) and then went to work doing scientific research. Not to earn money, but for the pure joy of increasing the knowledge of the world. Working with few resources and little money, she made discoveries that taught the world about radiation and led to the use of X-ray machines and nuclear energy today. In a previously all-male field, Marie Curie became the first woman to win the Nobel prize in science. Sadly, it took years to learn the dangers of radiation, and for much of her life Marie suffered unknowingly the effects of radiation sickness. Having become famous all over the world, she died quietly in 1934.

While I was dazzling audiences with my sharp-eyed shooting, and Marie Curie was unknowingly doing damage to her own eyes through constant exposure to radiation, a pair of women, one with poor eyesight and another with no sight at all were also changing our world. Their names were Annie Sullivan and Helen Keller.

**ANNE SULLIVAN:** (6 min)

*Costume change: Remove cowboy hat and replace it with shawl/scarf to become Annie*

*Sullivan.*

*(Mobile Ed Time Machine)*

Well, hello there! My name is Anne Sullivan (**ANNE SULLIVAN SLIDE**), and they've asked me to tell you a little bit about myself and my famous student. We've heard about nurses, scientists, spies, and actors: does anyone want to be a teacher here?

*(wait for answers)*

That's wonderful everyone! Teachers have very important jobs. Let me tell you!

**DELIVER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BASED ON AGE AND AUDIENCE:**

**K-3:** My parents came from Ireland to America to try to find a better life, but they didn't. My family was still poor. My mother couldn't walk well, and my father wasn't around very much. I got an eye disease called Trachoma (**EYEBALL SLIDE**) when I was around five and I couldn't see well. After my father died, he sent me and my brother to live in a poorhouse, but then my brother passed away in the poorhouse. I tried protecting him as much as I could, but the poorhouse was just terrible. Everyone was sick. *(crying)* I was sad at first, of course, but then I decided to keep living my life. I begged to go to school, and I was finally sent away to one. And this school was amazing! It was a school designed to teach the blind! I got to learn regular studies, but I also got to learn to communicate with the blind and deaf, which is not something many people could do. Blind and deaf people weren't treated very well, either. But now, a new system had been created to communicate by spelling letters into people's hands. It was called the "manual alphabet." I also learned a special writing system called Braille (**PLAY BRAILLE VIDEO/SLIDE**) that helps people who can't see and read through feeling with their fingers. I even had surgery to help me see better! I graduated from the school, and there was a girl who needed a teacher. I was assigned to her, and her name was Helen Keller.

**4-8:** My parents were from Ireland and came to America to try and find a better life. But they never did really. I was born in 1866, and my family was always poor. My mother was partly crippled, and my father wasn't around much. When I was five, I got an eye disease called

Trachoma which left me almost blind (**EYEBALL SLIDE**). My mother died and my father couldn't manage, so my younger brother Jimmy and I were shipped off to the poorhouse to live. I don't mean to upset you, but it was a terrible place, filled with people who were sick, dying, or half-mad. I tried to look after little Jimmy, but it was impossible to care for him in a place like that. One night he died, and they took him away. I was so sad and lonely. But instead, I tried to fight back. I begged for help from an inspector and told him I wanted to go to school. He arranged to have me sent to a fine school as a charity case. This school was for teaching the blind. There, I received not only a regular education but also learned a way to communicate with people who could not see or hear. No one had been able to do this before, and people who couldn't see or hear had usually been dismissed as beyond help and put into facilities for mental health. But now, a system had been developed to communicate by spelling letters into people's hands. It was called the "manual alphabet", and I learned how to use it as well as to read the special writing that we have for sightless people. It's called Braille after the Frenchman who created it (**PLAY BRAILLE VIDEO/SLIDE**). They also did some operations on my eyes that allowed me to see properly again. When I was twenty years old, I graduated from the school and the director came to me with a special assignment. There was a girl who needed a teacher. He wanted to know if I would be interested in teaching her. Her name was Helen Keller.

Helen Keller (**HELEN KELLER SLIDE**) was born in Alabama in 1880. Her father had been an army captain who had fought in the Civil War. She had been a very bright baby, but when she was nineteen months old, she developed a fever that made her very sick for a few days. When the fever went away, it left Helen blind and unable to hear any sounds. For years, Helen grew up in a

world of complete darkness and silence. All she knew was smell, taste, and touch. It was as though night came to her and never left. Gradually she stopped waiting for the day. But she was still very smart, and the world of darkness left her so frustrated that she had poor behavior. Her parents struggled to control her poor behavior. But through friends, they were put in touch with the director of the school from which I graduated, and through the school, they were put in touch with me.

When I first saw Helen, I knew my work would not be easy. She had very frustrating behavior, used to getting her own way, and throwing tantrums if she didn't. Of course, she was very frustrated on the inside, not being able to hear and see, and that's why she acted this way. She came to me the first day and felt all over my face with her hands (*demonstrate with own hands*), to see what I "looked like". Everyone, gently grab your own cheeks and feel your face a little, just like Helen did. Everyone's face is unique, and belongs to themselves. This is how Helen learned to identify people around her because she couldn't see them.

Helen began her "tricks" at the first meal. At breakfast, as she was used to doing, she went around the table feeling each plate and taking whatever she wanted to eat. When she got to my plate, I slapped her hand away. I needed to show her that behavior like that wasn't acceptable behavior. You should have seen the tantrum she threw. I won the fight that day, but both of us ended up crying.

So there would be few distractions, I arranged for Helen and me to live alone together in a small house a little ways from the main house. I began to take her hand whenever she was touching something and spelled the word for that thing into her hand. (*demonstrate on own hand*) She loved this but thought it was some kind of game. I couldn't get through to her that these spelling games were a way to "talk" to each other. We were outside one day, and I was spelling the words "water" and "mug" into her hand and trying to get her to understand that there was a difference between the mug and the wet stuff inside. Someone was using the water pump (**WATER WELL SLIDE**). I took her hand, thrust it under the water, and then quickly spelled the word for water into her other hand. Slowly at first and then faster and faster. It was a miracle! Suddenly, Helen's face lit up with excitement. The mystery of language became clear to her, and she realized that everything had a name. Over the next few weeks, there was no stopping her. I must have taught her hundreds of words in that time. She remembered each one perfectly, and she always wanted more. One day, she stopped and placed her hand not on another object but on me. I took her hand and slowly spelled out T-E-A-C-H-E-R: teacher. And from that time on, that is what she always called me.

Well, Helen Keller not only went on to learn to read Braille (**HELEN AND ANNE SLIDE**), but to write as well, even learning to speak. She studied German, French, Latin, Greek, and Roman history, and later physics, astronomy, and mathematics. She wrote books about her experiences, and she became famous all over the world. Helen triumphed totally over adversity and used her fame to try and help others. She became known as a great humanitarian (**HELEN SLIDE #2**).

Throughout most of her life, I, her "teacher", remained by her side, always guiding, supporting, loyal, and giving to the end.

During our current century, many women have "Made a Difference ". Margaret Mead, **(MARGARET SLIDE)** a young woman from New York, spent her entire life studying and writing about the peoples of remote South Pacific islands, to compare their society and way of life to our own. Meanwhile, an English woman named Mary Leakey **(LEAKEY SLIDE)** spent her life in Africa, digging in a place called the Olduvai Gorge, looking for bones and fossils (*pretend to dig through the ground*) that would help us to understand the very earliest ancestors of mankind. Mary Leakey discovered fossils left by human-like people who lived more than three and a half million years ago!

While women like Mary Leakey and Margaret Mead were adding to the knowledge of the world by working in remote places, other women were pushing back the frontiers of achievement in the full glare of international publicity. Nursing, education, science, and entertainment had been opened as fields in which women might take part, but there were still areas that were thought too dangerous for women.... areas as flying **(WRIGHT BROTHERS SLIDE)**.

*At this point, the performer steps out of Annie Sullivan and begins costume change, which takes place through the following. Scarf or shawl should be removed, the long skirt should be removed revealing either khaki slacks or riding pants and boots underdressed beneath. The*

*wig may now be removed to reveal shorter "real" hair. A leather flying jacket may be donned to complete the look.*

*(Mobile Ed Time Machine)*

**AMELIA EARHART:** (4 min)

Hi! I heard someone mention flying. Well, that's my specialty!

**DELIVER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BASED ON AGE AND AUDIENCE:**

**K-3:** You might have already heard of the Wright brothers; they were the first ones to ever fly an airplane. Years later, Blanche Stuart Scott (**BLANCHE SLIDE**) became the first woman ever to fly a plane. Harriet Quimby (**HARRIET SLIDE**) was the first woman to get her pilot's license which allowed her to fly planes. But planes weren't safe yet, they were still figuring out how to design them correctly. Quimby passed away because her plane wasn't safe. But that was one hundred years ago; planes are very safe today! After Quimby passed away, people tried to claim that women shouldn't fly airplanes because it was too dangerous, but that didn't stop us! Bessie Coleman (**BESSIE SLIDE**) grew up very poor and couldn't afford flying lessons. Even if she could afford to go to school, no one would let her into their school because of the color of her skin. Bessie was Black and Native American. Bessie eventually had flying lessons in France, and she was a fantastic pilot! She was known for her flying tricks and became known as "Brave Bessie". Many other women started becoming famous pilots as well, and one of them was me.

**4-8:** As you might already know, the first airplane was flown by the Wright brothers in 1903. Well, less than seven years later, Blanche Stuart Scott (**BLANCHE SLIDE**) became the first woman in this country to pilot a plane, and less than a year after that, Harriet Quimby

**(HARRIET SLIDE)** became the first American woman to obtain a pilot's license. Now about one hundred years ago, planes were brand new and quite experimental and dangerous. In 1912, Harriet Quimby was killed when she fell out of her plane during a flight. Now if that had happened to a man, they would have said it was just bad luck, but when something like that happened to a woman, people were quick to say it was a sign that flying was just too dangerous and that women couldn't do it. Even so, women kept trying. Bessie Coleman (**BESSIE COLEMAN**), who came from a terribly poor family in Texas, worked and struggled for years trying to scrape up the money to learn to fly. And she even had to travel to France to receive her flying lessons because, in those days, no American flying school would admit a Black and Native American woman. But once she learned, she was a fantastic pilot! By 1925 she was nationally known as a fine pilot and was known for her flying tricks. Many other women were also becoming famous as flyers, and I was one of them.

My name is Amelia Earhart. (**AMELIA SLIDE**) I was born in Kansas in 1897, and to be quite honest, the first time I saw a plane I was not at all impressed. I helped during the first World War as a nurse and during that time speaking with fighter pilots, I became infatuated with the idea of flight. I got my license to fly in 1921 but didn't think I could earn my living as a pilot. By 1926, I was living in Boston, Massachusetts, trying to help struggling immigrant families. Well, in 1927, a man named Charles Lindbergh became the first person to ever fly solo all the way across the Atlantic Ocean, (**OCEAN SLIDE**) from the United States to France. Instantly, he became famous all over the world. A short time later, a wealthy American woman named Amy Phipps Guest offered to pay the expenses for a woman to also fly the Atlantic.

They selected me to be that woman, but they weren't going to allow me to be the pilot, just a passenger. A man named Wilmer Stultz was the pilot, and another man was the co-pilot. I was really just along for the ride. It took twenty hours and forty minutes, but on June 18, 1928, I became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean! The fame I received allowed me to make the money to fly. A few years later in 1932, I flew the same trip, only this time all alone, and became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.

Over the years, I set quite a few records for distance and speed, and as a result, I was able to meet a lot of famous people. Do you know who the most interesting person I met was? Why, it was Eleanor Roosevelt, (**ELEANOR SLIDE**) the wife of the president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. She was an amazing woman. She truly cared about people and became so involved in so many important social and political issues that she changed the way people thought of the wife of a president. Her husband was crippled by polio, a disease that left him unable to use his legs. So during the time, he was president, Eleanor was his eyes and ears, constantly touring around the country and then reporting back to him what she had seen and heard. She had a tremendous influence on how this country was run while he was president, and afterward, she continued to serve the country as a diplomat.

But for me, well, all I ever really wanted to do was fly. Next month I'm going to set a new record. My co-pilot and I are setting out to become the first people to fly all the way around the world (**PLANE SLIDE**). We are going to fly from Florida, down through Central America, and

then across the South Atlantic to Africa. From there, we will fly up through India and across Southeast Asia before turning due east to fly all the way across the Pacific Ocean, toward home to the west coast of the USA. The whole trip will take about a month and cover about thirty thousand miles. That's a very long distance! Do you guys think that's a wild idea? (*wait for answers*) Well, I'm excited to do it because I think it's important to challenge myself to do things that are scary, to do things people tell me are impossible for me to do. I hope you guys can challenge yourselves just like I am (*points to the crowd*)!

**CONCLUSION:** (2 min)

*Mobile Ed Time Machine: Present Day*

***Costume change: Remove flying jacket.***

**PERFORMER:** Well, during that long flight home across the Pacific Ocean, Amelia apparently failed to find the small island where she was supposed to land and refuel. No one knows exactly what happened to her, but her plane disappeared on July 2, 1937, and she has never been heard from again.

We marvel at what all these women accomplished (**CONCLUSION SLIDE**). Harriet Tubman. Florence Nightingale. Clara Barton. Annie Oakley. Marie Curie. Anne Sullivan. Helen Keller. Bessie Coleman. And Amelia Earhart. Not just because they were famous women who did great things, but because they were great people who inspire us today, to do hard things. Though these women might have felt nervous to follow their passions and callings, they did it anyway. Even

though many people didn't believe in them to follow their dreams, they believed in themselves. I hope all of you will believe in yourself this week, next week, and next year. Dreams take a long time to achieve, and if you give up, you know for sure you'll never reach them.

**(CLOSING SLIDE)**