

# She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World

## She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World

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Ages: 4-8; Grades PreK-3

Themes: Women's History, Biography

Running Time: 12 minutes

### SUMMARY

This movie draws readers into the lives of thirteen American women who, through grace, grit, optimism, and courage, persisted through obstacles that held them, and other women, back. Students may recognize some of the women such as Harriet Tubman, Helen Keller, and Oprah Winfrey, and they will become familiar with new heroines such as Clara Lemlich, Nellie Bly, and Claudette Colvin. The through-line of each of these women's stories is their determination to change the world, not just for themselves, but for girls and women everywhere. This movie will spark students' interests into lesser-known, but not less important, pivotal people and events in American history, and will inspire all viewers to persist in the following of their own hopes and dreams.

### Common Core Connections:

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will define and discuss persistence.
- Students will define, identify, and deconstruct stereotypes.
- Students will infer qualities of strong leaders.
- Students will research an important historical figure and present the findings of their research.
- Students will write a personal narrative.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Define and discuss persistence with students. Use the following method to introduce and reinforce the word:

- Step 1: Write and say the word. Have students repeat orally.
  - Step 2: Tell a short story or give a brief description of the meaning of the word.
  - Step 3: Give students the opportunity to talk to each other to explain the meaning in their own words.
  - Step 4: Model drawing a picture that shows the meaning of the word.
  - Step 5: Have students write the word and draw their own picture that helps them remember the meaning of the word. Students who are proficient writers can also write a definition in their own words.
- Encourage students to watch and listen for the words "She persisted" and to think about how their characters' actions showed persistence. (CCRA.R.4)

Discuss stereotypes. Make a list of things that students think are "boy things" and things that students think are "girl things." Ask students to explain why they have these views. Ask students if boys can ever do any of the "girl things" or vice versa. Explain that stereotypes are ideas about groups of people that are based on one characteristic of some of those people, but that do not accurately reflect all of the characteristics of those people. Give students examples, such as: Native Americans are sometimes stereotyped as always wearing feather headdresses, when in fact only some tribes of Native Americans wear leather headdresses; or, pitbull dogs are stereotyped as being mean, but not all pitbulls are mean. Help students understand why stereotypes may make people feel bad and create false impressions. Generate a list of stereotypes that students have heard or experienced. Work with students to give examples of how the stereotypes are untrue. Lead into the video by saying: "We will watch a video about thirteen American women who showed persistence to prove stereotypes wrong. Watch and listen to learn about how they went against the stereotypes of their times."

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Follow up on the discussion of stereotypes. Guiding questions:

- What were some stereotypes about women that you heard in the movie?
- How did the different women in the book help to disprove those stereotypes?
- What other stereotypes did you hear about in the movie? How did some of the women fight against those?
- How have people's ideas about women changed?
- What stereotypes about girls and women exist today? What about stereotypes about boys and men? What actions can you take to dispel those stereotypes? (CCRA.R.1, CCRA.SL.1)

Guide a discussion about leadership and persistence. Help students draw inferences about what qualities strong leaders have, based on the women featured in the movie. Guiding questions:

- In what ways did the women in the movie lead others?
- What words can you use to describe the women in the movie?
- What obstacles did the women have to overcome?
- How did the women show persistence?

Follow up on the discussion by having students each choose one of the women to research further. Independently, or with a group, students can explore nonfiction texts and the internet to learn more about the life of each woman. Culminate the research with one of the following project suggestions:

- Annotated and illustrated biographical timeline
- PowerPoint presentation
- Dramatic reenactment of an important turning-point or event in the person's life with commentary on the impact of the event
- Informational essay
- Fictional interview with the person (CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.R.9, CCRA.W.8, CCRA.SL.2)

Have students write a personal narrative about a time that they showed persistence. Teach students strategies for generating ideas for writing, such as: listing important events, listing times with important people, listing important places, and listing times when they felt a strong emotion. Move on to having students plan by orally telling their stories to a partner, emphasizing a beginning, middle, and end. Next, have students continue planning by illustrating important parts of the story in pages of a booklet, or for more proficient writers, begin to draft. Finally, have students write the stories as they told and drew them. Consider teaching revision strategies, such as: add details to show, not tell, about an event; add dialogue; and reworking the beginning and/or ending. Be sure to leave a day at the end of the project for sharing stories! (CCRA.W.3)

### MORE TITLES ON WOMEN'S HISTORY:

**Coretta Scott** written by Ntozake Shange; illust. by Kadir Nelson

**Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa** written by Andrea Davis Pinkney; illust. by Brian Pinkney

**Helen's Big World: The Life of Helen Keller** written by Doreen Rappaport; illust. by Matt Tavares

**I Could Do That! Esther Morris Gets Women the Vote** written by Linda Arms White; illust. by Nancy Carpenter

**Rosa** written by Nikki Giovanni; illust. by Bryan Collier

**Who Says Women Can't Be Doctors? The Story of Elizabeth Blackwell** written by Tanya Lee Stone; illust. by Marjorie Priceman

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