Great Women in U.S. History

**SUMMARY** This nonfiction reader provides brief biographies of three women who broke down barriers against their gender in the early twentieth century: Babe Didrikson Zaharias, Amelia Earhart, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

**LESSON VOCABULARY**
- celebrate  
- continued  
- current  
- drowned  
- medals  
- stirred  
- strokes

**INTRODUCE THE BOOK**

**INTRODUCE THE TITLE AND AUTHOR** Discuss the title and the author of *Great Women in U.S. History*. Point out that this is a biography. Discuss with students what a biography is, and have them predict who this biography is about, based on the cover illustration.

**BUILD BACKGROUND** Discuss with students some of the activities that their mothers, grandmothers, and aunts perform in their daily lives, including work outside the house. Then, have girls in the class describe some of the things they like to do outside of school and what they plan to do in the future. Have boys in the class tell what their sisters, female cousins, or female friends do in their spare time. Ask students if girls can do the same things as boys do. Point out that not long ago, society believed there were certain things women should not do, such as vote.

**ELL** Have ELL students describe the social roles of women in their home countries and compare them to women’s roles in the United States.

**PREVIEW/USE TEXT FEATURES** Have students skim through the book and describe some of the activities the women are doing in the pictures. Invite students to make predictions about what types of women are featured in this biography.

**READ THE BOOK**

**SET PURPOSE** Turn to page 3 of the reader, and read together with students the names of the women who are featured in the book. Guide students to set their own purposes for reading by having them decide which woman they would like to learn more about.

**STRATEGY SUPPORT: QUESTIONING** Tell students to ask themselves questions as they read. This will help them focus on what they are reading. Then, have students answer the questions that they posed earlier. When they finish reading, ask students if they have more questions. Suggest that they write down their new questions and research the answers.

**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

**PAGES 4–5** Name one statement of fact and one statement of opinion you see on these pages. How do you know which is which? (Possible responses: Fact: Babe Didrikson Zaharias was born in Texas in 1911. Opinion: She knew she was just as strong as any boy. The fact can be checked in a book. The opinion is just Babe’s belief about herself.)

**PAGE 9** What is the main idea of this page? (Possible response: Amelia Earhart proved that women could do daring things.)

**PAGE 11** Did you find anything confusing on this page? How did you fix up your understanding? (Possible response: I didn’t know what polio was. I read on and found that Eleanor became Franklin’s nurse and saw in the picture that he couldn’t walk. I guessed that polio is a disease.)

**PAGE 13** After reading this page, what do you think is the main idea of this book? (Possible response: There are great women in history who worked hard to gain respect for all women.)
REVISIT THE BOOK

READER RESPONSE

1. Possible responses: Fact: She was born on July 24, 1897, in Kansas. I can check an encyclopedia. Opinion: Most people didn’t think that women should fly planes. This is a statement of the author’s ideas or beliefs.

2. Responses will vary but should include a question followed by a strategy, such as read on, to answer the question.


4. I think Amelia Earhart was the most daring because she flew across an ocean alone.

EXTEND UNDERSTANDING Point out to students that biographies are often about exceptional people, or people who have done exceptional things. Explain to students that authors may use adjectives in their biographies to express to the reader just how important the subject is. Have students look through the book for adjectives that Megan Litwin uses to describe the women in this biography. Discuss how the adjectives help the reader appreciate the accomplishments of these women.

RESPONSE OPTIONS

WRITING Have students write brief biographies of people that they consider important in their lives, such as a relative, teacher, or coach. Remind students to use main ideas and supporting details to describe their subjects, as well as statements of fact and opinion.

SOCIAL STUDIES

CONNECTION Have students research other important women in history. Tell students to write reports and include information about each person’s childhood, special obstacles, and accomplishments. Remind students to include paragraphs about why these women are important to remember.

Skill Work

TEACH/REVIEW VOCABULARY

Write the vocabulary words on the chalkboard. Form groups, and assign one word to each. Have each group find its word in the book. Tell students to create word webs for their words based on context clues in the book. Have groups share their webs and check their definitions against the Glossary.

TARGET SKILL AND STRATEGY

FACT AND OPINION Explain to students that a statement of fact is a statement that can be proved true or false. A statement of opinion is a person’s beliefs or ideas about something. Remind students that they just need to know that the statement can be checked by looking in reference sources, by asking an expert, or by observing. Give examples of statements of facts and opinions, and discuss with students how to distinguish each. Then tell students to list one statement of fact and one statement of opinion for each of the three women profiled in the reader.

QUESTIONING Review with students that asking questions is a way to further understand a topic and gain more information. Ask students what questions they had about the story. Have students write down their questions; as they read they can see whether their questions are answered. If not, direct them to additional resources to complete their inquiry.

ADDITIONAL SKILL INSTRUCTION

MAIN IDEA AND DETAILS Review with students that the main idea is the most important idea about a topic of a passage or a selection. Supporting details are the smaller pieces of information about the main idea. Tell students to look for the main idea about each woman in the reader and find two details that support this idea.
Fact and Opinion

- A **statement of fact** is a statement that can be proved true or false. You can check a statement of fact by looking in reference sources, asking an expert, or observing.
- A **statement of opinion** is a person’s beliefs or ideas about something. You cannot prove whether it is true or false.

**Directions**  Read the following passage. Then answer the questions below.

In 1932, Babe went to the Olympic Games in Los Angeles. She set a world record in the javelin throw. Newspapers called her the “World’s Greatest Athlete.” Babe knew she could do anything she could put her mind to.

Next, Babe took up golfing. Her golf strokes were so strong that she became a champion at that too. In 1950, she was named the Outstanding Woman Athlete of the Half-Century. She died of cancer at a young age, but her memory and courage will live forever.

1. What is one statement of fact that the author makes in this passage?

2. Where could you check whether the statement is true or false?

3. What is one statement of opinion that the author makes in this passage?

4. How do you know that this is a statement of opinion?

5. Which sentence in this passage contains both a statement of fact and a statement of opinion? Which part is which?
Vocabulary

Directions Choose the word from the box that best matches each definition. Write the letters of the word on the lines.

Check the Words You Know

| __celebrate | __continued | __current | __drowned |
| __medals   | __stirred   | __strokes |           |

1. awakened or brought to the surface

2. to make known or famous

3. a small piece of metal, usually with a special design, given as an award for some outstanding act

4. went on in some action

5. in tennis, golf, etc., several strikings of the ball

6. died by suffocation in water

Directions Write down the letters from the numbered spaces above. Then unscramble the letters to form a word from the box. Use the word to answer the riddle below.

What word describes an event that is happening today?

7. ____________________________________________

Directions Write sentences as directed below.

8. Use the word stirred in a sentence about cooking.

9. Use the word celebrate in a sentence about your favorite holiday.