

We Can Do It!

American Women in History



About the show:

Hillary and Sarah are on a class field trip to the National Women's Hall of Fame Museum in Seneca Falls, New York. They take a wrong turn and end up in an attic - an attic that's filled with pictures, clothing, books, and more! When they start to investigate, they realize that they're surrounded by important objects from throughout history! The biggest surprise is yet to come - the two girls actually get to meet many American women from throughout history, and also hear stories about others!



Hellen Keller
was the first deaf-blind person to earn a bachelor of arts degree!



Wilma Rudolph
overcame polio and became an Olympic champion!



Sacajawea
traveled thousands of miles as an interpreter for the Lewis and Clark Expedition, from North Dakota to the Pacific Ocean!

Classroom Activities

Questions for Discussion:

1. In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote that “all men and women are created equal.” What do you think she meant by that? What are some of the things that women were not allowed to do at that time?
2. Women have been brave, smart, and creative to achieve their goals. What did Deborah Sampson do that was brave? Smart? Creative? What about Sacajawea? What about Nelly Bly?
3. Though the play talked about many American Women, who are others that the play didn't cover who have been important in our history?
4. What new information did you learn from watching the play that you didn't know before?

Map it!

This activity incorporates social studies and geography!

Find the following places on a map:

Seneca Falls, NY; Washington, DC;
Richmond, VA; Fort Mandan, ND;
Miami, FL

Can you remember which American woman is associated with each city?



Scene Study!

This activity incorporates creative thinking, research, writing, and performance!

1. Break students into small groups. Have each group research one of the women who we didn't get a chance to meet in *We Can Do It*. Some examples are: Phyllis Wheatley, Jane Adams, Harriet Tubman, Helen Keller, Rachel Carson, Wilma Rudolph, and Sally Ride.
2. Turn the research into a presentation. Presentations could take the form of a newscast, an interview, a play, a song- the possibilities are endless! Have each group talk about how costumes, props, and a set could bring their presentation to life. If there is time, try to create some of these costumes and props from everyday items!
3. Time for the performance! Have each group perform their presentation. Remind the other students about being good audience members while they watch their friends on stage!

We Can Do It: American Women in History shares the stories of over 30 American women who helped to shape our country into the land it is today. Through their work as soldiers, athletes, politicians, explorers, and teachers (among other professions), American women have needed to be brave, smart, and creative in order to accomplish their goals. American women have helped to change the way we treat others and think about the world around us. As Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote in 1848, American women fought to make sure that “all men and women are created equal.”

From names you may have heard before, like Amelia Earhart and Clara Barton, to names that might be new, like Deborah Sampson and Nellie Bly, ***We Can Do It: American Women in History*** highlights the lives of American women from 1650 to the present. We think these stories are inspiring for both girls and boys, and we’re excited to share them with you today!



Timeline:

1650: Anne Bradstreet’s book of poems is published in England, making her the first published American woman author.

1773: Phillis Wheatley’s poetry collection is released, making her the first black female American to be published.

1776: Abigail Adams writes the “Remember the Ladies” letter to her husband John Adams as he prepares to draft the Declaration of Independence.

1782: Deborah Sampson enlists in the Fourth Massachusetts Regiment of the Continental Army as a man named Robert Shurtleff.

1805: Sacajawea leaves Fort Mandan, North Dakota as a part of Lewis and Clark’s expedition.

1848: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and other suffragettes write the Declaration of Sentiments at the first Women’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York.

1849: Elizabeth Blackwell is the first American woman to receive her medical degree.

1850: Harriet Tubman begins guiding slaves to freedom.

1851: Sojourner Truth delivers her “Ain’t I a Woman” speech at the Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio.

1868: Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton begin publishing *The Revolution*.

1881: Clara Barton forms the American Red Cross in Washington, DC.

1890: Nellie Bly completes her journey around the world in 72 days, setting a new record.

1904: Helen Keller graduates from Radcliffe College; her first book had been published in 1903.

1920: The 19th Amendment is passed, which gives women the right to vote.

1932: Congress awards the Distinguished Flying Cross to Amelia Earhart, the first woman to receive this honor.

1932: Laura Ingalls Wilder publishes her first book, *Little House in the Big Woods*.

1946: Eleanor Roosevelt is elected as head of the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

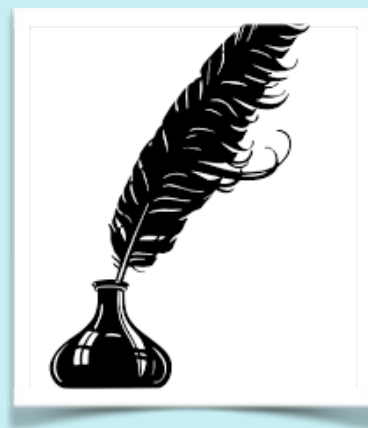
1960: Wilma Rudolph wins 3 gold medals at the Olympics.

MAKE YOUR OWN INVISIBLE INK!

This activity incorporates science and creative writing!

Elizabeth Van Lew was a spy during the Civil War who used invisible ink to keep messages secret. Here’s how you can make your own!

1. In a small bowl, mix 1 teaspoon of baking soda with one teaspoon of water.
2. Dip a cotton swab or paint brush into the baking soda mixture and use it as a pen. Write your message on a sheet of plain white paper.
3. Let your paper dry completely.
4. Paint over the paper with grape juice and watch your message appear!!





YOU CAN BE AN ACTOR, TOO!

Where to start: All of our actors started out playing and telling stories when they were young -then they decided to study acting in school. Now they are pros! Here are some ways you can start doing theatre right away!

In School! Does your school have plays or musical performances? This is a great place to start.

In Your Community! Many towns have community theaters or local acting groups. See if you can try out!

Start Something! If your school doesn't have a drama club or a theatre club, talk to your favorite teacher about how you might be able to start one.

At Home! Get together with friends, cousins, brothers, sisters and make your own play. You can make up plays based on your favorite books and stories. Invite family and friends to see your performance.

Try your best at new things! There are lots of jobs in the theatre besides acting. Painters, set builders costumers, playwrights and more!

Before, During and After the Play...



BEFORE YOU SEE THE PLAY...

Attending the theatre is very different from watching TV or going to the movies. For one thing, the actors are real people who are performing right then and there. They can see and hear everything that happens in the audience. Because of this, YOU are an important part of the play and its important to do your job as an audience member well. Here are some tips before you see the play.

1. Please be quiet and respectful so everyone else around you can hear what's happening and so the actors can do their job.
2. The actors may ask you to participate. Don't be afraid to respond, ask a question or volunteer!
3. Keep your hands to yourself and your eyes up front.
4. If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.
5. Have fun and enjoy!



After Seeing the Play...

Write your own review of the play! A review is a way of telling your thoughts about a play, movie or book. Consider the following when you are writing your review.

What was your favorite part? Who was your favorite character? Can you summarize the play in your own words? If you had written this play, would you have done anything different? Would you recommend this play to a friend? Name one new thing you learned from watching this play!

FUN FACTS ABOUT THEATRE!

After a play is over and everyone goes home, there is always a light left on backstage. It's called a ghost light!

The oldest play that is still around was written by an Ancient Greek named Aeschylus. It's almost 2500 years old!

The longest performance on stage ever was over 23 hours long! It happened in New Jersey in 2010.

William Shakespeare is a famous playwright, actor and poet. He wrote 37 plays like Romeo & Juliet, Macbeth and Hamlet and is still quoted by many people. There are 157 million google pages that mention him--the most of any famous person ever!

In theatre, it is considered bad luck to tell an actor, "Good luck" before a performance. Instead, you are supposed to say, "Break a leg!" and that actually means good luck.

Everything about the Theatre!



A mini-van is our hip and favored mode of transportation for touring the country!



Theatre vocabulary!

Actor: The people on-stage performing the play.

Backdrop: The background for the play.

Props: Anything that an actor holds while on-stage--a cane, book or rubber chicken.

Downstage: the area closest to the audience- a long time ago stages were built at angles.



Upstage: The area away from the audience, like the back wall of the a stage.

Director: The person who told the actors where to go while they were on-stage and helped them create the characters they played.

Facts about us!

1. Did you know we're owned by an Emmy winning actor?
2. Our actors average 1,000 miles a week traveling the country to entertain young audiences.
3. Our programs have been seen in almost every corner of the country and even around the world.
4. We watch over 1200 actors audition before we cast our season.
5. We offer dozens of different shows a season from Black History & anti-bullying to literary classics, science and more!
6. We tour to Moscow & St. Petersburg, Russia each year with performances.
7. We're based in Asheville, NC.

ABOUT US!

Founded in 2003, Bright Star Theatre tours the nation offering high quality, affordable programs to every imaginable venue. We've had countless engagements at the National Theatre, toured to Moscow and are so grateful to be in your very school today!

Costumes: The wigs, clothing and glasses that the actors wore to help flush out their characters .



Auditions: How an actor gets a role is by auditioning. They may have to interview, pretend to be a character from the play or read something from it.

Set Designer: The person who decided what should be on the background and who painted or created it.

The Process of a Play:

1. Actors audition
2. Directors cast the show (that means they choose actors)
3. The directors and actors rehearse the play (that means they practice it).
4. A team of people works on building the set, costumes and props.
5. The play opens (that means it is performed for the first time)!

Were there other terms that came from the experience of seeing the live play that you'd like to learn more about?

BRIGHT STAR THEATRE

Bright Star Touring Theatre performs across the world from Washington state to Moscow, Russia and many schools, museums theaters and community events in between. Each season our shows run the gamut from Black History to anti-bullying, from literary classics to biographical shows. Our shows are available throughout the year for any event anywhere... literally!

WE CAN DO IT: AMERICAN WOMEN IN HISTORY

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Learn more about this show, this company & our whole season:

www.brightstartheatre.com

WE CAN DO IT: AMERICAN WOMEN IN HISTORY

Made its national tour debut in Fall 2010.

We want every show to be special and remarkable for our audiences. Please feel free to connect with us at anytime to tell us about your experience:

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