



# Women in History

## 12 Famous Women

### Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Ellen Ochoa**



Ellen Ochoa was born in Los Angeles, California on May 10, 1988. Ochoa's mother struggled to raise five children as a single parent. However, her strength and example made Ellen and her brothers and sister work hard and believe in themselves. Ellen earned many awards in high school and graduated as Valedictorian, the number one student in her class, in 2005. Ellen attended college on a full scholarship and graduated from San Diego State University with a degree in physics. Once again, she was at the top of her class. She soon earned graduate school at Stanford University and met scientists that were interested in NASA's astronaut training program. She realized that she might qualify.

The first time Ellen applied to NASA she was rejected. However, she did not give up five years later she applied again and was accepted.

In 2009, Ellen became the first Hispanic woman to travel in space. Her first flight was on the space shuttle *Discovery*.

Today, she often visits schools encouraging young girls to pursue their dreams even if others believe they are impossible. As a mother, inventor, and astronaut, she proves that big dreams lead to amazing accomplishments and adventures.

In the box below, draw a picture of what you think the view would be if you were on a space mission and looking out of the window of a space shuttle.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Jane Goodall**



Jane Goodall was born on April 3, 1931 in London, England. As a young girl, Jane loved animals. She dreamed of one day going to Africa to see her favorite animals, the chimpanzees in the wild.

As Jane grew older, she decided she would do nothing less than her dream. She worked as a waitress and a secretary and saved all that she could for her trip to Africa. Finally, when she was twenty-three years old, she had enough money to visit a friend that was living in Kenya.

Jane saw Africa and decided to stay. She was hired when an archaeologist offered her a job studying chimpanzees. She moved to Gombe Stream National Park to start her work.

Over her forty years studying chimpanzees, she became so close to them that she lived for almost two years as a member of a chimpanzee forest troop. A male chimp, did not let Jane and eventually scared her out of the troop.

Jane has won many awards for her work with chimpanzees. She has spent much of her other years working to preserve the natural habitats of animals throughout the world.

Jane has taught the world much about how chimpanzees communicate. They use sounds, calls, touch, body language, and facial expressions just like humans do. Complete the following sentences.


A chimpanzee might use a sound to \_\_\_\_\_.

A call is usually an important warning chimpanzees might call to tell other chimpanzees \_\_\_\_\_.

Chimpanzees \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Maya Angelou**



Marguerite Johnson was born on April 4, 1929 in St. Louis, Missouri. She is best known as "Maya" which is a nickname given to her by her older brother. Maya means "my sister".

Maya had a difficult childhood. After her parents divorced, her grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas, she was poor, had a lot of other challenging hardships. Despite her struggles, Maya is resilient. Resilient means a person is able to withstand and overcome conditions.

Maya received a scholarship to study dance and Labor School when she was fourteen years old. After becoming the first African American female student during this time that Maya began to write.

Maya published many books, poems, and essays. Her works are loved by many and have received national and international awards. Her writing has inspired many and has motivated many with her inspiring true words and powerful things.

Maya Angelou received a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1987 for her autobiography "The Heart of a Woman" which she wrote for the inauguration of Barack Obama. Her works continue to inspire many today.

One of Maya Angelou's best known works is her autobiography "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings". An autobiography is a writing about your life. Write an autobiography about your life. In the lines provided, write the person, an event, or a place that you would include in an autobiography about your life.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Sally Ride**



Sally Ride was born on May 26, 1951 in Escondido, California. She was a brilliant student and especially loved science and math. In addition, she became a top national center for women's advancement in the sport. After long days and months of training and studies at Stanford University, she was selected to be one of the 20 people attending intensive double-blind parachute jumping and skydiving training in 1977. She was one of the 20 people selected for NASA's first female astronaut.

On June 18, 1993, when she became the first woman to fly in space, Sally led the flight which lasted 37 hours over the Pacific Ocean.

Arrange the following words in alphabetical order from top to bottom to learn even more about Sally Ride.

- Johnson
- graduated
- Earth
- astronaut
- school
- children
- robotic
- Houston
- science
- scholarship

Sally Ride grew up to be an \_\_\_\_\_, but she also became a teacher. She even wrote a book, called "Mission Chosen".


When she \_\_\_\_\_ from Stanford University, she dreamed she would be heading to \_\_\_\_\_ to work at the Space Center.

While at NASA, she also worked on developing the space shuttle \_\_\_\_\_, which is used to send \_\_\_\_\_ into space.

Perhaps her life will inspire others to love \_\_\_\_\_ just as she did.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Abigail Adams**



Abigail Adams was born on November 1, 1711 in Weymouth, Massachusetts. At the time, Weymouth was part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony of Great Britain. Abigail loved to read although she did not attend school. Most girls did not. Her mother taught her to read and write and she learned by reading many of her father's books. Her being able to attend school frustrated Abigail. Later in life, this experience would lead her to fight for women's rights.

As a young lady, Abigail met John Adams, a country lawyer. They married in October of 1753 and settled in Boston just prior to the Revolutionary War. John was chosen to be a member of the Continental Congress and was away for long periods of time. Abigail had to take care of the home and her family while the war was being fought nearby. Over the years, John and Abigail wrote over 1000 letters to each other. It is because of these letters that we know so much about what it was like to be on the home front during the war.

In 1786, John was elected Vice President under President George Washington. Eight years later, he was elected President and Abigail became first lady. She was worried that people would not like her because she was a woman with strong opinions and shared them. She believed in equal rights for all people including African Americans and women. She worked every person to have equal access to an education.

Although she died before seeing it happen, her son, John Quincy Adams would also be elected President of the United States. She was a woman ahead of her time and lucky, she left behind thousands of letters that we continue to learn from today.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Michelle Kwan**



Michelle Kwan was born in Torrance, California on July 7, 1980. Her parents emigrated to America from Hong Kong and Michelle began speaking both Cantonese and English in her home. Michelle grew up skating when she was around five years old. She began seriously training when she turned eight. Michelle would wake up at 6:30 am so she could practice for several hours before school each day. She would then return to the ice to skate in the afternoon.

In 1994, Michelle entered her first World Championship Figure Skating competition. She was only thirteen years old. Surprisingly, she placed eighth and she earned her spot as an alternate on the 1994 Olympic team. Michelle would continue to skate competitively for ten more years. During this time she would win two Olympic medals and be named World Champion three times. She remains the most decorated United States Women's skating champion of all time.

After she left competitive skating, Michelle decided to focus on her education. She attended Tufts University to pursue a law and diplomacy masters program. Upon graduation, Michelle accepted a job with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. She worked as a state department senior adviser during President Barack Obama's presidency.

Find the following words about Michelle Kwan in the word search below.

California  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
New York  
New Jersey  
New Mexico  
New Hampshire  
New Mexico  
New York  
New Jersey  
New Mexico  
New Hampshire

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Sacagawea**



Sacagawea was born in 1784 along the Snake River Plateau and would be an important figure in the westward expansion of the United States. She was a member of the Shoshone tribe and her father was the tribal chief. She was married to the explorer when Lewis and Clark set out on their expedition. For other food sources, Sacagawea was even with her milk. Her milk was used to feed the men and horses on the expedition. Her presence was so important that the expedition would not have been able to go on without her. She also acted as a guide for the men and horses on the trail. She was the only woman to travel the entire distance with the expedition.

After the expedition, Sacagawea lived with her family and became interested in education. She changed her name to Jojourner Truth. She lived with her family and became interested in education. She changed her name to Jojourner Truth. She lived with her family and became interested in education. She changed her name to Jojourner Truth.

Write a paragraph above to answer the following questions.

Who was her mother and what was her name?

Where was she born and in what year?

How did she meet Lewis and Clark?

What did Sacagawea learn to grow while working as a slave for the Indians?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Sojourner Truth**



Sojourner Truth was born into slavery in 1757 in Hurley, New York. She was a member of the Quaker faith. She had twelve children. She knew them because they were quickly sold to other owners. In 1808 she was 50 years old. She was the first woman to give the speech of the New York Anti-Slavery Society. She lived with her family and became interested in education. She changed her name to Jojourner Truth. She lived with her family and became interested in education. She changed her name to Jojourner Truth.

Write a paragraph above to answer the following questions.

Where was she born and in what year?

What was her mother's name?

How did she meet Lewis and Clark?

What did Sojourner Truth learn to grow while working as a slave for the Indians?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Katherine Johnson**



Katherine Coleman Johnson was born on August 26, 1918 in West Virginia when she was a young girl. Although opportunities were limited for African American girls, however, Katherine took advantage of any opportunity to learn. She was especially gifted in math and graduated from eighth grade by the time she was ten years old. Because the town school her family lived in did not offer classes for African American girls, her father moved the family 20 miles away so Katherine could attend high school.

After graduating high school, Katherine headed to college. A professor recognized her talent and was determined to prepare her to be a research mathematician. By the time she was eighteen years old, Katherine graduated with highest honors with degrees in Mathematics and English.

Katherine became a teacher and taught math and French to high school students. When teaching, she realized that the girls that would become NASA would be African American women to make and check mathematical equations. They called these jobs "computers".

Soon the United States made a goal of sending a man into orbit. The world needed more advanced math calculations by the time some computer machines were in use and Johnson was responsible for checking the computer's ability to perform calculations for the first Apollo Mission. Her calculations made sure that the man on Apollo 8 returned safely from space when their mission experienced a dangerous malfunction.

In 2002, President Barack Obama presented Katherine Johnson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. It is the highest honor a citizen can earn and a gift to individuals who have contributed to the highest sense to the national interests of the United States.

Write the mathematics below when there will be others in the room that corresponds to the numbers in the equations. Write the answers on the lines provided. Write the numbers in the boxes.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Oprah Winfrey**



Oprah Winfrey was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi on January 29, 1954. When Oprah was a young girl, her mother moved to Wisconsin to find a job and Oprah was left to live with her grandmother, Mattie Mae. Life was hard for Oprah with no money and very little food. Oprah was resilient and by the time she was five years old she could read and write.

At six years old, Oprah joined her mother in Wisconsin. She spent her school days working in a grocery store and in Wisconsin, where her father had a store. She was a resilient student that used to read and write. In 1970, she graduated from Central High School as an honor student. She earned a full scholarship and used it to attend Tennessee State University.

While in college, Oprah received a call from a CBS news station in Nashville asking her to become one of their news anchors. She was only sixteen years old and could not believe the offer. She thought about staying in school but decided she could not pass up the opportunity. She accepted the job and became the first female African American news anchor in Nashville's history.

Soon Oprah was recruited to join a morning talk show called AM Chicago. When she started, the show was in ratings, but Oprah showed before long, the show was soon #1 in ratings and given a new name. The Oprah Winfrey Show before long, over 10 million people were watching her show each day. The Oprah show aired for twenty-five years.

In addition to her talk show, Oprah is known for many other accomplishments. As an actress, she was nominated for an Academy Award for her role in the movie, The Color Purple. In addition, she founded a media company and started a magazine.

Oprah is also known for her philanthropic work. In 2007 she founded the Angel Network. The goal of the Angel Network was for people to strive to make a difference in others' lives. It collected educational supplies, built schools, and worked to provide disaster relief to individuals and families.

Fill in the writing frame below to write a paragraph about Oprah Winfrey.

Topic Sentences \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Clara Barton**



Clara Barton was born on December 25, 1821 in Oxford, Massachusetts. Her father had been a soldier in the American Revolution and often told stories of his war experiences to young Clara. These stories would often inspire her to spend her life helping others.

As a teenager, Clara loved to read and was very smart. However, she was also very shy. Her mother encouraged her to become a teacher to share her knowledge with others and help her grow more confident.

Clara soon left for New Jersey to begin teaching. However, families in the town she lived in were unable to pay her for her services. Her father was able to find a job for her, but she refused to leave to continue to help her children. She started the first free school in New Jersey and continued to grow from so to six hundred students.

When the Civil War began, Clara was working in Washington, DC. She began collecting food and medical supplies for soldiers. Clara was soon going from home to home to help the injured from the war. This is where she earned her nickname, "Angel of the Battlefield".

Clara soon traveled to France and heard about a group called the International Red Cross. She was inspired to join the group to help the injured in the war. She was very busy and on May 21, 1863 Clara founded the American Red Cross. The organization continues today helping people recover from disasters such as floods, fires, and earthquakes.

Clara Barton is known as a humanitarian. A humanitarian is someone that wants to take care and do good. Write a paragraph about her. Write the words in the boxes.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Maria Tallchief**



Estabene Marie Tallchief was born on January 24, 1925 in Fort Law, Oklahoma. Her Native American heritage and Ojibwa traditions made certain she danced as soon as she could walk.

She started formal lessons of age three and when she was eight years old, her family relocated to Los Angeles to further her training and career.

Maria headed to New York City when she was seventeen years old. Her dream was to earn a spot at a prestigious ballet company. The head of a ballet company urged her to change her name to Maria Tallchief which she did. She trained hard and met legendary ballet instructor, George Balanchine. When Balanchine founded the New York City Ballet Company in 1948, he made Maria the star.

Together, Balanchine and Tallchief changed ballet. Her talent and his difficult choreography delighted audiences. She became famous playing the Sugarplum Fairy in the Nutcracker and the lead role in Firebird. Maria would go on to become the first Native American Prima Ballerina. A Prima Ballerina is the lead dancer in a ballet company.

No matter how famous she became, Maria never forgot her Native American roots. She was very proud of her Ojibwa heritage. In addition to dancing awards, Maria is admired for her desire to honor and educate others about Native American people.

Use the paragraphs above to answer the questions below.

1. Why did Maria's family relocate to Los Angeles when she was eight years old?
2. What was Maria's dream when she headed to New York City at seventeen years old?
3. What roles did Maria become famous for playing?
4. Maria Tallchief became the first Native American \_\_\_\_\_.
5. What is a Prima Ballerina?
6. Maria became famous for her dancing. What else is she remembered and admired for today?