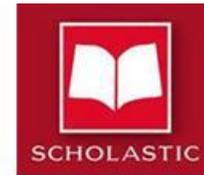




Activities



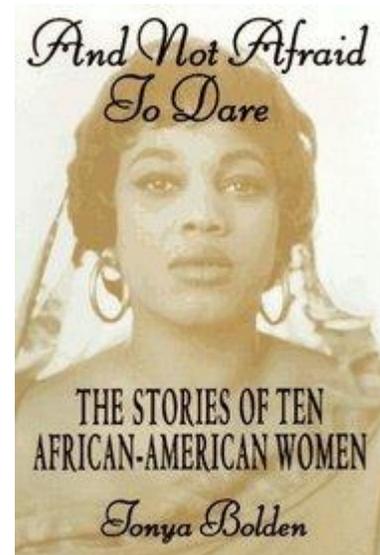
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Activities

And Not Afraid to Dare

Grades: 6–8

And Not Afraid to Dare
By Tonya Bolden



Overview

Kids learn about African American women who were pioneers in their fields from the Civil War to the Space Age. They discuss racism, prejudice and leadership.

The Book

In *And Not Afraid to Dare: The Stories of Ten African-American Women*, Tonya Bolden writes about ten women who can serve as inspiration for us all. These women all were pioneers of one sort or another.

Ellen Craft was a slave who made an astonishing escape by dressing as a sick white man. Her husband escaped with her, acting as an attendant. The two went on to lecture in the United States and Great Britain about the horrors of slavery, and later founded a school.

Charlotte Forten Grimké was born into a family of wealthy free blacks who were committed to the anti-slavery cause. She dedicated herself to helping slaves when she became a teacher of freed slaves during the Civil War. Throughout her life, she kept a journal describing her desire for justice and charity.

Unlike Charlotte Forten Grimké, **Mary Fields** was not born into wealth. She had to work hard all her life. In the 1870's, Fields went to work at a convent in the wild territory of Montana. Later, she opened her own restaurant, but it went broke because she gave food away to those in need. Later, she worked as a U.S. Mail carrier and as a washerwoman. Movie star Gary Cooper remembered this colorful, kind woman fondly from his youth.

Ida B. Wells was a major African American leader who led a crusade against lynching. Wells fought the unjust mob killings of African Americans by exposing the truth about them in her writing.

Starting as a teacher, Mary McLeod Bethune later became the founder of a school, the president of the National Association for Colored Women, and an advisor to Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

At the age of sixty-four, **Clara Hale** began a new life when she began to take in babies whose mothers were addicted to drugs. She and her daughter founded Hale House, giving food, shelter, and love to babies who had no place else to go. Later, Clara Hale took a special interest in babies with AIDS.

Throughout her adult life, **Leontyne Price** broke boundaries, becoming the first African-American opera star to perform in major classical roles around the world.

The famous novelist **Toni Morrison** was the first African American woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature-the most prestigious literary award in the world.

Astronaut **Mae Jemison** became the first African-American woman to be on board a space mission.

Track and field star **Jackie Joyner-Kersey** won medals in four different Olympics. She later used her fame and money to help others through tuition assistance.

Theme

Think about the title of this book, *And Not Afraid to Dare*. What do the women in the book have in common? What obstacles did they share?

Understanding Genres

Tonya Bolden's book is made up of short biographies. In these short pieces, the reader learns about remarkable women and their accomplishments. What kinds of details does Bolden include to make each woman come alive for the reader? How thorough are her descriptions? What kind of research do you think Bolden had to do to prepare for writing this book?

Conflict

Several of the women in this book had to overcome racism, and went on to make their marks in the world. Think about Ida B. Wells and Mary McLeod Bethune. What do you think gave them the strength to continue in their struggles?

Important People in the Lives of Great Women

Along with stories of ten women's amazing accomplishments, Bolden's book also tells something about important people in each of their lives. Charlotte Forten Grimké came from a family who strongly believed in fighting injustice. Clara Hale's daughter helped her found Hale House, and helped her mother in her work. Jackie Joyner-Kersey shared the joy of winning a medal in the Olympics with her brother, Al, who won on the very same day. Think about people who have helped you reach your goals. If someone were writing your biography, which people in your life would be included?

Discussion Questions

- a. Charlotte Forten Grimké traveled to South Carolina to teach freed slaves during the Civil War. Yet she shows evidence of her own kind of prejudice when she writes in her journal that people are "too black" or "so black" (p. 43). Why do you think it seemed important to her that black Americans assimilate as quickly as possible? Does this kind of issue exist today?
- b. Anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells faced prejudice not only because she was an African American, but because she was a woman. According to Bolden, there were male African American

leaders who did not want Wells to put herself in the center of the movement. Some considered her too radical. Yet Wells continued to write and get her message out. Why do you think Wells was considered radical when she was alive? Do you think she would still be considered radical today?

- c. Both Mary McLeod Bethune and Clara Hale cared deeply about children. Compare their lives and how they helped improve the lives of children.
- d. Toni Morrison and Leontyne Price are both remarkable artists, and each was the first African American woman to achieve what she did in her field. Yet there were other very talented African American singers and novelists before the late twentieth century. Why do you think it took so long for African American women artists to achieve the recognition they deserved?
- e. Former astronaut Mae Jemison and track-and-field star Jackie Joyner-Kersey both use their fame and resources to help others. Look at the ways each has chosen to improve others' lives. Think about what you would do if you gained special recognition. Would you reach out to help those in need? How would you do so?

• Subjects:

Civil Rights, Slavery, Underground Railroad, Abolition, Literature, Reading Comprehension, Civics and Government, African Americans, History, Social Studies, Women's Rights Movement, Leadership, Compare and Contrast

[Chorus] I'm not afraid (I'm not afraid) To take a stand (To take a stand) Everybody (Everybody) Come take my hand (Come take my hand) We'll walk this road together, through the storm Whatever weather, cold or warm Just lettin' you know that you're not alone Holla if you feel like you've been down the same road. [Intro] Yeah, it's been a ride I guess I had to go to that place to get to this one Now some of you might still be in that place If you're tryna get out, just follow me I'll get you there. [Verse 1] You can try and read my lyrics off of this Includes bibliographical references (pages 209-210) and index. Biographical portraits of ten African-American women including Leontyne Price, Toni Morrison, and Jackie Joyner-Kersey. Ellen Craft -- Charlotte Forten Grimke -- Mary Fields -- Ida B. Wells -- Mary McLeod Bethune -- Clara Hale -- Leontyne Price -- Toni Morrison -- Mae C. Jemison -- Jackie Joyner-Kersey -- And some others who dared. Accelerated Reader/Renaissance Learning.