



Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher

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☑ Lesson Objectives

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Describe the life and contributions of Mary McLeod Bethune
- ✓ Identify the main causes for which Mary McLeod Bethune fought during her lifetime
- ✓ Explain the concepts of *civil rights* and *human rights*
- ✓ Explain that Mary McLeod Bethune worked with Eleanor Roosevelt
- ✓ Explain the lack of educational opportunities for African American girls in the nineteenth century
- ✓ Explain that three presidents asked Mary McLeod Bethune for advice

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ Describe how words and phrases supply meaning in a free verse poem about Mary McLeod Bethune (RL.2.4)
- ✓ Describe the connection between the exclusion of African American men from the right to vote and Mary's efforts to teach them to read and write (RI.2.3)
- ✓ Interpret information from a timeline associated with "Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher," and explain how the timeline clarifies information in the read-aloud (RI.2.7)

- ✓ Plan, draft, and edit a free verse poem in which they provide their opinion about Mary McLeod Bethune’s achievements (W.2.1)
- ✓ Make a personal connection to how it must have felt when people tried to intimidate Mary and her students to scare them away (W.2.8)
- ✓ With assistance, organize facts and information from “Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher” into a timeline to answer questions (W.2.8)
- ✓ Retell important facts and information from “Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher” (SL.2.2)
- ✓ Ask and answer *what* questions orally, requiring literal recall and understanding of the details or facts from “Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher” (SL.2.3)
- ✓ Add drawings to descriptions of something that makes them feel proud (SL.2.5)
- ✓ Identify new meanings for the word *pool* and apply them accurately (L.2.5a)
- ✓ Prior to listening to “Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher,” orally identify what they know and have learned about civil rights, discrimination, and people who fought for civil rights and human rights
- ✓ Identify and express how Mary McLeod Bethune must have felt when people tried to intimidate her into ending her efforts to educate African American girls

Core Vocabulary

- federal, *adj.*** Relating to a strong central government with far-reaching powers
Example: Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a federal holiday that is observed on the third Monday in January.
Variation(s): none
- health care, *n.*** Medical care provided to people
Example: Countries around the world have different ways of providing health care to their citizens.
Variation(s): none

privilege, *n.* An honor or advantage that one person might have that sets him or her apart in some way

Example: “I have had the privilege of meeting twelve American presidents,” said the Queen of England.

Variation(s): privileges

proud, *adj.* Feeling great honor or a sense of satisfaction

Example: The first-place tennis team was proud of their accomplishments this year.

Variation(s): prouder, proudest

scholarship, *n.* Money or an opportunity given to a student to study for little or no cost


Example: Michael studied very hard in high school and earned a full scholarship that paid for his college education.

Variation(s): scholarships

society, *n.* A community of people who live together and share many of the same life experiences

Example: The invention of the steam train changed the way midwestern society functioned.

Variation(s): societies

<i>At a Glance</i>	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
<i>Introducing the Read-Aloud</i>	What Have We Already Learned?	timeline from previous lessons	10
	Image Preview		
	Purpose for Listening		
<i>Presenting the Read-Aloud</i>	Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher	U.S. map, world map, or globe	15
<i>Discussing the Read-Aloud</i>	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Proud	drawing paper, drawing tools	5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
<i>Extensions</i>	Timeline	Image Card 4	20
	Free Verse Writing	Instructional Masters 2B-1, 4B-1	
	Multiple Meaning Word Activity: Pool	Poster 2M (Pool)	
	Somebody Wanted But So Then	Instructional Master 4B-2; chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	



Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher

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Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Using the timeline as a guide, review with students the information learned thus far. In conducting this review, you may wish to ask the following questions:

- Which three people are depicted, or shown, in these images? (Susan B. Anthony, President Lincoln, and Eleanor Roosevelt)
- What are civil rights? (rights that the government gives to people, such as the right to vote and the right not to be discriminated against)
- What are human rights? (rights that all people should have, such as the right to food, shelter, a job, and an education)
- For what causes did Susan B. Anthony fight? (abolition of slavery and women's right to vote)
- Who was Eleanor Roosevelt's husband? (President Franklin D. Roosevelt)
- What important event in American history was occurring during the time President Roosevelt was president? (the Great Depression)
- For what causes did Eleanor Roosevelt fight? (for civil rights and human rights, such as better education and jobs, and for better lives for African Americans, children, women, Native Americans, and the poor)

Image Preview

Remind students that in the previous read-aloud, they heard briefly about a woman who worked with Eleanor Roosevelt and President Roosevelt. Ask if students remember the name of this woman. (Mary McLeod Bethune)



← Show image 4A-3: Mary teaching

Tell students that today they will hear more about the things Mary did to help improve the lives of many Americans, especially African American girls.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to learn how Mary McLeod Bethune improved opportunities for African American girls.



Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher

◀ Show image 4A-1: Mary McLeod Bethune

Mary Jane McLeod was born a long, long time ago, in 1875, in South Carolina on her parents' small farm. Mary's parents had seventeen children. Mary was the fifteenth child.

Mary was the only member of her family to go to school and receive an education. Her brothers and sisters were needed to work on the family farm. However, it wasn't an easy thing for Mary to go to school. She walked about five miles to school each day, and then she walked home again.¹

- 1 Five miles is about the distance from our school to _____. How would you feel if you had to walk five miles to get to school?



◀ Show image 4A-2: Mary as a child, with siblings and neighbors

Mary didn't mind. Going to school was a **privilege** that few African American children had—especially girls.² Mary was an excellent student. She learned easily and quickly. Mary would race home each day to teach her brothers and sisters the things she had learned at school. Mary also taught her neighbor's children. Mary's family was so **proud** of her.³

When Mary was thirteen years of age, she received a **scholarship** to study at a school for African American girls.⁴ The school was called Scotia Seminary in North Carolina. Mary's mother was so proud of her. She made her a special dress so that Mary would look nice when she went to her new school. Mary was sad to leave her family. They were sad to see her go, but everyone knew that Mary was going to do wonderful things with her life.

- 2 A privilege is an honor or advantage that someone has.

- 3 When someone is proud, they feel a sense of honor or satisfaction.

- 4 When someone receives a scholarship, it means they are given money or an opportunity to study with little or no cost.



◀ Show image 4A-3: Mary teaching

After attending Scotia Seminary, Mary received another scholarship, this time to a school in Chicago. After graduating, Mary returned to South Carolina to become a teacher at the school she had once attended.

Mary was determined to educate young African American children, and no one was going to stop her. After several years of

being a teacher, Mary decided to start a school of her own. She especially wanted to teach African American girls, as many still did not receive an education.

Mary had heard about a town in Florida called Daytona Beach. A new railroad was being built there, and many of the workers were African American men. The workers' families lived in camps. Their children did not go to school, and the men earned just about enough money to feed their families. Mary saw this as a great opportunity and came up with a plan.



← **Show image 4A-4: Mary with her students**

With just \$1.50 in her pocket, Mary moved to Daytona Beach, Florida, and opened her own school for African American girls. A kind woman offered Mary a place to live. A friend helped her find an empty house that later became the new school.

Old, broken furniture was fixed. Boxes and packing crates from local stores became desks and chairs, and in the autumn of 1904, Mary opened her own school. In the beginning, there were just six students, including Mary's own son. Gradually more and more students came. Each girl paid fifty cents a week for tuition. Mary taught them cooking and sewing as well as reading, writing, and math. There was never enough money, so Mary baked pies and cookies to sell.



← **Show image 4A-5: Mary, concerned, looks out through a window**

Not everyone liked what Mary was doing. One night while Mary was at school, all the street lights went out. When Mary looked out onto the street, she saw a group of people gathered together. They intended to scare Mary in the hope that she would close her school and leave town.⁵

Mary would not be bullied! As the group of people stood in a pool of light, Mary and the frightened girls watched and sang songs.⁶ Before long the people scattered.⁷

- 5 How do you think Mary and her students felt when they discovered that some people wanted to scare them away?
- 6 Here the word *pool* means a small area filled with light. A pool can also be a structure that is filled with water and is used for swimming.
- 7 What does the author of the read-aloud mean when he or she says "the people scattered"?



← **Show image 4A-6: Bethune-Cookman University**

Three years later, Mary moved her school to a new location, a thirty-two acre farm with fourteen buildings. The four hundred students at the school grew their own food. Mary was very proud of what she had achieved.⁸ Later, Mary's school joined with a school for African American boys and eventually became the Bethune-Cookman University. Mary's school started with five young African American girls and her son. It eventually became a four-year university with over one thousand students that still exists today. Mary became the president of the school.⁹

8 What does the word *proud* mean?

9 [Point to the image of the school.]



← **Show image 4A-7: Children reading**

However, Mary wasn't quite finished. There was more work to be done. Mary opened up her own hospital.¹⁰ Many African Americans received treatment in Mary's hospital. In addition to promoting education and **health care**, Mary joined forces with various groups who were campaigning for the right for women to vote.¹¹ As you have already discovered, in the early 1900s, women could not vote.¹² Because she believed all people had the right to an education and to have books to read, Mary opened up a library that provided free reading material to anyone who wanted it. Mary was doing amazing things.

10 How would you describe Mary's personality?

11 Health care is medical care that people receive.

12 What word did you learn from the Susan B. Anthony lesson that means the right to vote? (*suffrage*)



← **Show image 4A-8: Mary teaching men to read and write**

During this time, African American men did have the right to vote, but they weren't always able to. In order to vote, men had to be able to read and write. Mary held classes at night so that African American men who had not had the opportunity to go to school could learn these skills and therefore be able to vote. Once again, people tried to scare Mary away. They did not like what she was doing. Mary ignored them and continued her work. Mary always believed in the power of education. "The whole world opened to me when I learned to read," she once said.¹³

13 Why do you think Mary thought reading was so important?



← **Show image 4A-9: Three presidents**

14 [Point to the image on the left.]

15 [Point to the image in the center.]

16 [Point to the image on the right.]

17 Who was married to President Roosevelt? Why do you think three U.S. presidents asked Mary for advice?

18 The word *federal* refers to a central government that has far-reaching powers.

19 A society is a community of people who live together and share many of the same beliefs and experiences.

Mary's efforts had not gone unnoticed. Three U.S. presidents asked Mary for advice. President Coolidge¹⁴ invited her to attend his Child Welfare Conference. President Hoover¹⁵ asked her to head up the White House Conference on Child Health, and President Roosevelt¹⁶ named her as Special Advisor on Minority Affairs.¹⁷ Mary also became a founder and the first president of the National Council of Negro Women.

For many years, Mary worked closely with Eleanor Roosevelt. Mary became Director of the Division of Negro Affairs and of the National Youth Administration. She was the first African American woman to become head of a **federal** agency, or organization.¹⁸ Mary wanted all African Americans to become fully involved in American **society**.¹⁹

Mary received many honors for her work. She received the Spingarn Medal for her efforts in educating African Americans. This medal is given each year by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to an African American.



← **Show image 4A-10: Mary as a member of the Black Cabinet**

As you have already heard, Mary was part of a group of advisors known as the Black Cabinet. Mary herself asked President Roosevelt to choose more talented African Americans for important jobs. Today we have an African American president. Without people like Mary, it's possible that this might never have happened.



← **Show image 4A-11: Statue of Mary in Lincoln Park**

Mary McLeod Bethune died on May 18, 1955. On July 10, 1974, ninety-nine years to the day after Mary's birth, a statue of Mary was placed in Lincoln Park in Washington, D.C. Mary was the first woman and the first African American to be honored in this way. A portrait of Mary hangs in the State Capitol of South Carolina, a great honor for a woman who fought against discrimination and worked tirelessly for young African Americans.²⁰

20 What does *discrimination* mean?

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding the students' responses using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Inferential* Why did Mary consider going to school to be a privilege? (Going to school was considered to be a privilege because very few African American children, especially girls, had the opportunity to do so.)
2. *Literal* When Mary was thirteen years old, something special happened to her. What was it? (When Mary was thirteen years old, she received a scholarship.)
3. *Inferential* Why did Mary move to Daytona Beach, Florida? (Mary moved to Daytona Beach, Florida, to start a school for African American girls.)
4. *Literal* In addition to opening a school in Florida, what other institutions did Mary open there? (Mary opened a hospital and a library in Florida.)
5. *Inferential* Why was it difficult for some African American men to vote? (It was difficult for some African American men to vote because they had to prove that they could read and write, and many had not had the opportunity to learn.) What did Mary do to help overcome this problem? (Mary taught classes at night so that African American men could learn these skills.)
6. *Literal* Where would you find a statue of Mary? (There is a statue of Mary in Lincoln Park in Washington, D.C.)

[Please continue to model the *Question? Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

7. *Evaluative What? Pair Share:* Asking questions after a read-aloud is one way to see how much everyone has learned. Think of a question you can ask your neighbor about the read-aloud that starts with the word *what*. For example, you could ask, “What was Mary determined to do?” Turn to your neighbor and ask your *what* question. Listen to your neighbor’s response. Then your neighbor will ask a new *what* question, and you will get a chance to respond. I will call on several of you to share your questions with the class.
8. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Proud

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Mary’s family was so *proud* of her.”
2. Say the word *proud* with me.
3. The word *proud* means feeling great honor or a sense of satisfaction.
4. Noah was very proud of the model volcano he had made.
5. Have you ever been proud of something you have done? Try to use the word *proud* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I felt really proud of myself when I . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Drawing* activity for follow-up. Directions: Draw a picture of something or someone that makes you feel proud. Write the word *proud* on your work as the title of your drawing. [Remind students that the word *proud* means to feel honor or a sense of satisfaction.]



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



Mary McLeod Bethune: A Dedicated Teacher

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Extensions

20 minutes

Timeline

Review the individuals placed on the timeline thus far. Show students Image Card 4 (Mary McLeod Bethune). Ask students to describe the important work Mary did during her life. Help students understand that Mary lived and fought for civil rights and human rights after Susan B. Anthony, at approximately the same time as Eleanor Roosevelt, but was born just shortly before Eleanor Roosevelt. Ask students where on the timeline the Image Card should be placed to show when Mary McLeod Bethune performed her very important work. (slightly to the left of the Eleanor Roosevelt Image Card)

Free Verse Writing (Instructional Masters 2B-1 and 4B-1)

Ask students what type of poetry they have been writing. Ask which parts of a free verse poem can relate, or tell, the poet's opinion. (the words, phrases, and rhythm)

Explain to students that they are going to write a free verse poem in which they express an opinion about Mary McLeod Bethune's achievements. Explain that they are going to work in groups to discuss the content of the read-aloud they have just heard. Ask students to try to recall key facts about Mary McLeod Bethune's life and achievements. Encourage students to use these facts in their free verse poems. Remind students that there are no rules about how to write free verse poems. Free verse poems do not have to rhyme, there can be as many or as few words on a line as they wish, and free verse poems are simply made up of the words they choose to write. In addition, remind students that their free verse poems can form shapes. Students can accomplish this by placing different numbers of words on each line. Tell students that they first need to plan their poem by brainstorming ideas using Instructional Master 2B-1. Have students write "Mary McLeod

Bethune” in the circle in the center of Instructional Master 2B-1, and then write the ideas, words, or phrases they might use to write their free verse poem in the other circles. Remind students that planning is the first step in the writing process, and that drafting and editing are the next steps.

After students work in groups to brainstorm ideas for their free verse poems, have them individually create a free verse poem in which they express their opinion of Mary McLeod Bethune and her achievements. Students should write their free verse poems on Instructional Master 4B-1, writing Mary McLeod Bethune’s name on the line to the left of the image of Mary.

⇔ **Multiple Meaning Word Activity**

Definition Detective: Pool

[Have students hold up one, two, or three fingers to indicate which image shows the meaning of the word being discussed.]

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “As the group of people stood in a *pool* of light, Mary and the frightened girls watched and sang songs.”
2. With your neighbor, think of as many meanings for *pool* as you can, or discuss ways you can use the word *pool*.
3. [Show Poster 2M (Pool).] Point to the picture on the poster that shows how the word *pool* is used in the lesson. (one)
[Tell students that in this example, *pool* means a small area of light or liquid.]
4. *Pool* also means other things. *Pool* can mean a large structure that is filled with water and that is used for swimming. (two)
5. *Pool* can also mean a game in which players use a long stick and a white ball to hit colored balls into pockets around the table. (three)
6. Did you or your neighbor think of any of these definitions?
7. Now quiz your neighbor on the different meanings of *pool*. For example you could say, “I stepped in a pool of mud. Which pool am I?” And your neighbor should say, “one.”

Somebody Wanted But So Then (Instructional Master 4B-2)

Put the following blank summary chart on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard:

Somebody	
Wanted	
But	
So	
Then	

Explain to students that they are going to recount what they have learned about Mary McLeod Bethune. They will do this first individually, and then together as a class. Tell students that they are going to retell the part of Mary's story they have heard using Instructional Master 4B-2, a Somebody Wanted But So Then worksheet. Students who used the Core Knowledge Language Arts program in Kindergarten and Grade 1 should be familiar with this chart and will have seen their Kindergarten and Grade 1 teachers model the exercise. Have these students work in pairs to orally fill in the chart together while one person acts as the scribe. If you have any students who are new to the Core Knowledge Language Arts program, you may wish to work with them individually or in a small group, guiding them through the exercise.

If time allows, have students share their charts with the class. As they recount the story, you may wish to refer back to the read-aloud. As students retell the read-aloud, encourage them to use complete sentences and domain-related vocabulary.

For your reference, completed charts should be similar to the following:

Somebody	Mary McLeod
Wanted	to open her own school for African American girls
But	she had to wait to find the right opportunity
So	with just \$1.50, she moved to Daytona Beach, Florida, and opened her school for African American girls
Then	her school joined with a school for African American boys and eventually became a four-year college