

**BECAUSE  
OF THEM  
WE CAN**

**BOX**

**JUST FOR KIDS**

# BECAUSE OF BESSIE COLEMAN

ISSUE 7, 5-8

BOTWC MINI POSING AS  
BESSIE COLEMAN



*YOU DON'T KNOW  
WHAT YOU CAN DO  
UNTIL YOU TRY!*

# BESSIE COLEMAN: SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS!

DIRECTIONS: READ THE PASSAGE BELOW AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW.



PHOTO CREDIT: THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

ELIZABETH "BESSIE" COLEMAN WAS BORN IN TEXAS ON JANUARY 26TH, 1892. BESSIE LOVED SCHOOL AND DID VERY WELL IN MATH AND READING.

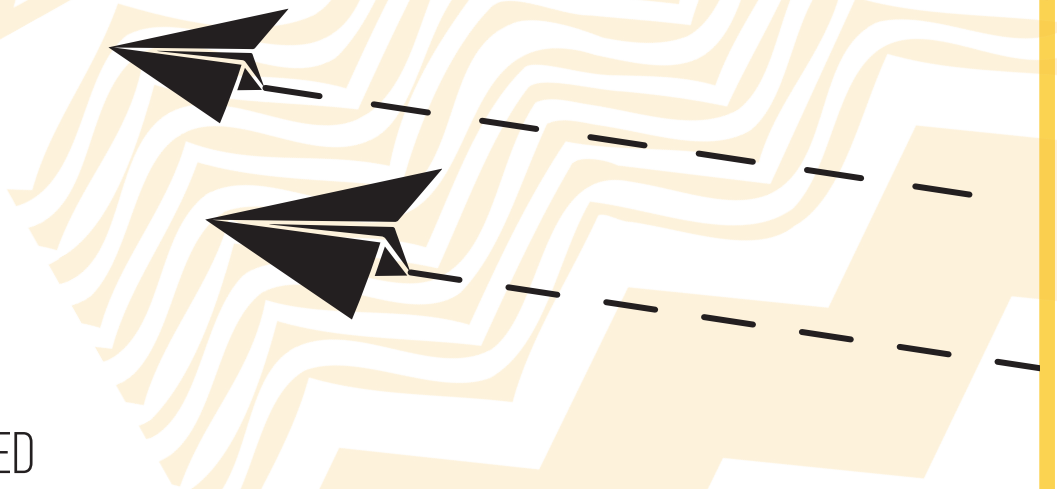
AT THE AGE OF 23, BESSIE MOVED TO CHICAGO TO LIVE WITH TWO OF HER OLDER BROTHERS, IN HOPES OF A BETTER LIFE. SHORTLY AFTER MOVING, BESSIE COLEMAN HEARD TERRIFIC STORIES OF **AVIATION** FROM SOLDIERS WHO RETURNED FROM WORLD WAR I. AVIATION IS THE FLYING OR OPERATING OF AN AIRPLANE.

BESSIE WANTED TO LEARN HOW TO BECOME A **PILOT**. PILOTS HAVE A LICENSE TO CONTROL AN AIRPLANE. AT THE TIME, THERE WERE NOT ANY WOMEN PILOTS OR AFRICAN AMERICAN PILOTS IN THE UNITED STATES. AFTER VISITING MANY AVIATION SCHOOLS, BESSIE HAD NO LUCK OF FINDING SOMEONE TO TEACH HER HOW TO FLY.

BESSIE MOVED TO FRANCE WHERE SHE BEGAN SCHOOL TO BECOME A PILOT. BESSIE COLEMAN WAS AWARDED HER INTERNATIONAL PILOT'S LICENSE IN JUNE 1921, MAKING HER THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN PERSON IN THE WORLD TO BECOME A LICENSED PILOT.

BESSIE LEARNED MANY TRICKS AND PERFORMED AT MANY AIR SHOWS ALL OVER THE U.S. THE AIRPLANES COLEMAN USED FOR HER SHOWS DID NOT HAVE A ROOF OR ANY PROTECTION. IN APRIL 1926, COLEMAN TOOK A PRACTICE FLIGHT TO PREPARE FOR HER UPCOMING SHOW. BESSIE'S ENGINE STOPPED WORKING AND THE PLANE FLIPPED OVER. BESSIE DID NOT HAVE ON A SEATBELT, FELL OUT OF THE OPEN PLANE, AND DIED.

BESSIE COLEMAN WAS AN **INNOVATOR** AND **PIONEER** IN THE FIELD OF AVIATION BOTH AS AN AFRICAN AMERICAN AND AS A WOMAN. BESSIE'S COURAGE TO OVERCOME ANYTHING IN HER WAY AND HER **DETERMINATION** TO CHASE HER DREAM HAS MADE HER AN ULTIMATE AFRICAN AMERICAN HERO.



# READ & ANSWER!

1. HOW DID BESSIE COLEMAN HEAR ABOUT AVIATION?

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2. WHAT FACTS DID YOU LEARN ABOUT BESSIE COLEMAN?

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## GLOSSARY

**AVIATION:** THE FLYING OR OPERATING AN AIRCRAFT

**PILOT:** A PERSON WHO HAS A LICENSE TO CONTROL AN AIRCRAFT

**INNOVATOR:** A PERSON WHO INTRODUCES NEW IDEAS

**PIONEER:** A PERSON WHO IS AMONG THE FIRST TO DEVELOP OR APPLY KNOWLEDGE

**DETERMINATION:** OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO REACH A GOAL



# DID YOU KNOW:

- BESSIE COLEMAN WAS THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN TO EARN HER PILOT'S LICENSE!
- BESSIE COLEMAN HAD 13 SIBLINGS.
- BESSIE COLEMAN WAS KNOWN AS "QUEEN BESS" OR "BRAVE BESS" FOR THE DAREDEVIL STUNTS AND TRICKS SHE PERFORMED IN THE AIR.



## WORD SEARCH

TIME YOURSELF. CAN YOU FIND ALL THE WORDS IN 2 MINUTES? GOOD LUCK!

FIND THE WORDS IN THE PUZZLE

BESSIE  
FIRST  
COLEMAN  
WOMAN

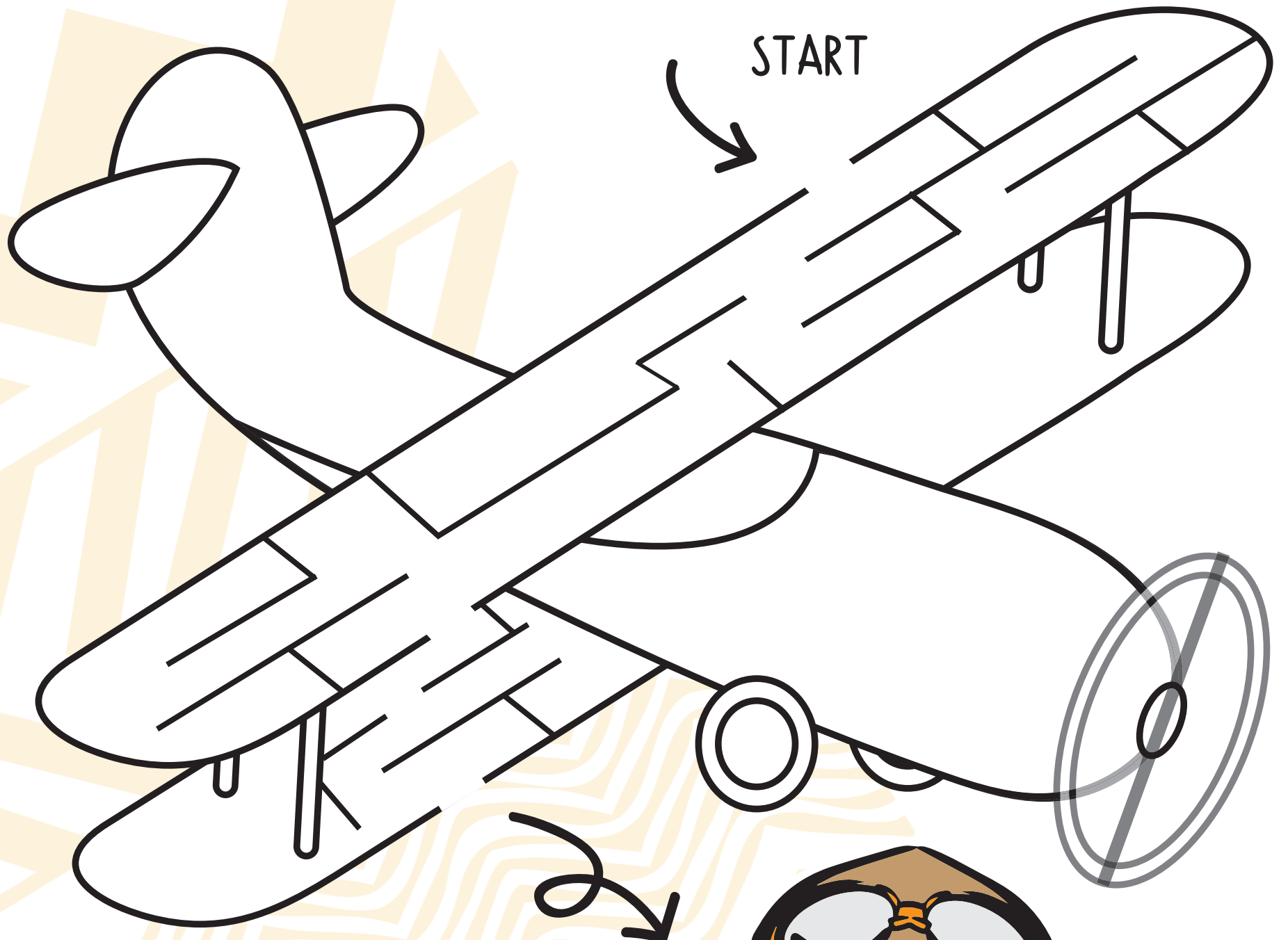
PILOT  
SCHOOL  
PLANE  
LICENSE  
COURAGE  
BRACE  
HERO  
SHOW

F	U	Z	S	H	L	O	C	J	U	E	S	O	U	E
E	N	A	L	P	S	P	E	G	I	L	C	J	K	S
Z	B	G	B	U	Y	I	I	S	I	O	E	R	U	J
H	Y	I	G	T	O	Z	S	L	U	W	V	G	R	N
F	T	V	X	H	T	E	W	R	O	J	B	J	G	P
V	Q	R	J	S	B	U	A	U	S	T	X	L	I	C
F	N	R	R	U	W	G	U	S	C	H	O	O	L	H
A	C	I	T	V	E	P	K	Y	I	P	Y	H	A	H
U	F	I	R	S	H	O	W	D	A	E	K	A	A	O
P	N	M	B	O	Q	E	U	H	X	O	Z	R	K	R
W	B	R	A	V	E	X	B	B	F	X	T	K	B	E
K	F	H	N	M	T	C	O	L	E	M	A	N	T	H
G	U	S	K	M	E	S	N	E	C	I	L	O	E	S
S	Z	Y	G	B	H	Y	K	O	D	U	I	Y	M	G
C	D	Y	U	T	B	A	X	M	N	A	M	O	W	G



# MAZE ACTIVITY

FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH THE PLANE TO BESSIE!



END!

**#BOTWCCHALLENGE**

SEE HOW FAR YOU CAN MAKE YOUR  
BESSIE COLEMAN AIRPLANE FLY!  
PUT ON YOUR AVIATOR GLASSES AND  
HEAD OUTSIDE!

**BESSIE COLEMAN**

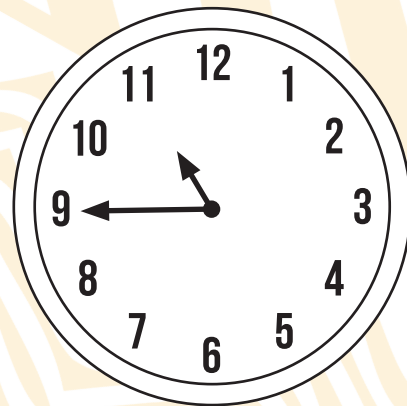
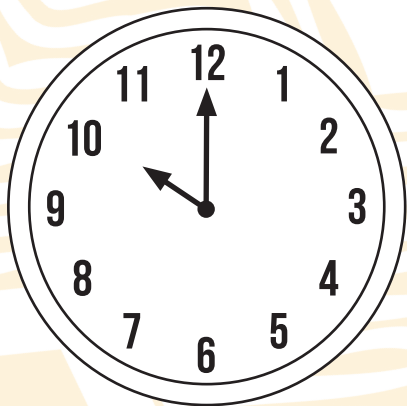
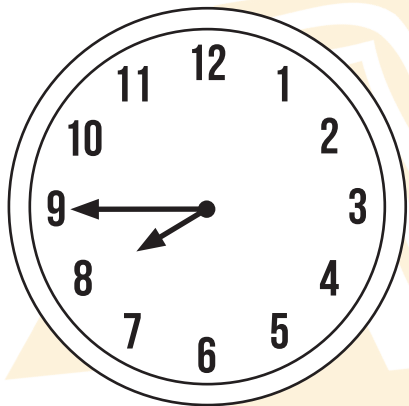
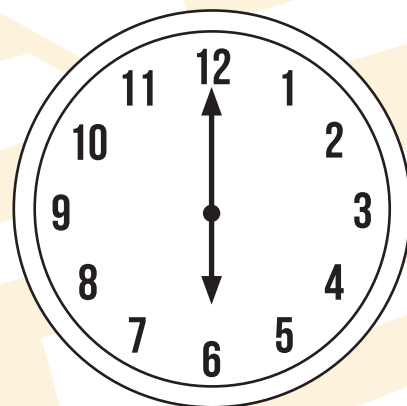
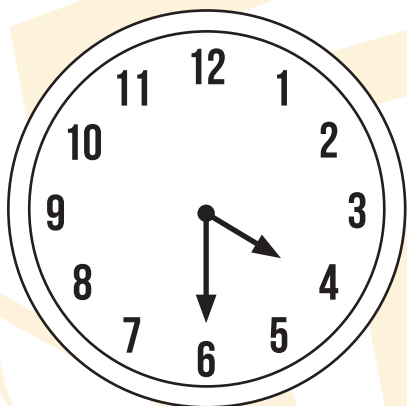
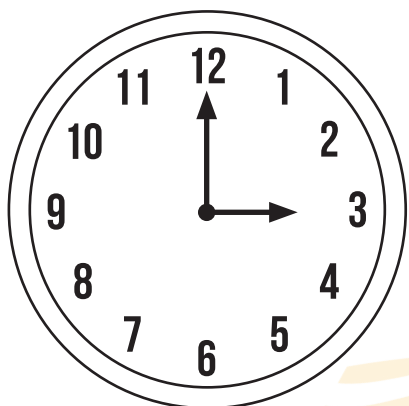
# WHAT TIME IS IT?

A. BESSIE COLEMAN TOOK OFF FLYING AT 9:15 AM AND LANDED AT 12:15 AM.  
HOW LONG WAS BESSIE FLYING FOR?

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B. WRITE IN THE CORRECT TIME BELOW EACH CLOCK.



ANSWERS: (A) 3 HOURS (B) 1. 3:00, 2. 4:30, 3. 6:00, 4. 8:45, 5. 10:00, 6. 11:45PM

## TAKE THE PLEDGE

**I WILL HONOR**  
THE SACRIFICES OF  
MY ANCESTORS.

**I WILL BELIEVE**  
IN ME.

**I WILL PURSUE**  
MY DREAMS.

**I WILL HELP**  
OTHERS ALONG  
THE WAY.