

# STAGEWORKS



## **AFRICAN AMERICAN GREATS**

### **Teacher Guidelines**

Mary McLeod Bethune, educator and civil rights activist

Dr. Charles Drew, scientist & medical researcher

Jackie Robinson, sports legend, broke color barrier

Rosa Parks, civil rights activist

Madame C.J. Walker, 1st African American millionaire

### **Community Partners**



## African American Greats Tour

History comes alive in your school! Students will meet familiar African American Greats (Jackie Robinson, Rosa Parks) and be introduced to new heroes who broke the color barrier and advanced civil rights (Dr. Charles Drew, Madam C.J. Walker and Mary McLeod Bethune). Estimated time: 30 minutes.

This program is presented as a part of the Artists-in-the-Schools Program, which is funded and jointly sponsored by the Hillsborough County Public Schools and the Arts Council of Hillsborough County.

## Stageworks African American Greats Tour:

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This program features two professional actors who will perform monologues as five notables of African American History: Mary McLeod Bethune, Dr. Charles Drew, Madam C.J. Walker, Jackie Robinson and Rosa Parks. These exceptional individuals struggled to overcome prejudice and racial barriers to excel in their chosen fields: education (McLeod Bethune), science and research (Drew), business and philanthropy (Walker), and sports (Robinson), as well as using their talents to break color barriers and advance civil rights (Parks) After the program, there will be a “talk back” during which the audience will have an opportunity to ask questions and share their reactions with the actors.

About the characters (in order of appearance):

Mary Jane McLeod Bethune (1875-1955) the daughter of slaves, was an educator and civil rights leader best known for founding a private school for African American students in Daytona, Fl. which ultimately evolved into Bethune-Cookman University.

Dr. Charles Drew (1904-1950) was an African American surgeon and scientist who pioneered methods of storing blood plasma for transfusion and organized the first large-scale blood bank in the U.S. His work is credited with saving the lives of thousands of U.S. soldiers during WWII.

Madam C. J. Walker (born Sarah Breedlove 1867-1919) is regarded as the first female self-made millionaire in America. She made her fortune by developing and marketing a successful line of beauty and hair products for black women. A generous philanthropist, she used her fortune to support civil rights, education, and anti-lynching campaigns.

Jackie Robinson (1919-1972) “broke the baseball color line” by becoming the first African American to play Major League baseball in the modern era in 1947. His tremendous talent as well as the courage with which Robinson handled racist abuse and even death threats inspired a generation of African Americans.

Rosa Parks (1913-2005) seamstress and civil rights activist whose refusal to surrender her bus seat to a white passenger in (1955), sparking the Montgomery bus boycott and other efforts to end segregation.

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Standards connected to performance:

Language Arts:

LAFS.K12.S.L.1.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Theater:

TH.68.C.2. Assessing our own and others’ artistic work, using critical-thinking, problem-solving, and decision making skills, is central to artistic growth.

TH.68.H.1. Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they lived.

TH.68.C.2.4. Discuss and defined one's personal response to a theatre production. TH.68.H.1.2. Analyze the impact of one's emotions and social experiences when respond to, or participating in a play.

TH.68.H.1.Pa.a. Have a better understanding of another time period.

## Preshow activity

### Theater Etiquette Activity

This is a reflective exercise for your students. Please read the following section and discuss their role as audience at a live performance.

Watching a live show is not like watching TV or a movie. The actors can see and hear you---the audience. How do you think your behavior can affect a performance (for better or worse?)

A live performance experience is more active for the audience. It can require more attention and focus. What sorts of multitasking activities are now common while watching TV that are not appropriate while watching a live show? (Texting, computer, moving around, etc).

A live performance requires that the audience watch and listen quietly. Your talking disturbs not only the actors but other audience members who want to hear the show. What sorts of audience behaviors do you find annoying? (Talking, moving around, eating, talking on cell phones, etc)

This performance will have a “talk back” which will give you, the audience, a chance to ask questions of the actors and share your responses to the show. Just as in a performance, the audience

should remain quiet so that everyone can hear both the questions and answers. Think for a moment about how you would like your peers to behave if you have a question or comment.

Standards for Theater Etiquette:

TH.68.S.1.1. Describe the responsibilities of audience members, to the actors and each other, at live and recorded performances and demonstrate appropriate behavior.

TH.68.H.1.5. Describe one's own personal responses to a theatrical work and show respect for the responses of others.

TH.912.S.1.1 Describe the interactive effect of audience members and actors on performances.

## **Language arts activity:**

### Daily life under Jim Crow

It is difficult to appreciate the scale of the achievements of these great Americans without some sense of the magnitude of the challenges they faced due to the racial discrimination as it existed during the Jim Crow era in which they lived. Read the following to your students then share the sample list of Jim Crow laws in the Florida Constitution. Ask them to reflect upon how their daily lives would have been different if that lived in the era of Jackie Robinson or Madam Walker? What daily activities could they no longer do? Who could they no longer socialize with? How would their education be different? What would their future look like?

“From the 1880s into the 1960s, a majority of American states enforced segregation through „JimCrow“laws (so named after a character from minstrel shows). From Connecticut to California, and from Montana to Florida, many states had laws that imposed fines and/or jail time. The majority of these laws forbade marriage between people of different races and ordered business owners to keep their black and white customers separated. Between 1865 and 1967, the state of Florida

enacted 19 Jim Crow segregation laws. Florida also imposed some of the harshest penalties on record including fines, jail time and corporal punishment such as whipping.” (<http://www.findingsources.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/jimcrowlawsflorida.pdf>)

- 1895: Education [Statute] Penal offense for any persons to conduct any school, any grade, either public or private where whites and blacks are instructed or boarded in the same building, or taught in the same class by the same teachers. Penalty: Between \$150 and \$500 fine, or imprisonment in the county jail between three and six months.
- 1903: Miscegenation [Statute] Intermarriage with a Negro, mulatto, or any person with one-eighth Negro blood shall be punished. Penalty: Imprisonment up to ten years or a fine not more than \$1,000.
- 1907: Railroads [Statute] Separate waiting rooms for each race to be provided at railroad depots along with separate ticket windows. Also called for separation of the races on streetcars. Signs in plain letters to be marked "For White" and "For Colored" to be displayed. Penalties: Railroad companies that refused to comply with the provision could be fined up to \$5,000.
- 1913: Education [Statute] Unlawful for white teachers to teach Negroes in Negro schools, and for Negro teachers to teach in white schools. Penalty: Violators subject to fines up to \$500, or imprisonment up to six months.
- 1944: Miscegenation [Statute] Illegal for whites and Negroes to live in adultery. Penalty: up to \$500, or up to two years imprisonment
- 1958: Public Carrier [Statute] Races to be segregated on public carriers.

### **Standard for Language Arts Activity:**

LAFS.68.RH.1.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

LAFS.910.RH.1.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Theater activity:

## **After the Show**

The African American Greats show is a very simple production that has virtually no set pieces, no special lighting or sound effects. This enables us to tour the show more easily and perform in all types of venues. Have your class imagine and discuss what a full scale production of these 5 monologues might look like.

- Discuss what aspects of each monologue that you might want to highlight:
  - The historical time period
  - The location
  - The time of day
  - The mood of the piece
  - The important ideas discussed in each piece
  - The historical importance of the events discussed in the piece
  
- Consider both realistic or representational design (i.e. a laboratory for Dr. Drew) as well as symbolic or impressionistic design that focus on mood or spirit of the piece.

- Discuss what performance elements you would use. What colors in the set, costumes and lights? Consider the possibility of projections (i.e. images of segregation), music (period or mood music), and possibility additional characters.

### **Standards for Theatre Activity:**

TH.68.F.1.1. Manipulate various design components to imagine the world of the character.

TH.68.C.1.4. Create and present a design, production concept, or performance and defend artistic choices.

TH.912.F.1.1 Synthesize research, analysis, and imagination to create believable characters and settings.

More information on Florida Jim Crow laws can be found at:

<http://www.findingsources.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/jimcrowlawsflorida.pdf>

More information regarding the struggle against Jim Crow laws including personal narratives, time lines and organized efforts to combat segregation can be found at:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories.html>

Images and photographs from the Jim Crow era can be found at:

[http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/085\\_disc.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/085_disc.html)

Useful teaching materials on Jim Crow can be found at:

[http://www.ducksters.com/history/civil\\_rights/jim\\_crow\\_laws.php](http://www.ducksters.com/history/civil_rights/jim_crow_laws.php)

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## **Glossary of useful terms:**

**Blood Plasma:** The liquid portion of blood that carries blood cells and critical nutrients that maintain the body's fluid balance.

**Jim Crow Laws:** Racial segregation laws that were enacted after the Reconstruction period (Post 1877) that mandated de jure racial segregation of public conveyances such as trains, public facilities such as beaches and businesses. They were also used to block African Americans from voting. Also known as "black laws", they were named for a character from minstrel shows.

**Monologue:** a theatrical term that refers to a speech given by one actor either to other actors or the audience.

**NAACP:** National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is a civil rights organization for ethnic minorities in the United States founded in 1909.

**Negro Leagues:** Professional baseball teams comprised primarily of African Americans and, to a lesser extent, Latin Americans, that reached their hey day in the 1920' and 1930's and died out after major league baseball integrated after Jackie Robinson "broke the color barrier."

## **About Stageworks:**

Stageworks Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre in Tampa. Located in the heart of the Channel District, right next door to downtown Tampa, it's a comfortable 99-seat theatre where every seat's a good one and easy covered parking is available. We present both new and classic plays that earn rave reviews from critics and audience members. In 2014, Stageworks was awarded Creative Loafing's Best of the Bay award for Best Theatre, and Artistic Director Karla Hartley won for Best Director.

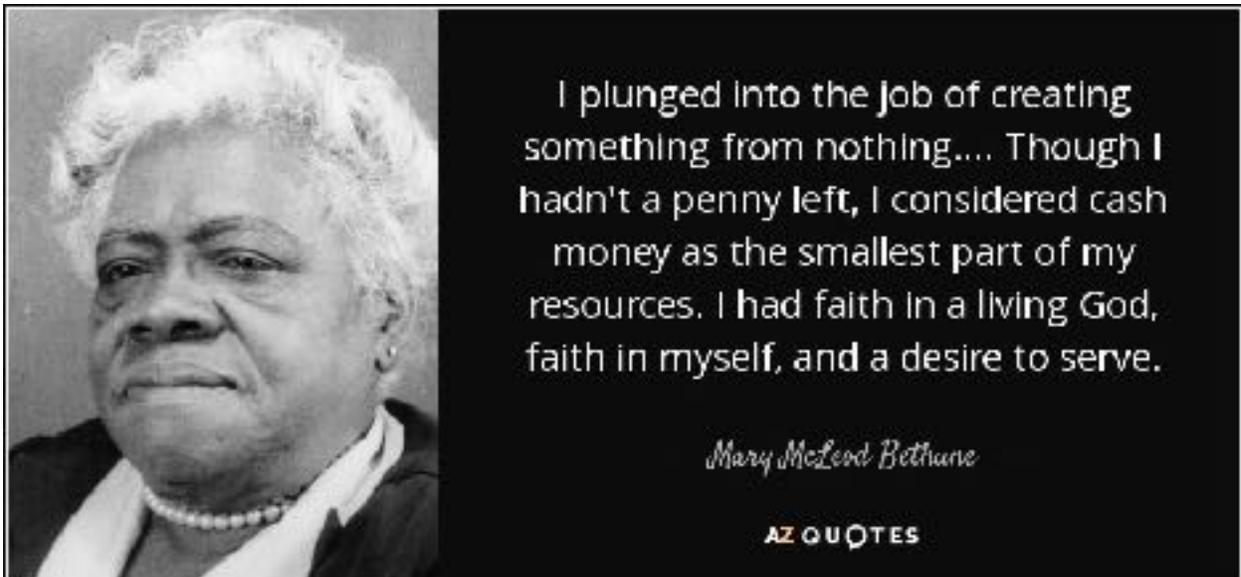
## AT A GLANCE

# MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE

- 1875 Mary McLeod Bethune is born, the daughter of former slaves, received no education until she was 10 years old
- 1894 Graduates from Scotia Seminary, begins her teaching career in North Carolina
- 1898 Married Albertus Bethune and moved to Palatka, FL
- 1904 Opened Daytona Educational and Industrial School for Negro Girls
- 1925 Bethune College and Cookman College merge to form Bethune-Cookman College
- 1924-1928 President of the National Association of Colored Women and campaigned against lynching and employment discrimination
- 1935 Chosen as Roosevelt's special advisor on minority affairs
- 1940 Elected President of the NAACP and campaigned against segregation in the armed forces during WWII.
- 1955 Dies at the age of 80 in Daytona Beach, Florida

## Discussions Questions

1. Mary McLeod Bethune was one of many African-American women and men who developed schools for African Americans. Why do you think this was necessary? What was the historical significance of schools for African Americans?
2. What do you think were some of the character traits that helped Bethune succeed?
3. As the daughter of former slaves, why do you think education was such an important mission for Mary McLeod Bethune?
4. What do you think Mary meant by the term “racial dignity”? Why is it important for living in our society?



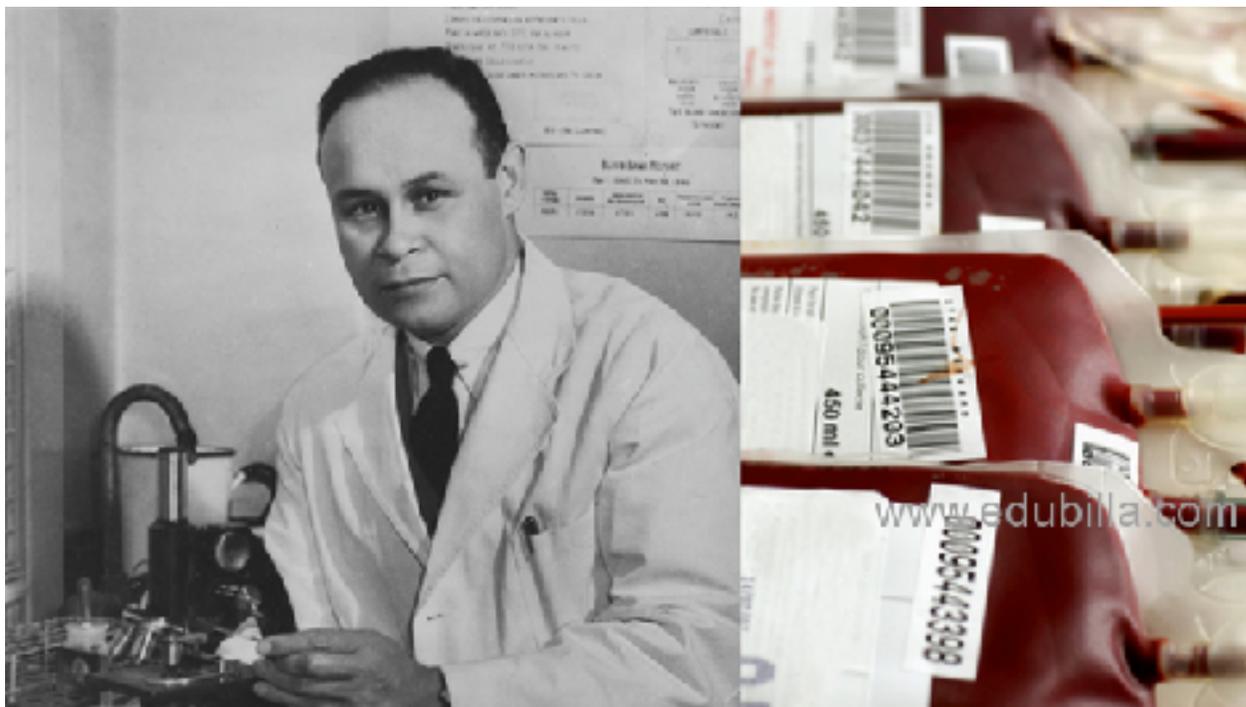
## AT A GLANCE

### DR. CHARLES DREW

- June 3, 1904 Born in Washington, D.C.
- 1926 Graduated Amherst College, BA
- 1933 Awarded Doctor of Medicine & Master of Surgery from McGill University, Canada
- 1940 Completed "Banked Blood," a pioneering work on blood plasma research
- 1941 Appointed Director of the 1st Red Cross National Blood Donor Service, appointed Asst. Director of Blood Procurement for the U.S. Army and Navy. Openly criticized military's blood segregation policy
- 1941 Appointed Head of the Dept. of Surgery at Howard University, Washington, D.C.
- 1944-1946 Chief of Staff, Freedman's Hospital
- 1949 Surgical Consultant to the Surgeon General, U.S. Army
- April, 1950 Died as result of injuries in car accident near Burlington, N.C.

## Discussions Questions

1. Define the term "irony". Is the term "irony" appropriate in describing the death of Dr. Drew? Why?
2. Where is Amherst College? What is the "Ivy league"? What is the significance of Dr. Drew attending Amherst in the 1920"s?
3. How do you think Dr. Drew might be involved in the AIDS crisis today? As a researcher, advocate? Explain.
4. What personal qualities are needed to captain a track team? How might these qualities be transferred to the field of medical research? How might Dr. Drew's family life have influenced his achievement?



# AT A GLANCE

## ROSA PARKS

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1913-1955     | Born Tuskegee, AL, attended Alabama State College. Worked as a seamstress and active in Montgomery chapters of the NAACP and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference |
| Dec 1 1955    | Arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on Montgomery bus  |
| Dec 4., 1955  | Martin Luther King, jr. urges the city's black community to boycott buses, to beginning the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the modern Civil Rights Era                        |
| Dec. 21, 1956 | Supreme Court rules bus segregation unconstitutional. Boycott ends. Parks and King thrust into national spotlight   |
| 1957          | Moves to Detroit, MI to escape harassment and death threats   |
| 1963          | Participated in the March on Washington   |
| 1987          | Established the Rosa & Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development   |
| 1999          | One of TIME magazines 20th most influential people of the century   |
| Oct. 24, 2005 | Died in Detroit, MI at age of 92  |

## Discussions Questions

1. Have you ever used public transportation? How would you feel if you had to sit in the back of the bus or give up your seat to a white person?
2. Think about public places you go to regularly. How would your life be different if you could not use restaurants, hospitals, department stores, public rest rooms and water fountains?
3. What is courage? What did Rosa Parks have to fear being part of the civil rights movement?
4. What is a leader? Was Rosa Parks a leader? Why?

**“People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true... No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in.”**

**—*Rosa Parks***



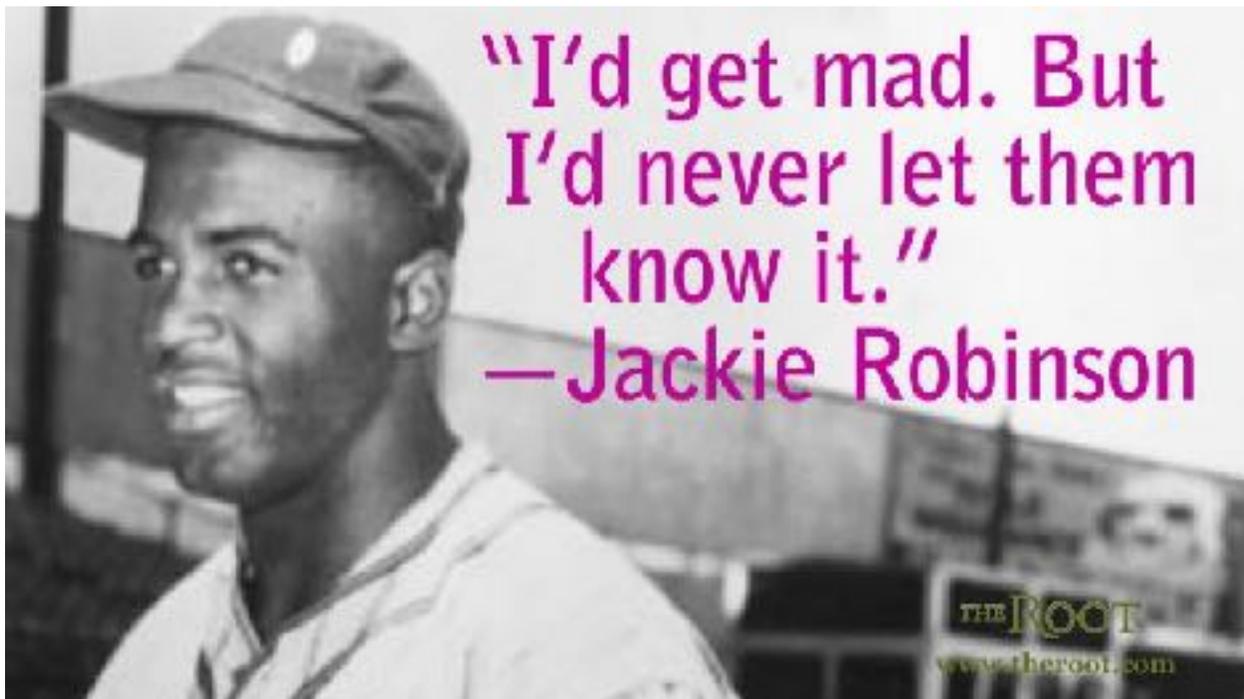
## AT A GLANCE

# JACKIE ROBINSON

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1876          | National League formed   |
| 1920          | Negro National League formed   |
| Jan. 31, 1919 | Born Cairo, GA   |
| Spring, 1944  | Jackie joins the Negro Baseball League and plays for the Kansas City Monarchs                                  |
| April 1946    | Plays his first big league game with the Brooklyn Dodgers  |
| Oct. 1947     | First ever major league Rookie of the  |
| Oct. 1949     | Named the National League Most Valuable Player   |
| 1955          | Announces his retirement from baseball   |
| Jan. 1960     | Elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame   |
| Oct. 23, 1971 | Jackie Robinson dies, Stamford, CN   |
| 1973          | Jackie Robinson Foundation established   |
| 1982          | Robinson becomes the first baseball player ever to be depicted on a U.S. Postage Stamp called "Black Heritage" |

## Discussions Questions

1. Was Jackie Robinson a hero? What makes him a hero? Are all sports stars heroes? Do you think today's sports stars are heroes?
2. What do you think was the hardest challenge Jackie Robinson had to face?
3. How has baseball changed since Jackie Robinson's day?
4. Why do you think the Jackie Robinson Foundation's goal is to help minority students become scholars, not athletes?



## AT A GLANCE

# MADAME C.J. WALKER

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Dec. 23, 1867 | Born Sarah Breedlove in Delta, LA   |
| 1891          | Married at age of 14 to C.J. Walker   |
| 1905          | Discovered formula for texturizing preparations for black hair  |
| 1908          | Established office in Pittsburg, PA   |
| 1910          | Founded the C.J. Walker Laboratories for manufacturing various cosmetics and a training school for beauty culturists in Indianapolis, IN  |
| 1910-1919     | Supported the NAACP, established scholarships, established a school in West Africa and fought for anti-lynching legislation and against segregation and voting restrictions for African Americans |
| May 25, 1919  | Dies at age of 52, 1st American woman, black or white to become a millionaire through her own efforts.  |

## Discussions Questions

1. Name some of the most popular hair styles today? How might Madame C.J. Walker's early methods for hair care influence some of today's styles?
2. How was she demonstrating civic responsibility (acting for the good of the public) at a time before women had the right to vote and most African Americans were disenfranchised (did not have the right to vote)?
3. Looking at your own preferences, what philanthropic way would you use your time and money today? Are there specific causes you would like to advance?
4. Madame C.J. Walker was one of the great entrepreneurs and philanthropists of her day. Can you think of modern day examples of individuals who followed her example?

