



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## DAVY CROCKETT

Davy Crockett did many great things in his life. He was a frontiersman and an explorer. He became a leader in the Creek Indian War. He was later a congressman in the United States House of Representatives. Davy was born into a poor family, but he did not let that stop him from accomplishing many things.

Davy's life began in a small cabin on August 17, 1786. He was the fifth of nine children. They moved many times when he was young. At the age of 13, Davy ran away from home to avoid getting in trouble by his father. While on his own, he went from town to town and learned many skills through the jobs he took and as a hunter and trapper. After almost three years, he returned home. His family was surprised but happy to see him. Davy worked for a year for men to whom his father owed money. Later, he was able to save his earnings and buy things for himself.

In 1806, Davy married Polly Finlay, and they had three children. She died, and he married Elizabeth Patton. She was a widow with two children.

Davy died fighting for freedom. He died at the Battle of the Alamo in Texas in 1836. Through the years, Davy has been the subject of songs, books, TV programs, and movies.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. How old was Davy Crockett when he died?
  - a. 46
  - b. 60
  - c. 45
  - d. 50
2. Why did Davy run away from home?
  - a. because he wanted to go live in the woods
  - b. because he was worried about getting in trouble
  - c. because he was afraid of getting married
  - d. because he had to work for his father
3. What conclusions can you draw about Davy Crockett?
  - a. He worked hard and did many important things.
  - b. He was lazy and didn't do much with his life.
  - c. He became a famous explorer.
  - d. He didn't like politics.
4. Which statement does **NOT** explain how Davy Crockett made our country a better place?
  - a. He died fighting at the Alamo.
  - b. He served in the House of Representatives.
  - c. He could hit the center of any target with his rifle.
  - d. He was a leader in the Creek Indian War.



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## NARCISSA WHITMAN

Have you ever been wrongly accused of something? Narcissa Whitman lost her life because someone lied about her. Her life was a mixture of victories and tragedies. She did things no one else could.

Narcissa was born in New York on March 14, 1808. When she was young, she loved to read. The stories of Harriet Broadman, a missionary to India, were her favorites. A missionary is someone who does religious or charitable work. The stories told of good deeds and helping others. Narcissa dreamed of becoming a missionary herself.

Narcissa became a teacher; however, she never gave up her dream of being a missionary. She tried to find a placement, but unmarried women were not accepted at that time.

Narcissa married a man named Marcus Whitman. He was a doctor and a missionary. Her dream finally became real. The day after their wedding, they headed down the dusty trail. They moved west to help others. She would share her beliefs and tend to others' needs.

For 11 years, they lived in the Oregon territory. They had one daughter, Alice. When she was two years old, Alice fell into a river and drowned. She never had any more children of her own, but the Whitmans later adopted several other children.

Even though Narcissa had dreamed of being a missionary, she didn't know what was in store for her. Life was much more difficult than she had known. For many years she was the only woman living in the mission. She missed her family and mail was slow to bring news from them.

Narcissa found it hard to understand the ways of the Native Americans. They did not understand her. In 1847, a measles outbreak took the lives of many natives, but most of the Caucasians survived. The natives claimed that the Whitmans were poisoning them and that they wanted to steal all the land. This lie caused a revolt.

The mission was destroyed. The Whitmans and others were killed. A terrible lie killed a wonderful woman and those around her.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What was Narcissa's dream as a child?
  - to become an artist
  - to become a painter
  - to become a missionary
  - to become a settler
- Why was she unable to become a missionary at first?
  - She was too young.
  - Single women were not allowed to be missionaries then.
  - She was too old.
  - Her mother would not let her go.
- How was Narcissa's dream of becoming a missionary different from the real thing?
  - She found the job to be exciting.
  - She got to travel much more than she originally thought.
  - She found that she had to learn to cook and clean.
  - She found the job to be hard and lonely.
- What type of literature is the passage above?
  - biography
  - historical fiction
  - adventure
  - fairy tale



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## STAGECOACH MARY FIELDS

Mary Fields lived in the American Wild West. She was born a slave and became an orphan. She never married, and she had no children. This African-American woman found work in a convent in Toledo, Ohio. She formed a strong bond with Mother Amadeus.

The nuns moved to Montana, where Mother Amadeus became very ill. When Mary learned of the illness, she traveled to Montana. She nursed the nun back to health. She then stayed at the mission. Mary protected the nuns from thieves and criminals. She was a pistol-packing woman who never turned away from a fight.

She was six feet tall and as strong as any man. Mary helped build a school and carry supplies. She could fix anything! She became the foreman of the workers. Men reported to her! However, her temper got the best of her, and she was forced to leave the mission. The nuns helped her start a business nearby.

Mary opened a café. She did not make any money. Her heart was too big. She fed the hungry without pay. She could not turn away people who needed help. When the café closed, Mary found a new job.

This job suited her well. In 1895, she became a driver of a U.S. mail coach. She became the second woman—and the first African-American woman—to ever work for the post office. She and her mule, Moses, never missed a day. She earned her nickname, “Stagecoach,” for her reliability. She did this job until she was 70 years old! “Stagecoach” Mary Fields broke boundaries of race, gender, and age.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What was so unusual about Mary?
  - She was gentle and kind.
  - She worked at a mission.
  - She tipped her wagon in the middle of the night.
  - She carried a gun, was tough, and did the jobs of men in the Old West.
- What do you think the phrase “pistol-packing” means?
 

|                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. packing a pistol into a suitcase | c. carrying a pistol |
| b. wrapping up a pistol as a gift   | d. burying a pistol  |
- What do you think would **NOT** have been part of Mary’s job at the mission?
 

|                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| a. carrying firewood | c. digging a well          |
| b. sewing            | d. building a storage room |
- Why did Mary get the nickname “Stagecoach”?
 

|                                         |                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. She was as reliable as a stagecoach. | c. She was as fast as a stagecoach. |
| b. She was as big as a stagecoach.      | d. She could carry a stagecoach.    |



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CLARA BARTON

Clara Barton was America's first nurse. When she was 11, her big brother fell off a barn roof. He was badly injured. She took care of him. That is when she knew what she wanted to do with her life.

When the Civil War started, there was no such thing as a nurse! Barton decided that the hurt and dying soldiers needed care. She went right out into the battlefields to help them. She refused to rest if even one wounded man needed care. Sometimes she worked for three days straight with only one meal and an hour and a half of sleep.

Barton had one goal: she wanted to be sure that every injured soldier was properly taken care of. And nothing stopped her. She burned her hands but kept working. She got frostbite on her fingers. Still, she took care of the men. Twice she was nearly shot: one bullet passed through her sleeve, and the other tore off a part of her skirt.

After the war, she went to Europe to rest. But instead, she became a nurse to the men on the battlefields of Europe. There she heard about the Red Cross. The Red Cross gave any wounded person care and food. It did not matter what side they were on. And no one would attack a tent flying a Red Cross flag.

When she returned home, she formed the American Red Cross to meet people's needs during emergencies. The first people the American Red Cross helped were those who had lost their homes due to a big forest fire. Barton continued to work with the American Red Cross until she died at the age of 91.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Most of the soldiers Clara cared for had been . . .
  - a. burned.
  - b. shot.
  - c. frostbitten.
  - d. kicked.
2. What happened last?
  - a. Clara took care of men on the battlefield.
  - b. Clara took care of her brother.
  - c. Clara started the American Red Cross.
  - d. Clara went to Europe.
3. Why did Clara form the American Red Cross?
  - a. She wanted to help anyone in need.
  - b. She had seen the Red Cross during the Civil War and thought it was a good idea.
  - c. She wanted to fight fires.
  - d. She wanted to help soldiers.
4. When Clara went into the battlefields to care for the soldiers, she showed that she was . . .
  - a. scared.
  - b. selfish.
  - c. brave.
  - d. wounded.



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## CHARLIE PARKHURST

Have you ever been tricked? Charlie Parkhurst tricked a lot of people. When Charlie died, we found out the truth—Charlie was really Charlotte!

Charlotte was born in New Hampshire around 1812. She was orphaned at an early age, and her life changed. In order to survive, Charlotte became Charlie. She escaped from an orphanage by dressing as a boy. She learned that boys could get jobs, but little girls could not. Boys could learn trades; they could make a living. So she dressed in pants and boys' things.

Charlie tried a few jobs, and "he" found his calling. Charlie worked as a stable boy. People saw that he was good with horses. This skill led to a great career. He learned to handle teams of horses. Stagecoach driving was the perfect job for him!

He could drive a stagecoach plum full of passengers, bags, mail, and gold dust. He would get it safely across the Sierra Nevada Mountains. For twenty years people rode safely across the mountains with Charlie. He proved that he was one of the best drivers. Everybody felt safe when they were with him.

Charlie met outlaws twice. The first time, they got the box of money. It was full. The second time, Charlie was ready for them. He made sure the bandits didn't get what they were after. The passengers watched from inside the stagecoach.

When Charlie died, the coroner found out the truth. Charlie was a woman! She had done things women never dreamed of. She'd been the best stagecoach driver in the area. She had even voted for the president of the United States 50 years before women were allowed to vote!

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why is "he" in quotes in paragraph three?
  - a. because someone said these words
  - b. because "he" is really a "she"
  - c. it should not have quotes
  - d. because it is the title of an article
2. A group of words that could be used instead of "plum full of" in paragraph four would be . . .
  - a. stuffed with.
  - b. empty.
  - c. full of plums.
  - d. missing several.
3. Why did Charlie take a fake identity?
  - a. to hide from his parents
  - b. to hide from police
  - c. because no girls' clothes were available
  - d. to escape from an orphanage and be able to get work
4. What question would Charlie have been able to answer?
  - a. How did the United States win its freedom?
  - b. What do railroads keep in the engine room?
  - c. How did you keep your identity a secret all of those years?
  - d. How do you take care of sheep?