

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Few guessed that this quiet, parentless girl growing up in New York City would one day become the First Lady of the United States. Even fewer thought she would become an author and lecturer and a woman much admired and lauded by people throughout the world.

Born Anna Eleanor Roosevelt in 1884 to wealthy, but troubled parents who both died while she was young. Roosevelt was cared for by her grandmother and sent to school in England. In 1905 she married her distant cousin, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. She and her husband had six children. Although they were wealthy, her life was not easy, and she suffered several personal tragedies.

Her second son died when he was a baby. In 1921 her strong, athletic husband was stricken with polio, which left him physically disabled for life.

Eleanor Roosevelt was a remarkable woman who had great intelligence and tremendous strength of character. She never let things get her down. She nursed her husband back to good health and encouraged him to remain in politics. She then helped him to become governor of New York, and, in 1933, president of the United States.

While he was president, she took a great interest in all the affairs of the country. She became her husband's legs and eyes; she visited prisons and hospitals; she went down into mines, up scaffoldings, and into factories. Roosevelt was tireless and daring.

During the depression she traveled all over the country bringing goodwill, reassurance, and help to people without food and jobs. During World War II she visited American soldiers in camps all over the world. The United States had never known a First Lady like her.

Roosevelt also kept in touch with the American people through a daily newspaper column called "My Day". She broadcast on the radio and delivered lectures. All first for a First Lady.

In 1945 her husband, the president, died, but instead of retiring she took on an even more demanding role. She became Chairwoman of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The whole world became Roosevelt's concern. She visited many different countries, but her purpose remained the same—to help those in need. This she continued to do until she died in 1962.



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Find the Main Idea: Choose one.

- (a) How to become famous.
- (b) How becoming a president's wife can change someone.
- (c) Why Eleanor Roosevelt was loved and admired.
- (d) How this First Lady helped her husband become president.

Find the Facts: Mark each one true or false.

- (a) Eleanor Roosevelt's parents died when she was young.  
- (b) She was born in 1884.  
- (c) She married a relative.  
- (d) Her husband was injured in a car accident.  
- (e) President Roosevelt came to rely on her.  
- (f) She retired from public life when her husband died  

Find the Order. Number the following in the order in which they appear in the passage.

- (1) (a) She suffered several personal tragedies.
- (2) (b) She continued to help people until she died in 1962.
- (3) (c) Her husband was stricken with polio.
- (4) (d) She became Chairwoman of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- (5) (e) She visited prisons and hospitals.
- (6) (f) She nursed her husband back to good health.

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Go beyond the Facts: After reading the passage. why do you think Eleanor Roosevelt was so loved and respected?

- (a) She was the president's wife.
- (b) She helped her husband become president.
- (c) She wrote a newspaper column.
- (d) She loved and helped people.

Write the letter of the correct definition beside the word.

1. lecturer	(a) willing to take risks, not afraid
2. troubled	(b) temporary platform used to do work on a building
3. tragedy	(c) having worries; problems
4. athletic	(d) having to do with the process of governing
5. stricken	(e) overcome by
6. politics	(f) interest in or care for a person or thing
7. scaffolding	(g) strong. Well coordinated
8. daring	(h) someone who talks on a subject to an audience
9. concern	(i) A very sad experience