

This set of group readers (Readers Theater) starts by taking a look at Amazing Women from across the world and across the centuries, and then focuses on the part played by women in shaping America's history - fighting for a voice both in society and politics.

1. Amazing Women From Across the World: 15th - 20th century

Speakers:

Interviewer

Elizabeth I

Catherine the Great

Indira Gandhi

Eleanor Roosevelt

Joan of Arc

Eleanor: Well, thank you. Though I did just what I felt was right.

Catherine: And you will go down in history as being a shining beacon of light. Course, that's what some of us set out to do - but things just didn't quite work out that way.

Indira: I know exactly what you mean. It was my intention to make things better for the poor in my nation but somehow events got in the way.

Elizabeth: Being a woman at the top is never easy.

Indira: Especially when you are 'the first' - like me!

Elizabeth: And me!

Indira: But you 'inherited' your throne - you were the next in line. I had to prove myself - and get elected - India's first female prime minister!

Catherine: And it was hardly a 'walk in the park' for me, getting to be empress of Russia. You wouldn't believe the lengths I had to go to!

Joan: Like getting your husband, the Emperor, 'removed'!

Interviewer: Let's remind ourselves of your words, that it "pleased Almighty God to remove the late emperor by a sudden and violent malady"!

2. Amazing Women From Across the World: 20th Century

Speakers:

Mother Theresa

Helen Keller (Helen)

Anne Frank (Anne)

Marie Curie (Marie)

Princess Diana (Di)

Margaret Thatcher (Maggie)

M. Theresa: Life is an opportunity, benefit from it.

Di: Life is beauty, admire it.

Anne: Life is a dream, realise it.

Helen: Life is a challenge, meet it.

Maggie: Life is a duty, complete it.

Marie: Life is a game, play it.

M. Theresa: Life is costly, care for it.

Di: Life is wealth, keep it.

Anne: Life is love, enjoy it.

Helen: Life is a mystery, know it.

Maggie: Life is a promise, fulfil it.

Marie: Life is sorrow, overcome it.

3. Amazing Women in the American Women's Suffrage Movement

Speakers:

Interviewer

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Lucy Stone

Carrie Chapman Catt

Jeanette Rankin

Alice Paul

Interviewer: (With a slight shake in his voice) Good morning, ladies! I am honored to be in your midst!

Elizabeth: And a little overawed, by the sounds of it!

Interviewer: Well, I *am* the only man here!

Lucy: And since when has that ever stopped you men?

Interviewer: Now, ladies. I trust we're not going to get confrontational?

Carrie: Only if necessary!

Jeanette: Not so much need, today, perhaps. We all stand here as equals!

Alice: About time too!

Interviewer: Well, let me just say how much I admire what you did.

Alice: You'd best not be patronizing!

4. Amazing Women in the American Civil Rights Movement

Speakers:

Interviewer

Sojourner Truth

Harriet Tubman

Ida Wells

Fannie Lou Townsend Hamer

Rosa Parks

Interviewer: You ladies never gave up!

Fannie: Well, as I said at the time "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired".

Interviewer: And your bravery, Harriet, knew no boundaries.

Harriet: Well, like I said "I can't die but once"!

Interviewer: And you, Sojourner, will certainly never be forgotten.

Sojourner: As I said on my death bed "I'm not going to die honey; I'm going home like a shooting star!"

Interviewer: And to think of all the injustice you, Ida, brought to light...

Ida: 700 cases of false charges against victims of those terrible lynchings - innocent people hanged by the mob.

Interviewer: And not forgetting you, Rosa - "the great fuse that led to the modern stride toward freedom" - the words of Martin Luther King himself!

Rosa: I feel honored to have been symbolic of the power of the individual.

5. Amazing First Ladies 31-35

Speakers:

Interviewer

Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Wife of John F. Kennedy

Claudia Taylor Johnson Wife of Lyndon B. Johnson

Pat Ryan Nixon Wife of Richard Nixon

Betty Bloomer Ford Wife of Gerald Ford

Rosalynn Smith Carter Wife of Jimmy Carter

Claudia: You were a true champion of the cause - what bravery you showed in undergoing surgery!

Betty: But no more than any of the other tens of thousands of women out there! They're all just as brave but nobody hears about them.

Pat: And that's why you were so admired. Not just for your own personal battle with cancer, but for having the courage to speak out about it. It was something of a taboo subject before. Women didn't feel comfortable talking about it. And you changed all that.

Rosalyn: You made it easier for women to face their fears

Jacqueline: The result being thousands of women began to have check- ups - so vital for the early detection of the disease.

Claudia: Think of all the lives you must have saved! I might have campaigned for women's rights, but you gave a lot of those women *life!*