

Little People, BIG DREAMS

Josephine Baker



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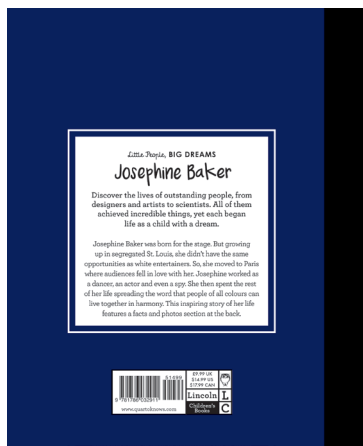
For readers aged 4+ | 9781786032911 | Hardback | £9.99

Lots of the activities and discussion topics in these teacher's notes are deliberately left open to encourage pupils to develop independent thinking around the book. This will help pupils build confidence in their ability to problem solve as individuals and also as part of a group.



The Front Cover

Why do you think Josephine Baker was well known?



The Blurb

What facts do you find out about her from the blurb?

Do you find any of them surprising?



Find out where St Louis is.

What does the author mean, when she writes, 'Some would say she was born with nothing'?

What special qualities did Josephine have?



How does the illustrator convey that life was different for black girls?

Do you think white people 'live in another world' today?

Should skin colour affect the way people behave towards each other?



What is a street artist?

Can you make your legs 'elastic fantastic'?

What can you infer about Josephine's character?



Why was it good fortune that Josephine was the last dancer at the end of the chorus line?

In small groups, create your own chorus line dance, with the end person doing 'silly and stylish' movements.



What qualities do you think Josephine has developed?

Add a thought bubble to the illustration to show what she might be thinking.

What clue is in the illustration to indicate where Josephine is in Europe?



Why do you think things were different for black people in France?

What clues does the illustrator use in this picture to show that Josephine is in France?

Why do you think Josephine didn't feel free before?



What does the author mean when she says 'Josephine became a star overnight'?

What do you think the 'shimmy, the moosh, the mess around, the Charleston' were?

Watch the following films, showing the Charleston and the shimmy.

quartokno.ws/2CeOZ7V

quartokno.ws/2TCk3IS

Create your own video, with instructions on how to do the shimmy.

Ask someone (possibly your teacher!) to try following the instructions to see if they are accurate.



What problems might occur with owning a baby cheetah?

Have a class discussion about the rights and wrongs of keeping wild animals as pets. By doing some research first, you will be able to develop your argument, using evidence to back up your opinions.



Make a list of modern day superstars who sing and act in movies.

What made Josephine's achievements particularly special?

What do you notice about this illustration?



But then World War Two began and half of Europe was invaded. Josephine knew she had to do something.

She became a spy and smuggled secret reports in her music sheets. She was a heroine of the French resistance!

Which country invaded half of Europe during the Second World War?

Why do you think Josephine was well placed to be a spy?

Find out about the French resistance and what they did during the war.

Look at the Wiki article on how to make invisible ink: quartokno.ws/2Ccr1IA

Try each one by writing a secret message.

Which method is the most effective? Why do you think this is?



When the war ended, Josephine adopted 12 children from the four corners of the world. She believed people of all colours could live together in harmony and wanted to prove it to everyone.

What do you imagine life might have been like, to be adopted along with eleven other children from different countries?

What pros and cons do you think there would be?



But times were changing in America, and Josephine returned home. She travelled to Washington and marched for and rights along with thousands of other people. A man called Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. marched with her.

What are 'civil rights'?

Why do you think Josephine decided to return to America?

What do you notice she is wearing in the illustration?

Find out about Martin Luther King and his most famous speech: quartokno.ws/2UvvW0m




And when she celebrated her 80th year career on stage, the world gave her a standing ovation. It was a long way from St. Louis for little Josephine, but she had made it, in her own spectacular way.


What is a 'standing ovation'?

Summarise what Josephine has achieved in her life.


JOSEPHINE BAKER
(Born 1906 • Died 1975)




1908



1917



c. 1920



1944

Josephine Baker was born into poverty in St. Louis, Missouri. Josephine's early years were difficult. She was brought up in poverty in a segregated city. This meant there were separate rules for white and black people. There were different schooling, bus hours, medical care and education to opportunities, jobs and access to services. But Josephine made it despite the roadblocks put in front of her. She learned her craft watching vaudeville shows and danced herself out of the St. Louis courts. Her art was confident, independent and full of joy. The unique talent took her to shows in Boston, New York and Paris. And at the age of 19, Josephine became an overnight sensation in her first Parisian show.

Over the following years she continued to become confident on stage, famously wearing a banana skirt. She became the first black woman to star in a major film – going on to make four in total. Then, during World War Two, Josephine worked as a spy, using information that helped the French resistance against the Nazis. Josephine never stopped fighting for equal rights, she worked to perform in segregated theatres, she spoke at the March on Washington, and she adopted 12 children from around the world, calling them her 'Rainbow Tribe'. Her hope for the future was that people would learn to live in peace and without prejudice. She remained one of the biggest and brightest stars in entertainment for the rest of her life.

What do the following words and phrases mean:

- poverty
- segregated
- access to services
- roadblocks
- honed
- vaudeville

Create your own timeline of Josephine Baker's life. Remember to add in the two World Wars.

Design your own dance costume for a class display, using fruit motifs.

Why do you think Josephine Baker used the name 'Rainbow Tribe'?

Do you think her hope for living 'in peace and without prejudice' is a possibility?

Be bold, be brave, dream BIG!

Discover inspirational lives from around the world.



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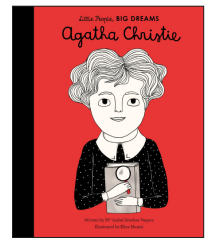
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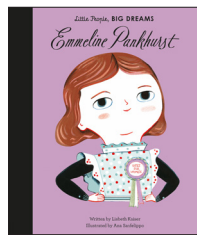
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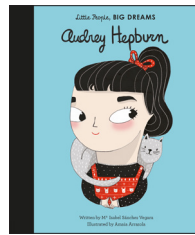
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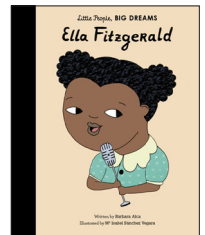
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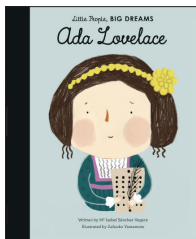
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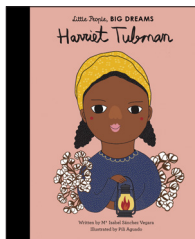
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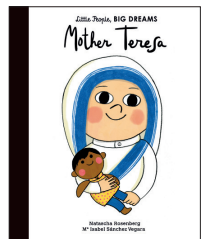
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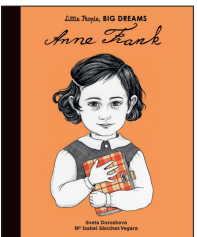
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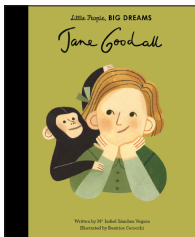
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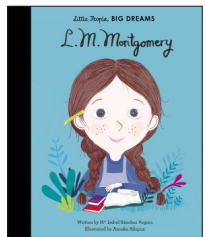
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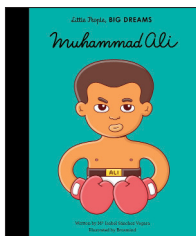
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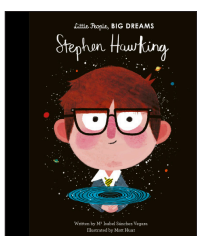
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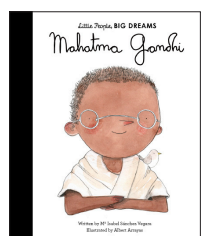
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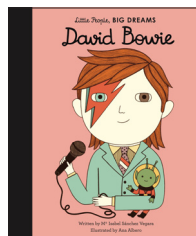
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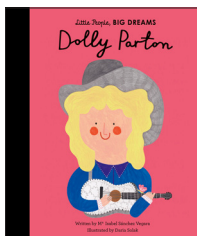
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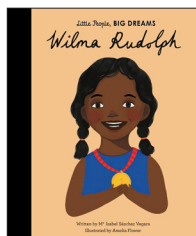
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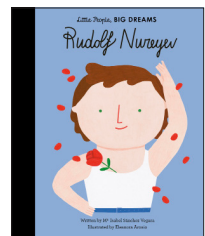
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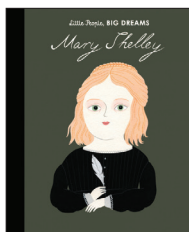
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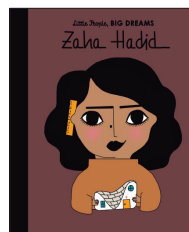
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