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# Fly High!: The Story Of Bessie Coleman



## Synopsis

When Bessie Coleman was a child, she wanted to be in school -- not in the cotton fields of Texas, helping her family earn money. She wanted to be somebody significant in the world. So Bessie did everything she could to learn under the most challenging of circumstances. At the end of every day in the fields she checked the foreman's numbers -- made sure his math was correct. And this was just the beginning of a life of hard work and dedication that really paid off: Bessie became the first African-American to earn a pilot's license. She was somebody.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Written for an older audience than aimed for in either Lynn Joseph's *Fly, Bessie, Fly* or Reeve Lindbergh's *Nobody Owns the Sky!*: The Story of 'Brave Bessie' Coleman, this informative and insightful picture-book biography of the African-American aviator merits attention. Borden and Kroeger, co-authors of *Paperboy*, stress the adversities of Bessie Coleman's childhood in rural Texas at the turn of the 20th century and emphasize her extraordinary perseverance. As a girl, Bessie struggles to get an education, even when she must pick cotton instead of attending school; later, at 18, Bessie enrolls in "catch-up classes" and is placed in sixth grade at a private college, but her money runs out after only one term. Undefeated in her determination to become "somebody,"

Bessie eventually moves to Chicago in 1915 and, later, learns of French women who piloted planes during WWI. From that point on, Bessie resolves to fly; when no American pilots agree to teach her, she saves up money and enrolls at a school in France, becoming the first African-American to earn a pilot's license. At once breezy and grounded, the rhythmic text is arranged in short, verse-like lines, which should encourage reluctant readers to climb on board. Flavin's (Pushing Up the Sky) pebbly gouaches are atmospheric if a bit stiff, capitalizing on Borden and Kroeger's optimism. A flight well worth taking. Ages 9-12. (Jan.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

K-Gr 4-The authors' flair for imparting history soars in this biography of the first African American to earn a pilot's license. From her difficult childhood spent picking cotton in Texas to her grand achievements in aviation, Coleman's personality shines through. The warm illustrations done in gouache on colored paper mix exciting images of the aviator flying her plane with quieter glimpses of her interacting with friends and family members. The straightforward sentence structure keeps the action moving and will capture reluctant readers. Coleman's affinity for children will captivate youngsters, who will freely mourn the early demise of the "tr&#x8A;s chic! aviatrix" who often told others, "You can be somebody, too." A first-rate follow-up to Borden's Good-Bye, Charles Lindbergh (McElderry, 1998).-Gay Lynn Van Vleck, Henrico County Library, Glen Allen, VACopyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This book was really easy for my students to read and contained a lot of information that helped with their research projects.

Loved this book my daughter wants it read to her every night!! She's only 2!! Lol!

This book is wonderfu. It tells the story of Bessie Coleman, a woman of color,who pursued her dream of flying, even at a time when women in our country weren't permitted in flight schools.My students are always very interested when I read it to them.

Perfectly age appropriate telling of her life. My 3rd grader did a report on this book and still enjoys it. She has read it numerous times since giving her report.

Good detailed book. I had to edit while reading to my daughter's kindergarten class. But they loved

the story and stayed engaged for the entire reading.

Daughter loves this book. I have been on a search for good books about strong women for my 8-year old daughter. This did not disappoint.

BESSIE'S STORY IS WELL TOLD HERE, BEAUTIFUL BOOK WELL WRITTEN, PERFECT FOR FLIGHT HISTORIANS AND CHILDREN TO LEARN ABOUT A WONDERFUL WOMEN WHO FLEW.

I used this book to discuss multicultural issues. Nice presentation, colorful. I recommend it for grades 3-6, or lower as a read aloud.

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