Read-Alone

Helen Keller

by Margaret Davidson

Read-Alone Guide Answer Key by Jennifer Reed

Illuminations

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Illuminations Year Five

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~ Weeks 1 and 2 ~

Supplies

- *Helen Keller* by Margaret Davidson
- Map of The United States

Week 1 - Day 1

- Read pages 7–19.

Discussion Generators

1. What caused healthy baby Helen to lose her hearing and sight? *[An illness called scarlet fever]*
2. How did Helen's mother discover she was blind? *[When her mother waved her hand and a lamp in front of her face, Helen didn't even blink.]*
3. How did Helen's mother discover she was also deaf? *[Helen, who loved to eat, did not respond to the food bell. Her mother then rattled Helen's can of stones near her ear and, again, Helen did not respond.]*
4. Why was Helen so angry? *[She was frustrated because she couldn't communicate and didn't understand the things she felt, both physically and emotionally.]*
5. Why did the Keller's feel they would one day have to send Helen away to the State Insane Asylum? *[She was becoming wild and uncontrollable, and the State Insane Asylum was the only place that could handle girls such as Helen.]*

- All mapping activities will be completed on the same United States map found in your literature guide for this book. All mapping locations are marked; they just need to be labeled as directed. Your first location to label is Tuscumbia, AL.

Hands-On Activities

- In order to communicate with those around her, Helen created signs to express her needs and wants. Even people who can hear use signs to communicate without words. How many can you think of?
- It is a common practice for those with deaf family members to make up signs for those they interact with regularly. Many feminine signs are near the cheeks or heart, and many masculine signs are near the temple, but, just as it was for the Kellers, most signs for people mimic habits or likes of that person. Create signs for your family members.

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Week 1 - Day 2

- Read pages 20–29.

Discussion Generators

1. How could Helen "listen" with her whole body? *[She could feel vibrations, like the thud of the horses' hooves.]*
2. How did Helen feel about strangers? *[She did not like them, nor to be touched by them, but she was curious enough about them to touch their faces, clothes, and belongings.]*
3. Was Helen a frightened child? How do you think this might be a problem being she had no sight or hearing? *[No, Helen was curious and not at all frightened. Answers may include that her actions could put herself in danger or could be inappropriate.]*
4. How did Helen react when Miss Annie did not give the doll back to her? What did Helen need to learn? *[Helen attacked Miss Annie, hitting her in the mouth. Helen needed to learn self-control, instead of behaving like an animal.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Learn the finger alphabet. This can be done through a book from your local library or bookstore or through various websites. A personal favorite website to learn to fingerspell is

  http://www.handspeak.com/spell/index.php?id=spell-asl&abc=asla
- Read Galatians 5:22–23 and explain how these verses could help anyone learn self-control.

Week 1 - Day 3

- Read pages 30–45.

Discussion Generators

1. Why was Helen's "little bit of strength" important to have? What are your own strengths that are beneficial in your life? *[Helen had a lot of challenges to overcome, and her strength would be necessary to face them. Answers will vary.]*
2. What did Helen's rude behavior reveal about her thoughts of other people's rights? *[Helen's rude behavior, like eating off of their plates, showed she did not realize that others had rights too. She was putting her own wants ahead of others.]*
3. Why did Miss Annie and Helen move to the garden house? Was it a success? *[Miss Annie asked to move away with Helen so Helen would learn that Miss Annie is a part of her life and that she must be obeyed. After a while, Helen did learn to mind Miss Annie, which made the move a success.]*
4. What was the first word Helen truly learned? *[Water!]*
5. How did Helen change when she finally understood that everything had a name? Why do you think she changed? *[The wild little girl was gone. Answers may include that her frustration was lessened as she began to understand the world around her and had a way to communicate.]*

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Week 1 - Day 4

- Read pages 46–55.

Discussion Generators

1. What brought Helen's laughter back? *[Helen was finally able to understand parts of her world and to communicate. This eased her frustration and brought about happiness.]*
2. What types of activities did Helen's education include? *[Helen's education included, spelling, reading, and learning about God's creation through exploration of insects, gardening, tree identification, animals, etc.]*
3. How did Helen know a storm was coming? *[She could smell it, and she felt the thunder.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Spend some time learning the alphabet in braille, which can be found on the back of your book.
- Write a paragraph or two about how the braille alphabet was invented. This website will get you started: http://www.afb.org/braillebug/louis_braille_bio.asp
- Pretend you know someone who is blind; help them understand something like colors, clouds, or anything that cannot be touched. Pretend you know someone who is deaf; help them understand music, animal noises, or another noise. Either choose to write out how you went about describing the items or conduct your experiment in person.

Week 2 - Day 1

- Read pages 56–64.

Discussion Generators

1. How did Helen's seventh Christmas differ from all the rest? *[Through Miss Annie, Helen finally understood Christmas and was extremely joyful.]*
2. Who did Helen's mother thank for the blessing of Miss Annie? *[Helen's mother thanked God for the blessing of Annie.]*
3. What things could Helen do better than other people? *[She could tell if a dog was welcoming or angry by touch, tell if books were in a room by smell, and tell people apart by touch.]*

Hands-On Activity

- Write your name in braille. This website will show you how it is usually done, but figure out a way you can improvise. http://www.afb.org/braillebug/braille_technology.asp

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Week 2 - Day 2

- Read pages 65–73.

Discussion Generators

1. How did Helen feel about books and why? *[Helen knew books were very important because "They tell me so much that is interesting about things I cannot see. And they are never tired or troubled like people."]*
2. What did Teacher have in common with Helen? *[Teacher had once been almost as blind as Helen, but she had an operation that improved her vision somewhat.]*
3. How did Helen react when she realized she would never be able to see or hear? *[At first she was bitter, but then she became determined to talk like other people.]*
4. What miracle happened with Helen? *[She learned to talk with her mouth.]*

- Label Boston, Massachusetts, and Plymouth Rock on your map.

Hands-On Activity

- Make a toy steamboat. With your parent's permission, visit this web page that has many different plans for making a toy steamboat. http://www.sciencetoymaker.org/boat/index.htm

Week 2 - Day 3

- Read pages 74–81.

Discussion Generators

1. What goal did Helen set when she was twelve years old? *[Helen's goal was to go to college.]*
2. What changed the college president's mind about Helen attending Radcliffe? *[After being denied admission, Helen wrote the president and said, "You must let me try, for a true soldier does not admit defeat before the battle." Her determination must have impressed him.]*
3. In what ways was college more difficult for Helen than most students? *[Sometimes Teacher could not keep up with the professors, and Helen would miss parts of the lecture. Also, Helen did not have time to take notes, so she had to memorize everything.]*
4. How was college difficult on Teacher? What kept her going? *[All the reading was hard on her eyes, but she was determined and kept on going.]*

- Label the state of Maine and The White House on your map.

Hands-On Activity

- Make some roasted (baked) apples (check your cookbooks for a recipe) and popcorn.

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Week 2 - Day 4

- Read pages 82–91.

Discussion Generators

1. What message did Helen want to spread and how did she do it? *[Helen wanted to tell others about the problems of the deaf and blind, so she first began to write. After discovering people mostly wanted to read about her own life, she and Teacher began to give lectures.]*
2. What was Helen's advice to those who could see? How can you do this? *["Use your eyes as if tomorrow you would go blind. Do the same with all your other senses." Answers will vary.]*
3. What had Teacher worked all her life for? Was she successful? *[To make Helen free. Yes.]*
4. Was Helen always happy? *[No, she had times when she was sad about her blindness and deafness, but she tried her best to keep her life full of "books and work and friends."]*
5. What are two beliefs that Helen held about life? What do you think about these beliefs? *[1. "Life is an adventure, or it is nothing." 2. "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart." Answers will vary.]*

- Label Westport, Connecticut, on your map.

Hands-On Activities

- In the first chapter the following is said of Helen: "Helen's body continued to grow. But how could her mind grow in the dark silence?" After reading about Helen Keller's life, how is this question answered? Write your answer out.
- Watch the movie "The Miracle Worker."
- With your parents' permission, visit the Helen Keller Birthplace website. You can take a virtual tour and see where Helen grew up. You can also play games on the kids' page. http://www.helenkellerbirthplace.org/

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