



Equal Treatment, Equal Access: Raising Awareness about People with Disabilities and Their Struggle for Equal Rights

Students Handouts and Supporting Materials for Teachers

Lesson 3: Seeing the World through the Hands of People with a Visual Disability

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Group Discussion Questions about Helen Keller Quote

1. What do you think was Helen Keller's message?
2. What are some attitudes of "seeing people" towards people who are blind or who have a visual disability?
3. How do these assumptions or beliefs affect the way "seeing people" behave towards people who are blind or who have a visual disability?
4. How might people with a visual disability go about doing things differently from people who can see?

Name: _____

True/False Statements about the Life of Helen Keller

1. Helen Keller was born in Alabama in 1880, and died in Connecticut in 1968. **T F**
2. Helen Keller was born blind and deaf. **T F**
3. Helen Keller was a famous poet. **T F**
4. Helen Keller was not a well-behaved girl. She had many tantrums, and broke a lot of dishes and lamps in her house when she was little. **T F**
5. Helen Keller's teacher, Anne Sullivan, was also visually disabled. She lost most of her sight by the time she was five years old. **T F**
6. Helen Keller's teacher, Anne Sullivan, first taught Helen how to communicate by spelling out words in the palms of her hands. **T F**
7. Helen Keller never went to college. **T F**
8. Helen Keller was an activist, and wrote several essays and books about the life of poor people in the United States who were visually disabled or blind. **T F**
9. In Helen Keller's time, women were campaigning for the right to vote. Helen Keller could not march with other women for the right to vote. **T F**
10. Helen Keller traveled the world to Japan, Australia, South America, Europe and Africa. **T F**

Name: _____

Answer Key: True/False Statements about the Life of Helen Keller

10. Helen Keller was born in Alabama in 1880, and died in Connecticut in 1968.

TRUE.

11. Helen Keller was born blind and deaf.

FALSE. Helen Keller was born a healthy child. When she was nearly two years old, she contracted a serious illness that left her blind and deaf. Her illness was never officially diagnosed by doctors at the time.

12. Helen Keller was a famous poet.

TRUE. Helen Keller also wrote many essays and several books, two of which were autobiographies.

13. Helen Keller was not a well-behaved girl. She had many tantrums, and broke a lot of dishes and lamps in her house.

TRUE. Helen Keller was very unruly until Anne Sullivan became her teacher at the age of 7. Anne Sullivan would punish her for her tantrums by ignoring her and not speaking to her for a while. Eventually, Helen stopped misbehaving.

14. Helen Keller's teacher, Anne Sullivan, was also visually disabled. She lost most of her sight by the time she was five years old.

TRUE. Anne Sullivan lost the majority of her eyesight by the age of five, but she was able to correct some of her impairment with two surgeries later in life. She remained slightly visually impaired for the rest of her life.

15. Helen Keller's teacher, Anne Sullivan, first taught Helen how to communicate by spelling out words in the palms of her hands.

TRUE. However, when Helen learned how to read and write Braille, she mostly preferred to communicate sounding out or writing down her thoughts.

16.Helen Keller never went to college.

FALSE. Helen Keller was the first person who was deaf and blind to enroll in college. She graduated from Harvard University, Radcliffe College in 1904.

17.Helen Keller was an activist, and wrote several essays and books about the life of poor people in the United States who were visually disabled or blind

TRUE. Helen Keller discovered that most of the cases of blindness or visually disability in the early 1900's were of poor people who were injured in accidents, or could not afford medical treatment. Helen Keller began to work on behalf of working class and poor people to receive proper medical care so that cases of visual disability could be avoided whenever possible.

18.In Helen Keller's time, women were campaigning for the right to vote. Helen Keller could not march with other women for the right to vote.

FALSE. Helen Keller was an activist for women's rights, and marched at the head of many women's suffrage parades.

10. Helen Keller traveled the world to Japan, Australia, South America, Europe and Africa.

TRUE. Helen and her friend Polly Thomson traveled all over the world raising money for the American Foundation for the Blind.

Sources:

- *Loewen, James W., Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong, The New Press, New York, New York, 1995.*
- *Royal National Institute of the Blind:*
http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/publicwebsite/public_keller.hcsp