



# A Dream of Flight

## Part 1

**Teacher Reads** Bessie Coleman was born in 1892, before airplanes were invented. Yet she went on to become the first Black and first Native American female airplane pilot in the United States.

**Bessie Coleman** wanted to make a fine life for  
9 herself. She worked at different jobs. Then, in 1914,  
18 **World War I** started. This was the **first** war in which  
29 planes were used.

32 Coleman's **brothers** went to **France** to fight in the  
41 war. When her brothers came back from the war, they  
51 spoke of **women** flying planes in France. Coleman  
59 began to think she would like to fly planes herself.

## Part 2

**Teacher Reads** During Bessie Coleman's lifetime, women and Black people had limited opportunities. But Coleman pushed back on those limits after she heard her brothers' stories from the war.

69 Bessie Coleman felt her dream of flight  
76 growing. She wanted to train to fly planes. But  
85 as a Black **woman**, no flying school in the U.S.  
95 would let her in.

99 In France, there was a flying school  
106 where Coleman could go. She got a passport  
114 and sailed to France. Coleman would fly  
121 in France.



### Part 3

**Teacher Reads** Coleman had big plans after she learned to fly in France. Keep reading to learn about what she wanted to do.

123 Coleman trained to fly planes. She made her dream  
132 of flying happen. She wanted more people to reach for  
142 that same dream. She planned to start a flying school  
152 to teach Black people to fly.

158 Coleman came back to the U.S. She put on shows  
168 to raise cash for her school. She would perform tricks  
178 in her plane, such as spins and dives. The stunts  
188 thrilled people.

190 In 1926, Coleman was killed in a plane crash before  
200 she could see her dream of a flying school happen.  
210 But her dream of flight for all people has not been  
221 forgotten. Today all people can fly if they wish. [Learn More](#)

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