

# Virginia Was a Spy



Author:  
**Catherine Urdahl**

Illustrator:  
**Gary Kelley**

## Vocabulary

diplomat, undercover, heroism

## Reviews

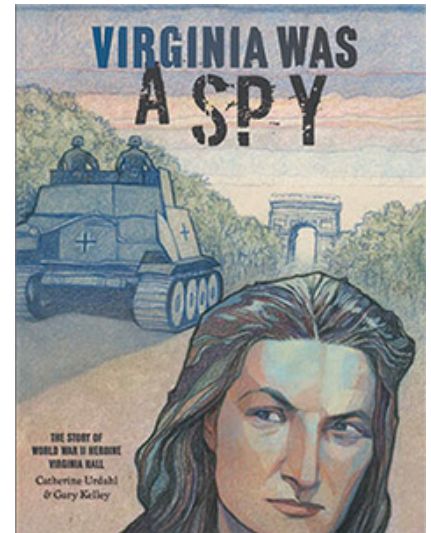
“A fascinating introduction to a remarkable life.”- [Kirkus Reviews](#)

## Summary

This suspenseful picture book biography follows the life of Virginia Hall, a humble yet heroic spy who helped bring an end to World War II.

## FAIR Standard

DV.3-5.8 I can discuss specific people from history who drew power from their humanity, culture, and American ideals to fight racism and intolerance.



## Discussion

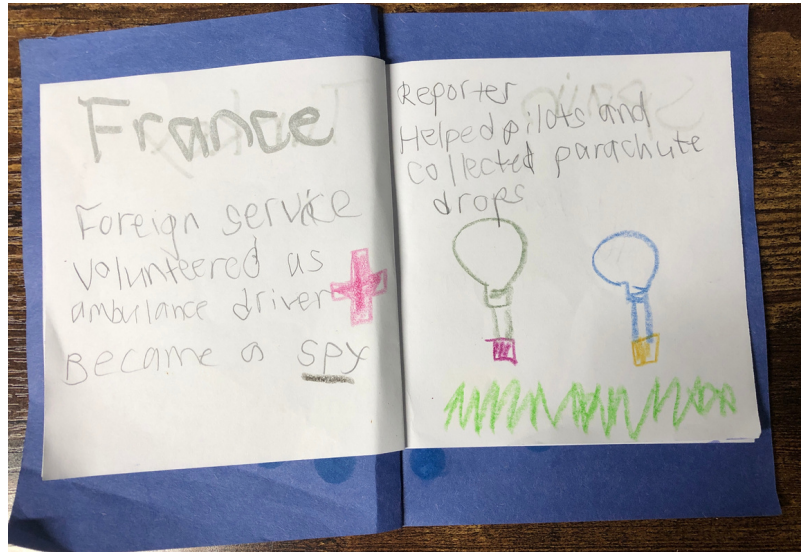
1. Virginia did many different creative things to help others win freedom. Which one stood out to you the most? Why?
2. What part of being a spy do you think was most challenging or scary for Virginia? Why?
3. Notice how the author organized this book to highlight some of Virginia's roles and accomplishments. What was the purpose of the author repeating the refrain "Virginia was Virginia"?
4. Gary Kelley used graphic novel style panels and pictures to illustrate the events in this story. Do you think this was the most effective way to tell Virginia's story? Did you have any strong feelings or responses to any of the pictures as you were reading? Why?
5. When President Truman wanted to present Virginia with an award for her heroism in a White House ceremony, she said no and chose to accept the medal in private. What character traits did Virginia show here? How did those character traits help her to do her work in France?

## Activities

1. Make a list of all the roles Virginia played in her life (explorer, pirate, adventurer, etc.). Create a flip book and draw a picture for each role she played. Write down 2-3 things that helped her succeed in each role.

Challenge: Can you act out each role? Have a partner guess what Virginia was doing as you act out the role she had to play.

2. On the inside cover of this book is a photograph of Virginia Hall's passport. Using the book as a guide, create your own version of Virginia's passport, identifying the places she traveled to and what she did there.



## Additional Resources

[Author Website](#)