

Helen's Big World

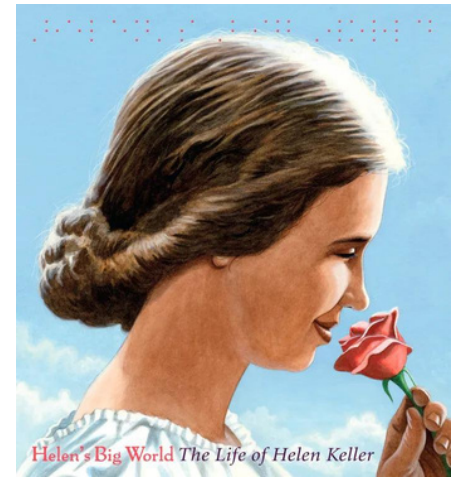


Author:
Doreen Rappaport

Illustrator:
Matt Tavares

Awards

ALSC Notable Children's Books, 2013
Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices, 2013
Charlotte Zolotow Award, 2013
Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Platinum Award, 2012
Oppenheim SNAP (Special Needs Adaptable Products) Award
ABC Best Books for Children, 2012
Entertainment Weekly Great New Historical Books For Kids, 2012
Nerdy Book Club Nonfiction Picture Book Award, 2012
Amelia Bloomer Project, 2014
Black-Eyed Susan Picture Book Award Masterlist
Illinois Monarch Award Masterlist, 2015



Vocabulary

awakened, imitated, marveled

Reviews

[Publishers Weekly](#)

Summary

Helen Keller's stirring quotes are embedded in this narrative that highlights her persistence to gain knowledge with the help of her teacher, Annie Sullivan.

FAIR Standard

DV.3-5.9 I recognize similarities I share with the people around me as well as the ways in which I'm unique.

Discussion

1. Helen, recalling the moment when Annie Sullivan spelled *water* on her palm, wrote, "That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, and set it free." Has there been a time when you learned something new that filled you with hope or joy?

Discussion

2. What were Annie Sullivan's strengths? What do you think Helen's life would have been like if she'd never met Annie?
 3. The illustrator, Matt Tavares, wrote that his pictures "focused on all of the things Helen could do, instead of the two things she couldn't do." Which is your favorite illustration and why? Do any of the pictures surprise you?
 4. How did Matt Tavares use colors to show the big changes in Annie's life?
 5. What do you think Helen would say about how we should treat people who are different from us?
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Activities

1. The endpapers of this book show a manual language chart. Choose a special word or name and learn how to spell it using sign language. Can a friend or family member guess what you are signing by looking at the chart?

Challenge: To learn more about basic sign language signs, watch [this video](#) and practice on your own.

2. Many of the illustrations from this book show Helen Keller exploring and discovering the world through touch. Choose an item from nature to represent on paper using glue, clay, putty, or another substance. Try to recreate your item so that someone could trace or follow it with their fingers and be able to identify what it is.

Challenge: Can you spell your item's name using the [braille alphabet](#)?

