# *Pillars of Culture:*
## *50 People who Made America Great*

**This chapter requires a companion activity book in which students respond to questions on text content. Answers are found in the Teacher's Resource Kit.**



# *Chapter 2*
# *Text*

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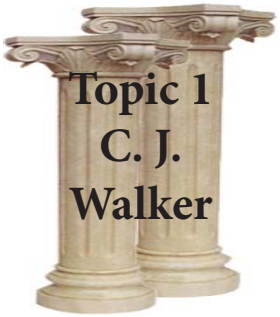



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# *Pillars of Culture*
# *Women of Courage*




## Chapter 2, Section 1
## Topics 1-5



C. J. Walker

Every once-in-a while, a person seems to be born to impact culture, in-spite-of hardships, tragedy, and disadvantages of poverty and ***dependency***. Such was C. J. Walker, the daughter of Black slaves and sharecroppers in rural Louisiana in 1867. The Civil War (1861-'65) had ***devastated*** Black and White southern families and economics. Times were hard as people tried to recover from war-torn states. C. J. Walker had lost her father and mother to disease, and was homeless, when a sister and her husband "took in" C. J. for several months.

However, at age 14 years, she ran away to get married. The marriage lasted three years. At age 17 years, C. J. became pregnant and gave birth to a daughter. As was too often the case, the husband abandoned the young mother and daughter. At 20 years old, as a single parent without a job, she moved to St. Louis to live with one of her four brothers, who were successful barbers. C. J. earned a ***scant*** living doing laundry, a trade which she had learned as a child in Louisiana.




***Dependency:*** obligated, need for survival
***Devastated:*** ruined
***Scant:*** very little food, poor
***Eradicate:*** get rid of
***Malady:*** problem, condition
***Composition:*** formula, materials
***Niche:*** a specialized segment of the market
***Periodically:*** frequently, often

Because of her scalp condition, C. J. began to experiment with home remedies to ***eradicate*** bald spots and itching – a common ***malady*** for African-American women due to the use of harsh soap. C. J.'s products were effective, and she began to sell her hair products door-to-door to other Black women. By trying various marketing methods and observing the ***composition*** of other hair products, C. J. developed an entrepreneurial mentality. She discovered that she was meeting a need among African-American women, and so she found a ***niche*** market.

Another marriage failed after only a few years because "her man" was an alcoholic and ***periodically*** unemployed. In 1908, C.J. Walker opened a college in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to train other "hair culturists" to manufacture and sell cosmetics to Black women. Eventually, she employed about 3,000 people in the cosmetic industry. Her energy and commitment to help other people raise

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their economic and cultural levels in society earned C. J. the distinction of becoming the first Black female millionaire in America.

C. J. ***attributed*** her success to hard work, faith in God, and the people who taught her things she didn't know or understand. She constantly studied and experimented to learn how to improve lives. She learned to listen, be appreciative, give generously, and stay focused on fulfilling her goals. She did not believe in "just working" to earn a pay check. She lived with purpose!

Tragically, she died at the early age of 51, due to high blood pressure, and fatigue from an exhausting schedule that included work, speaking engagements, and social events. She was popular with "common" and "society" people. She became a ***cultured*** lady, who entertained upper-class people and blue-color workers alike. She made friends easily, but did not ***tolerate*** laziness and irresponsibility. She led by example to help make America a great nation.




Label of One of Walker's Products

## VOCABULARY

***Attributed:*** gave credit to
***Cultured:*** refined, educated, classy
***Tolerate:*** allow

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them."*
-C. J. Walker, entrepreneur

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# *Pillars of Culture*
## *Women of Courage*




### Chapter 2, Section 1
### Topics 1-5



Clara Barton

At age three, Clara Barton ***trudged*** off to school with her big brother. Clara Barton was a "tomboy" in her youth in Massachusetts. She galloped horses, climbed trees, and stood her ground when boys tried to ***intimidate*** her. At age ten, she experienced her first taste of first-aid, when her brother fell off a barn roof and was severely injured. Doctors offered no hope for the boy's recovery, but Clara stayed by his side until he walked again.

Clara was shy, but learned to ***articulate*** her opinions through writing and speaking. She became a teacher at age 17, and taught school for 12 years. She ***honed*** her writing and language skills in New York, before starting a school that grew to 600 children. She left education to become a clerk in the US Patent office in Washington, D.C. In 1861, Clara learned about soldiers wounded in the Baltimore Revolt in Maryland. She volunteered to assist with the recovery of 40 soldiers. She and other women provided clothes, bandages, and medical help. She wrote letters for soldiers, read to them, and provided emotional support.

In 1862, during the Civil War, Clara ***petitioned*** the government for permission to provide nurse services on the Union Army front lines. That was a bold request, because women were not considered capable of facing battlefield conditions of cannon smoke, blood, bloated bodies, and no sanitary facilities. Military officers ***initially*** denied her request, but her ***persistence*** prevailed, and Clara's team of women nurses were allowed to provide bandages and medical aid at such places as Cedar Mountain, Second Bull Run, Antetam, and Fredericksburg. Clara's heroic commitment to save the lives of wounded soldiers put her in danger many times. Once, a bullet pierced her dress, and killed a young soldier Clara was attending. Her bravery, compassion, and commitment earned respect from military officials, who ***reluctantly*** allowed Clara and her nurse brigade to serve as "angels of mercy" at the front lines.

### VOCABULARY

***Trudged:*** walked with effort
***Intimidate:*** to frighten through threats
***Articulate:*** to express clearly
***Honed:*** improved, developed
***Petitioned:*** requested, asked
***Initially:*** at first
***Persistence:*** determination, perseverance
***Reluctantly:*** hesitated long

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In 1864, Clara Barton was appointed "the lady in charge" of the hospital at the front lines of the Union Army at the James River. Her reputation grew, as she became known as the "Angel of the Battlefield." After the Civil War, Clara assumed responsibility for locating 22,000 dead soldiers, and responding to more than 41,800 inquiries from relatives. She even undertook the ***gruesome*** task to help bury 13,000 soldiers who died in the Anderson Prison Camp in Georgia.

The ***ordeal*** exhausted Clara, who sailed to Switzerland to rest. There, she learned about the European Red Cross organization. She attended wounded soldiers in France and ***Prussia***. Clara returned to the United States, and between 1873 and 1882, she worked tirelessly to persuade government officials to establish an American Red Cross organization. Her efforts paid off in 1882, when permission was granted. Clara served at the founder and president of the American Red Cross for more than 21 years. The rest is history. Red Cross Nurses have provided emergency aid to victims of floods, fires, disasters, hurricanes, and tornadoes in every state.

Clara Barton never married, even though she was asked at least three times. Her sense of mission to relieve suffering took priority until her death at age 90 in 1912. She is honored on street signs, school buildings, organizations, and in books, poems, songs, and movies. Clara Barton may have been a "tomboy" in youth, but she was an angel in adulthood. She helped make America great.




The American Red Cross provides widespread humanitarian aid to this day.

## VOCABULARY

***Gruesome:*** vile, sickening
***Ordeal:*** event, activity
***Prussia:*** mostly present-day Germany

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"While our soldiers can stand and fight, I can stand and feed and nurse them."*
-Clara Barton, nurse

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# *Pillars of Culture*
## *Women of Courage*




**Chapter 2, Section 1**
**Topics 1-5**



Dolley Madison

Portrait by Gilbert Stuart

Even successful people experience grief, sorrow, and hardship. That was the story of Dolley Madison. She was born of Quaker parents in North Carolina in 1768. Poverty caused the family to leave their plantation. Dolley apparently never attended school, but was well informed. She married a young Quaker lawyer named John Todd in 1790, and birthed two sons. However, after only three years of marriage, her husband and three-month-old son died during an outbreak of yellow fever that killed 4,000 people. Dolley was a single mother at age 21.

A short time later, she met and married bachelor-congressman James Madison, who was 17 years older than Dolley. They remained in Philadelphia for three years, after which time James retired from politics after serving eight years in the US House of Representatives. The Madisons moved to Virginia, but relocated to Washington, DC when President Thomas Jefferson asked James to become Secretary of State. During that eight years, Dolley acted as "first lady" for Thomas Jefferson, who was a ***widower***. Dolley's eight years as official hostess for the White House prepared her for that role when her husband succeeded Jefferson to became the fourth US president.

Since Jefferson was the first president to occupy the White House, Dolley was asked to assume responsibility for furnishing and decorating the new White House. Dolley furnished the presidential home modestly, yet comfortably. Her unmatched ***eloquence***, charm, attire, and ***radiant*** personality equipped her as the "perfect hostess." Her guests, both common and ***royalty***, were made to feel welcome. Dolley hosted the first ***inaugural*** ball in 1809 at Long's Hotel. More than 400 guests attended. Dolley wore a stunning buff-colored, trailing velvet gown, which some people said made her appear as "a queen." She ***cultivated*** a reputation as a gracious ***conversationalist***, who ***cunningly*** steered guests toward pleasant topics and support for her husband's policies. Her parties, balls, and dinners set the tone for future presidential gatherings.

VOCABULARY

***Widower:*** man whose wife died
***Eloquence:*** proper words
***Radiant:*** sparkling, out-going
***Royalty:*** wealthy, influential
***Inaugural:*** celebration of election
***Cultivated:*** grew
***Conversationalist:*** talker and listener
***Cunningly:*** with wisdom

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Tragically, Dolley's son from her first marriage never really recovered from the loss of his father, and became a gambler and alcoholic. His debts landed him in prison for a while. In fact, he ***squandered*** family resources to the point that James and Dolley lost most of their wealth, including their beautiful Virginia home. After James died in 1836, Dolley compiled the notes her husband had used to draft the Constitution, and sold them to Congress to pay her son's debts and to support herself.

Even though Dolley experienced heartache over her wayward son, "the first lady" continued to fulfill her duties. She aided ***subsequent*** "first ladies" in hosting gatherings at the White House. Allegedly, Dolley was instrumental in asking Francis Scott Key to board a British ship during the War of 1812 to gain release of a friend held as prisoner by the British. Mr. Key watched the British ships bombard Fort McHenry throughout the night, during which time Key penned the Star Spangled Banner, which became the National Anthem.

Dolley became famous when she rescued a portrait of George Washington and important documents, including the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, only minutes before the British approached and burned the White House in 1814. Dolley Madison was cherished by her country when she died at age 81 in 1849.



Depiction of Dolley Madison overseeing the rescue of George Washington's portrait from the White House shortly before it was burned by British troops in 1814. (Montpelier)



Dolley Madison in 1848, a year before her death.

## VOCABULARY

***Squandered:*** wasted, spent foolishly
***Subsequent:*** future, later

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"It is one of my sources of happiness never to desire a knowledge of other people's business."*
-Dolley Madison, US first lady

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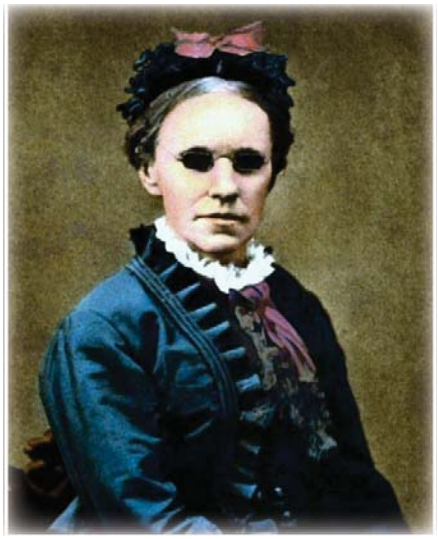
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# *Pillars of Culture*
## *Women of Courage*




**Chapter 2, Section 1**
**Topics 1-5**



Fanny Crosby

People with physical handicaps often have strengths that defy understanding. That was the case with Fanny Crosby. She lost her vision in both eyes at six weeks old when a "quack" doctor applied an ointment that destroyed Fanny's eyesight. But, blindness seemed to open other senses that enabled Fanny "to see" in life what other people overlooked. Fanny was born in 1820, and lived for almost 95 years in darkness. However, blindness did not prevent her from learning, serving, playing musical instruments, singing, and writing more than 8,000 Gospel songs that earned her the title, "Gospel Queen."

Fanny became fatherless as a child, and her poverty-stricken mother left Fanny in the care of a Christian grandmother, who read the Bible, prayed, and talked with Fanny about the loving ways of God. School officials recognized Fanny's unique ability to write poetry and "see" life from God's point of view. At age 15, Fanny attended a school for the blind in New York City. She stayed there for more than 23 years, first as a student, then as a teacher. She even married a fellow student. Unfortunately, a wide age difference and financial stresses led to separation. Fanny lived most of her life alone in a small apartment near "***skid row***" in New York City.

She expressed her emotions by writing poetry, speaking to groups, and helping people recover from alcoholism and crime. After she turned 40 years old, Fanny began to write Gospel songs. Her ***prolific*** ability allowed Fanny to produce six or seven songs per day. On one occasion, a singer asked Fanny to compose a song; she handed it to him in less than thirty minutes. She was paid one or two dollars for each song. Payment was sufficient to provide room, board, and a few items of clothing, but she gave away whatever money was not needed to sustain her ***meager*** existence. By the time Fanny's hair started turning grey, she was respected and admired by dignitaries, evangelists, choir directors, congressmen, and presidents.

### VOCABULARY

***Skid row:*** poverty area in a city
***Prolific:*** rapid production
***Meager:*** skimpy, barely enough

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Some of her songs became famous, and are sung today because of their appeal to congregations and individuals. Most Christian songbooks include dozens of Fanny's songs. She wrote so many that publishers assigned "***pen names***" to prevent the appearance that one person dominated the selection of songs. Among her most popular are such titles as:

*Safe In the Arms of Jesus*

*Blessed Assurance*

*Rescue The Perishing*

*Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior*

*To God Be The Glory*

Her passion was to rest in the presence of God and to bring glory to Him. Fanny refused to let self-pity or ***malcontent*** turn her into a victim. Determinedly, she thrust herself into a life of positive influence and unmatched productivity. Fanny did not let her blindness, nor sympathy from others, excuse her from giving all of her abilities and affection to her Creator. As a result, the dependent and intimate nature of her relationship with Christ gave life, sincerity, and substance to her songs and poems.

The heartfelt lyrics of Fanny's songs have provided comfort, hope, and courage to countless people — supplying others with the strength to survive and thrive, rather than ***acquiesce*** to the status of "victim."

Fanny Crosby remains one of the most influential figures in the history of this nation. Her ***resilient*** spirit can be found in her song:

*All the way my Savior leads me*
*What have I to ask beside*
*Can I doubt His tender mercy*
*Who thru life has been my guide?*
*Heavenly peace, divinest comfort*
*Here by faith in Him to dwell*
*For I know what'ere befell me*
*Jesus doeth all things well.*



## VOCABULARY

***Pen names:*** not real name
***Malcontent:*** severe dissatisfaction
***Acquiesce:*** to give in
***Resilient:*** tough; persevering

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver."*
-Fanny Crosby, songwriter

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# *Pillars of Culture*
# *Women of Courage*




## Chapter 2, Section 1
## Topics 1-5



Sacagawea

Excerpt from the painting *Lewis and Clark at Three Forks* by Edgar S. Paxson




***Common-law:*** living together but not married
***Interpreters:*** translators of language
***Commissioned:*** assigned to perform a task
***Accompanied:*** went along, traveled with
***Headwaters:*** where a river begins
***Expedition:*** group on a journey for a specific purpose

Sacagawea was only about sixteen years old when she gave birth to a son, while staying in a rustic frontier fort in North Dakota. Her ***common-law*** husband, a forty-year-old French fur trapper, had bought Sacagawea from Hidatsa warriors who had kidnapped the Shoshone Indian girl in Idaho. The young maiden had not seen her family for many years when she met Merriweather Clark and William Lewis in the winter of 1804. Three months after giving birth to "Pompy", Sacagawea and her husband were hired as ***interpreters*** for the Lewis and Clark expedition ***commissioned*** by President Thomas Jefferson to explore the Louisiana Purchase and westward to the Pacific Ocean.

That eight thousand-mile journey (1804-'05) became historic, not only because of the incredible accomplishments of the Lewis and Clark team, but also for the awesome endurance and value demonstrated by teenage mother, Sacagawea. Her name meant "Bird woman", and surely that was a fitting name for the light-footed Indian mother who ***accompanied*** a team of rough mountain men as they followed the Missouri River to its ***headwaters*** in the Rocky Mountains. Along the journey, Sacagawea carried and nursed her infant while helping Lewis and Clark collect and classify plants, birds, and animals.

As the ***expedition*** approached the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, a party of Shoshone warriors appeared on horses. Because they saw a woman with an infant, the warriors approached in a friendly manner. As Sacagawea began to interpret for Lewis and Clark, who wanted to buy horses, the young girl expressed joy and surprise as she recognized her older brother. During their "family reunion", Sacagawea persuaded her brother to provide horses to ride across the mountains. Even though Sacagawea was tempted to remain with her family, she fulfilled her commitment to accompany the expedition to the Pacific Ocean and back to Missouri.

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The expedition reached the coast near present day Astoria, Oregon, where they made winter camp. Then, they began the long journey back to Missouri. The trip required a combination of walking, riding horses, paddling canoes, and ***poling*** log rafts. Lewis and Clark used ***Celestial Navigation*** techniques to record the locations of streams, rivers, mountains, and valleys. They kept ***meticulous*** records of wildlife, Native-American villages, buffalo herds, and ***spectacular*** scenes, such as present-day Yellowstone National Park, the Bitterroot Mountains, and Great Falls, Montana.

After the journey was over, Sacagawea and her husband lived in Missouri for three years. She gave birth to a daughter during that time. William Clark adopted Pompy, and provided an education in a boarding school and in Europe with a German prince. History is ***vague*** regarding the death of Sacagawea; some historians believe she died at about age 25 in 1812. Others claim that she eventually returned to her Shoshone people, and died in the mid-1800s. Regardless of ***ambiguity*** about her death, her life during that one-year journey in 1804-'05 made history. She is ***commemorated*** on stamps, monuments, plaques, and in books, movies, and parks. Sacagawea was an amazing Native-American woman who helped make America a great nation.




A US Dollar Coin Honoring Sacagawea




Map of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

## VOCABULARY

***Poling:*** moving a raft with the use of long poles
***Celestial navigation:*** charting a route by studying the positions of stars
***Meticulous:*** details, specifics
***Spectacular:*** awesome, breath-taking, grand
***Vague:*** uncertain; unclear
***Ambiguity:*** not clear, confusing
***Commemorated:*** honored, celebrated

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"Amazing the things you find when you bother to search for them."*
-Sacagawea, explorer

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# *Pillars of Culture*
# *Overcomers*




## Chapter 2, Section 2
## Topics 6-10



Alvin York

Being born in the thick woods of Tennessee in the 1800s, walking barefooted while plowing with a mule, and harvesting wild game with a gun for dinner was the background for a man who became a decorated World War I hero. Alvin York was born in a two-room log cabin in 1887. He learned to fish, hunt, gather berries, and read a little by candlelight. He grew to more than six feet tall, and was strong and athletic. He was courageous, fearless, and confident. He could shoot a small target at a hundred yards with open sights. Alvin's mother was a "God-fearing" woman, who instructed Alvin to be obedient, courteous, and thoughtful. However, he did not always please his mother. He liked to pull ***pranks*** on people, use "strong drink", ***brawl***, and talk with "flavored" words. Fortunately, Alvin had a religious ***conversion*** experience, and his life turned from a ***rambunctious*** boy, who engaged in "devilish" behavior, to a serious man, who studied the Bible to determine what kind of life he should live to please God.




***Pranks:*** mischevious acts
***Brawl:*** fight
***Conversion:*** change of beliefs and behavior
***Rambunctious:*** full of fun, energetic, unruly
***Conscientious objector:*** doesn't believe in killing people for any reason
***Marksmanship:*** good shot with weapon
***Turmoil:*** conflict, anguish
***Boot camp:*** place that trains soldiers

At age 29, Alvin received notice that he had to register for the army. He indicated that he was a ***conscientious objector***, but he was drafted anyway, and assigned to a non-combat unit. His physical strength, work ethic, and ***marksmanship*** were noticed by officers, who persuaded Alvin to consider combat duty to save the lives of his army friends, who were about to be shipped to France to fight against German soldiers. Alvin was in emotional ***turmoil***. On one hand, he wanted to please God, and on the other hand, he did not want to be in a position where he could not protect fellow soldiers. He went home on leave after ***boot camp*** to talk with his mother. She advised Alvin to go off into the woods and pray for guidance. He did, and returned to his Army unit convinced that he would be protected in combat by Divine powers.

He was sent to the France, where American soldiers faced German machine guns, mortars, and nerve gas. Alvin was ordered to "take out" a German machine gun unit that was killing American

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soldiers. Alvin applied his hunting and stalking skills to sneak around behind the Germans. Using his 30-06 caliber bolt-action rifle, Alvin began to "pick off" enemy soldiers. They returned fire, scattering bullets all around Alvin, but none touched him. His expert marksmanship was deadly, and more than 132 German soldiers and officers avoided death by surrendering to Alvin. He marched them to his commanding officer, who was surprised that one American soldier had captured 132 of the enemy.



Alvin received praise, promotion, and awards for his heroic action. He thought too much "fuss" was being made over him. He simply thought that he fulfilled his duty under combat conditions. Officers disagreed and decorated Alvin with the Congressional ***Medal of Honor***. In fact, by the end of WWI, Alvin York was considered the most decorated soldier of the war. He returned home to parades, speaking engagements, and ***adulation***. He was by nature a shy man, and did not enjoy all the publicity. He just wanted to marry his sweetheart, Grace Williams. They settled down on a farm, presented as a wedding gift by civic groups and private citizens who appreciated Alvin's heroism. He finally agreed to let Hollywood make a film about his life, entitled *Sergeant York*, starring Gary Cooper. It was a box-office hit, and continues to be viewed on DVDs, television, and handheld electronic devices. Alvin York helped make America a great nation.

## VOCABULARY

***Medal of Honor:*** highest award for military bravery
***Adulation:*** expression of praise, worship

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"I will live the life God wants me to live."*
-Alvin York, WWI hero

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# *Pillars of Culture*
## *Overcomers*




### Chapter 2, Section 2
### Topics 6-10



Audie Murphy

Growing up without a father can be tough. That is exactly what Audie Murphy did. In fact, Audie overcame domestic turmoil to became the most decorated US soldier in WWII. Audie was 7th of 10 children born in 1925 to a Texas ***sharecropper*** family. The often-absent father eventually abandoned his wife and children when Audie was in elementary school. Young Audie worked at odd jobs to earn money to provide food, and often harvested small game for dinner. Finally, he dropped out of school in 5th grade to work for a neighbor.

When Japanese bombers attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, Audie's neighbors talked excitedly about joining the military to defend America. Audie was only 16 years old, but he wanted to serve his country in a time of need. Shortly thereafter, Audie's mother died, and Audie realized that he could not support his younger siblings as a teenager sharecropper. An older sister helped Audie fill out papers to enlist. However, the Marines and Navy rejected Audie because he was only 5 feet 7 inches tall and 17 years old. The US Army accepted Audie in June of 1942, after he claimed to be 18 years of age.

Audie Murphy began to emerge as a leader of men while in boot camp. His first assignment was in Africa, where he demonstrated courage, perseverance, and marksmanship. His ***battalion*** was shipped to Sicily and on to Italy, where Audie was promoted to ***corporal*** and put in charge of a ***squad*** at the age of 18. His valor in battlefield action soon earned promotion to staff sergeant. Time after time, while scouting for enemy patrols, Audie exposed himself to danger in-order-to protect his men. He soon earned a reputation as one the most courageous and competent ***platoon*** leaders in his battalion. After the Americans invaded France, Audie continued to distinguish himself with heroic acts of bravery: blowing up a German tank, charging machine-gun nests, and capturing prisoners.

## VOCABULARY

***Sharecropper:*** farmer who raises crops and shares profit with the landowner.
***Battalion:*** large group of soldiers (two or more Companies)
***Corporal:*** one stripe on uniform sleeve
***Squad:*** small unit of soldiers (usually 4 to 10)
***Platoon:*** two or more squads of at least 8 soldiers

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While serving in Europe, Audie contracted malaria twice, was wounded in both legs, heel, and hip. One of his most courageous acts occurred in France, when his battalion was confronted by German tanks and infantry. So fierce were the German attackers that Audie's men had to retreat. Audie remained behind to direct US artillery fire onto enemy tanks. A nearby US tank was burning, but the 50-caliber machine gun was above the flames. Audie jumped on the tank and began "mowing down" the Germans. So intense was his firing that the enemy gave up and retreated. Just as Audie jumped off the burning tank, it exploded into flames, and a German bullet struck Audie in the hip. He recovered to became Commander of B ***Company*** at the age of 19. Later, he was promoted to battalion leader. His superior officers claimed that Audie Murphy was the best battalion leader in the command.



His heroic behavior earned so many medals from America, France, and Belgium that Audie Murphy was the most decorated soldier of WWII. Back in the United States, Audie was celebrated as a hero. He appeared in dozens of movies. Two of the most popular were: *Red Badge of Courage*, and *To Hell and Back*, which was about his war experiences. Audie raised horses in Arizona and California for several years between making movies and military training films. He suffered from bouts of depression over war memories. Audie Murphy died in a private plane crash in 1971. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, where his grave is the second most visited. He defied critics who said he was too small and young to defend his country. He proved them wrong.

## VOCABULARY

***Company:*** two or more platoons

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

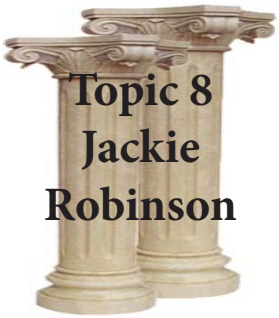
*"Seems to me that if you're afraid or living with some big fear, you're not really living."*
-Audie Murphy, WWII hero

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# *Pillars of Culture*
# *Overcomers*




## Chapter 2, Section 2
## Topics 6-10



Jackie Robinson

Being fatherless, Black, and poor had its challenges for Jackie Robinson during childhood in Georgia during the 1920s and '30s. Jackie's father abandoned his family in Georgia, and the single mother took her five children to California to start life over. Jackie grew up in poverty, but was given a strong Christian foundation and faith by his mother and a pastor. Jackie's faith would be tested by people filled with prejudice, hatred, and bigotry as Robinson carved out a heroic life as professional baseball's first African-American All-Star player.

School offered a road to athletics. Jackie was gifted with amazing athletic agility and ability. He excelled as a runner, long-jumper, quarterback, and shortstop. Moreover, he was intelligent, humble, and could think fast. He graduated from high school, and enrolled in a junior college, where he became an all-star athlete in four sports. After completing junior college, Jackie enrolled in ***UCLA***. There, he earned varsity letters in football, baseball, basketball, and track. His athletic achievements were truly startling! He wanted to play professional sports, but WWII interfered.

In 1942, Jackie was drafted into the US Army, where he was promoted to lieutenant. His military experience was less than pleasant, primarily due to racial prejudice. At one point, he disagreed ***vehemently*** with an officer during a race-related incident, and had to face a court martial. However, he was ***acquitted*** and received an honorable discharge at the end of his ***enlistment***. But, the experience left an emotional scar that caused Jackie to seethe with anger and bitterness toward people who exhibited racial prejudice toward African-Americans.

In 1944, Jackie began playing baseball with the "***Negro League***". At that time in history, professional baseball and the military practiced segregation between Blacks and Whites. Robinson's baseball achievements drew the attention of Branch Rickey, Manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, who was looking for an

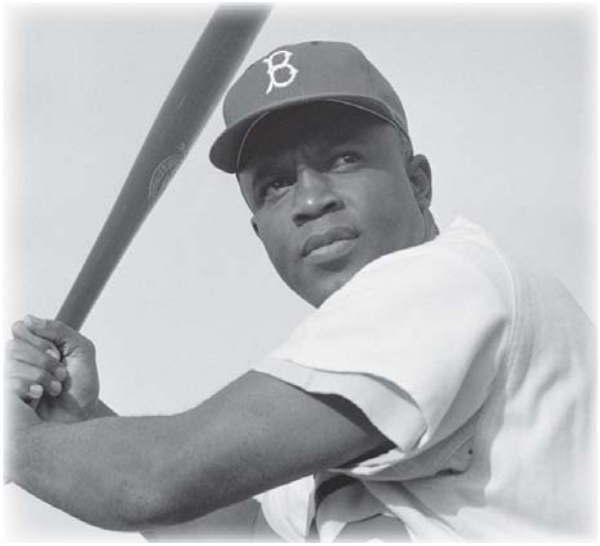



***UCLA:*** University of California at Los Angeles
***Vehemently:*** strongly
***Acquitted:*** not guilty
***Enlistment:*** time of military duty
***Negro League:*** ball teams made up of only Blacks

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African-American baseball player who could break "the color barrier" in major league baseball. Other Black payers were considered to be better players than Jackie, but Mr. Rickey wanted a player who not only had athletic ability, but displayed moral character, integrity, and courage to withstand taunts and ridicule from white players and fans. Branch Rickey hired Jackie and began to groom him for playing in professional baseball. Jackie Robinson learned to be bigger than the people who ***belittled*** him.



He submitted ***meekly*** to awful abuse from teammates, fans, and radio announcers. But, his ***exploits*** as a player ***astounded*** everyone. He stole bases, slammed homeruns, made double plays, and caught "uncatchable balls." During his first year as a player, Jackie was voted Rookie of the Year. During the next decade, Jackie Robinson helped the Brooklyn Dodgers play in six World Series, and win the championship in 1955. He was an All-Star six times, and was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. So profound were Robinson's baseball achievements that his number 42 was ***permanently*** retired from all baseball teams. In 1950, the box-office sensation film, *The Jackie Robinson Story*, featured Jackie, who portrayed himself. He was listed among the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. He is honored on postage stamps, monuments, sculptures, and buildings. His life was an example of how moral courage with talent can break racial barriers and make America great.

## VOCABULARY

***Belittled:*** made fun of, ridiculed, teased
***Meekly:*** moral strength with courage
***Exploits:*** achievements
***Astounded:*** surprised, startled, amazed
***Permanently:*** forever

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"Life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."*
-Jackie Robinson, baseball champion

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Jesse Owens

Jesse wasn't his real name, but that is what his high school coach called him. The name stuck and found its way into history books. Jesse was really James Cleveland Owens. He was born in 1913, and grew up in a poverty-stricken home in Alabama. His mother did ***domestic*** jobs because Jesse's father was often unemployed. When Jesse was ten years old, the family migrated to Cleveland, Ohio, where they lived in humble ***circumstances***. Jesse was an ***energetic*** boy, who could run like the wind, but he didn't ***participate*** in school sports because he had to do ***menial*** tasks after school to earn a few coins to help provide food for the family table.

One day, a junior high school coach noticed that Jesse's running speed was the fastest the coach had ever witnessed. He challenged Jesse to show up for school an hour early each day to be coached on running ***techniques***. In high school, Jesse Owens began to set new sprint and long-jump records. College coaches began to notice, and upon graduation, Jesse received an invitation to run track for Ohio State University. He accepted the offer on the condition that the university would find a job for his father.

Jesse struggled with academics, segregation, racial prejudice, and relationships with his girlfriend, but he excelled in track and field events. His amazing performances, in which he set three world records and tied a fourth at the Big Ten competition in 1935, drew ***international*** attention. He married his high school sweetheart, Minnie Solomon, in 1935; they had three daughters, who supported and admired their father.

Jesse became a household name when he won four gold medals at the 1936 Olympic Games held in Berlin, Germany: the 100 and 220-yard dash, 440-yard relay, and long jump. He ***infuriated*** Adolph Hitler, who had hoped to ***demonstrate*** that Blacks were ***inferior*** to Whites. However, the crowd and other athletes ***idolized***, and honored Jesse. In fact, Jesse Owens became the most popular athlete at the Olympic Games. New York City honored




***Domestic:*** relating to household or family
***Circumstances:*** conditions
***Energetic:*** full of energy, active
***Participate:*** take part in, involved
***Menial:*** simple, basic
***Techniques:*** ways of doing things
***International:*** worldwide
***Infuriated:*** angry, upset
***Demonstrate:*** show how
***Inferior:*** less than

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Jesse with a ***ticker-tape*** parade, during which a stranger allegedly tossed a paper bag containing $10,000 into Jesse's lap, which he allegedly used to buy a home for his parents, and a new automobile for the high school coach who had ***mentored*** Jesse. He was a world-wide hero, but he faced difficulties at home.

For the next several decades, Jesse struggled with financial pressure due to ***periodic*** unemployment. He tried to operate several businesses, but they failed because his talent was in sports and mentoring youth. In-spite-of all the fame he had earned as an Olympic sprinter, Jesse did not receive ***endorsements***. Such financial benefits were not available for Black track stars in the 1930s and '40s. He often accepted humiliating arrangements in-order-to provide financial support for his family. However, throughout the remainder of his life, Jesse was a champion of the American free enterprise economic system, even with its "bouts" of racial prejudice and segregation. Some ***bigoted*** people tried to make life miserable for Jesse; but he did not give them that privilege. He remained "bigger" than the "little" people who were rude to him. Sadly, he died of cancer at the age of 66. He is remembered as one of the greatest athletes in history.



Owens Competing in the 1936 Olympics

## VOCABULARY

***Ticker-tape:*** machine that prints numbers on paper tapes
***Mentored:*** guided; advised
***Periodic:*** occurring from time to time

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"Find the good. It's all around you. Find it, showcase it and you'll start believing it."*
-Jesse Owens, Olympic champion

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# *Pillars of Culture*
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A Statue Honoring
Nathan Hale

To become a teacher is good. Serving in the military is noble. But, being hanged as a military spy was considered disgraceful in 1776. One of the most tragic events of the American War for Independence was the death of Nathan Hale when he was only 21 years old. Nathan Hale was born in 1755, and was raised by ***Puritan*** parents who taught him well, and enrolled him in Yale College at the age of 14. Yale was founded primarily to prepare young men for Christian ministry. Nathan adjusted well from rural farm life to ***cosmopolitan*** life in New England. He was handsome, athletic, and earned a reputation for being gracious, sociable, and ***studious*** in mathematics, science, and the classics. He graduated with honors at the age of 18, and became a school teacher in Connecticut. He began his work day at 5:00 AM teaching a class of young ladies, who wanted to learn to write and compute arithmetic. The girls were dismissed at 7:00 AM, and Nathan taught boys for the rest of the day.

A Yale classmate wrote a letter to Nathan while he was a teacher, stating "Liberty is our ***reigning*** topic, which loudly calls upon everyone to exert his talents & abilities to the utmost in defending it – now is the time for heroes…" That letter appealed to Nathan, whose moral courage and Christian training provided a strong sense of duty and commitment to ***noble*** causes.

Because Nathan was energetic, intelligent, and patriotic, he joined the Connecticut ***Militia*** in 1775. Even though Nathan was only 19 years old, he became a leader. In July, 1775, Nathan received a letter from Benjamin Talmadge, who mentioned that British treatment of colonists "demanded that young men defend religious freedom, the honor of God, a glorious country…" Nathan ***resigned*** his teaching position and enlisted as a 1st Lieutenant in the 7th Connecticut ***Regiment***. His leadership earned promotion to captain. He was often seen encouraging and praying with his troops when they became ill. He longed for combat action, but was faithful in fulfilling his ***mundane*** duties of filing reports, drilling his troops, and serving guard duty.

## VOCABULARY

***Puritan:*** virtuous, obedient to God's laws of purity
***Cosmopolitan:*** city, urban
***Studious:*** likes to read, study
***Reigning:*** ruling, main
***Noble:*** righteous, good
***Militia:*** volunteer civilian soldiers
***Resigned:*** gave up, quit
***Regiment:*** unit of military forces
***Mundane:*** boring, routine

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When the British assembled to invade New York, General George Washington asked for volunteers to go behind enemy lines to gather information about the ***anticipated*** invasion. The Continental Army did not have a network of spies from which General Washington could assign men to gather information about enemy troops. Nathan Hale volunteered, even though he had no training in ***espionage*** techniques or ***precautions***. He exchanged his officer's uniform for the garb of a teacher, stuffed his Yale Diploma in his coat, and pretended to be a teacher looking for work. He slipped into New York and began to note enemy troop movements. A crafty British officer suspected that Nathan was a colonial spy, and lured Nathan into ***divulging*** the purpose of his mission. He was captured and charged with espionage. The next day he was marched to a tree, where he was bound and told that he was to be executed. He was hanged at the age of 21. British officers later wrote of Hale's calmness, dignity, and courage. Today, Nathan Hale is honored as a patriotic hero on street signs, with statues, and in literature. George Washington learned from Hale's tragic death, and established an efficient spy network that helped win independence. Nathan Hale was an example of heroic greatness.



A Depiction of Hale's Execution

Artist Unknown

## VOCABULARY

***Anticipated:*** looked forward to
***Espionage:*** spying
***Precautions:*** careful steps, awareness
***Divulging:*** revealing, exposing, disclosing

## *LIFE PRINCIPLE:*

*"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."*
-Nathan Hale, American patriot

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