

Name: _____

Date: _____

Bessie Coleman

Bessie was the first African American and Native American woman to fly a plane. That is quite an accomplishment! Many hurdles stood in her way: lack of money, being African American, being Native American, being a woman, lack of a flight school in the United States, and many more.

What words would you use to describe Bessie to others?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Bessie Coleman

Bessie Coleman was the first African American and Native American woman to fly an airplane. She was born in Texas in 1892. Her mother was a maid and her father was a sharecropper. As a child, she helped her mom pick cotton and do laundry to save enough to go to college.

She had to drop out of college after the first semester because she couldn't afford to stay. She moved in with her brothers, who were in the military, and told amazing stories about flying airplanes.

She wanted to learn so badly but women couldn't go to flight school in the United States, at that time. So, she took classes at night to learn French and she applied to a flying school in France. She was accepted and became famous for her flying.

She was nicknamed "Brave Bessie" because she loved to do tricks in her airplane. She traveled all over the world performing in her airplane. She died in 1926 when she fell out of her airplane while it was upside down. Airplanes didn't have roofs then and she wasn't wearing a seatbelt, at the time.

Who is this passage about?

What is she famous for?

Where did she go to learn to fly?