



## Thinksheet

Rising 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

**Mae Among the Stars** By Roda Ahmed

### Classroom Activities

- **Classroom Collaboration: Timeline and Elements of the Story:**
  - **As a class:** Review and record the timeline of events that happened to Mae in the story.
  - **Breakout groups:** Assign small teams of students (or number off) to collaborate to create a visual timeline of events, being sure to include information on the elements of the story: character(s), setting(s), problem, solution, and theme. Each team receives a piece of chart paper/ bulletin board paper/poster board on which they work together to record and illustrate the timeline, elements of the story, and their chosen team name.
  - **Group Presentations:** Groups display their posters around the classroom or in the hallway and the whole class participates in a gallery walk.
- **Story Elements Writing Prompt:**
  - **As a class:** Brainstorm all of the problems or challenges that happened to Mae in the text. Record on a class chart for display. Discuss the characters' responses and how the challenges were solved.
  - As a follow-up question, ask, "How are Mae's Mom and Dad similar in the story? (Clue: The students may give many different types of responses, and all have merit. As you talk about the book and this question, try to get them to notice that Mae's parents are very encouraging and tell her the same advice of "if you can dream it, if you believe it and work hard for it, anything is possible.") Conversely, also ask, "Are any adults not encouraging to Mae to become whatever she dreams of?" Review how Miss Bell acts differently than Mae's Mom and Dad. Also, ask students, "Why do you think Miss Bell told Mae that she would be better as a nurse?" Be sure to give context with information on customary career paths for typical American women in the 1960s.
  - **Students reflect and write:** Have students write 3-5 sentences responding to the writing prompt, "What was one challenge in Mae Among the Stars, and how did the character(s) respond to the challenge?"
  - \*As needed, provide the answer prompts, "One challenge for the characters in Mae Among the Stars was..." and "The character(s) \_\_\_\_\_ responded to that challenge by..."
- **Student Writing: Who are our American heroes?**
  - **As a class:** Ask the class, "What is a hero?" (Have students or teams of students look up the word hero in a dictionary or online for a full definition. Brainstorm about those in our country who have been heroes. Discuss and prompt with questions such as, "Who are our American heroes? What notable



These resources were prepared by GELF's Educator Advisory Council, a group of 28 Tennessee educators, to encourage engagement with the K-3 Home Library books distributed to students over the summer.

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things have they done to make our nation better? Is Mae Jemison an example of an American hero?" Record responses on a two-column class chart, American Heroes/Contribution to Making our Nation Better

- **Students reflect and write:** Have students write a letter to a chosen living American hero to learn more and thank them for their service to our nation. Have students include at least one question about what inspired the individual. \*As needed, provide students with a personal letter template or an exemplar letter.
- **Research Project: Who is Your American Hero?** Have each student research their favorite American Hero to learn and record important facts about the individual's life: Who they are and where and when they grew up, who/ what inspired them, what they achieved, adversity they encountered and how they overcame it etc.
  - **Individual Presentations:** Offer a variety of ways students may share their research project with the class: orally, in the form of a powerpoint slide or blog page, or written and illustrated for display in the classroom.
  - Be sure to have each student include information on why or how the special American Hero was chosen.
- **Additional Resources and Virtual Links:**
  - **Meet the Author:** <https://www.rodaworld.com/mae-among-the-stars>
  - **Hear and See this Book Read Aloud on YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eylvAioMRPk>
  - **Additional Reading and Discussion Guides for Before, During and After Reading:** <https://readingtokids.org/Books/BookView.php?pag=5&bookID=00001575>
  - **Watch and Learn:** To learn more about the main character, watch these videos from interviews where Dr. Mae Jemison shares more information about her inspiration, experience, and what she is doing now to advance science:
    - **Mae Jemison: I Wanted to Go Into Space:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0vGDfuWhfl>
    - **Girls ask Dr. Mae Jemison About Space:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZoDnBoTTxQ>
    - **Mae Jemison: Starship:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7q9X5T\\_-NdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7q9X5T_-NdQ)
  - **Mae Jemison Mini-Biography:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgOalKshblU>



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- **Story Time From Space: If I Were an Astronaut**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wV8yw7iV8w>
- **Find out more: What do astronauts do?**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhD8GFwy734&list=PLBf1hFTaf0FYGFV\\_t94lqNGFIW\\_XF23Tuo/](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhD8GFwy734&list=PLBf1hFTaf0FYGFV_t94lqNGFIW_XF23Tuo/)



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