

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

CLARA BARTON, HELEN KELLER,  
AND RUBY BRIDGES

by Caren Churchbuilder

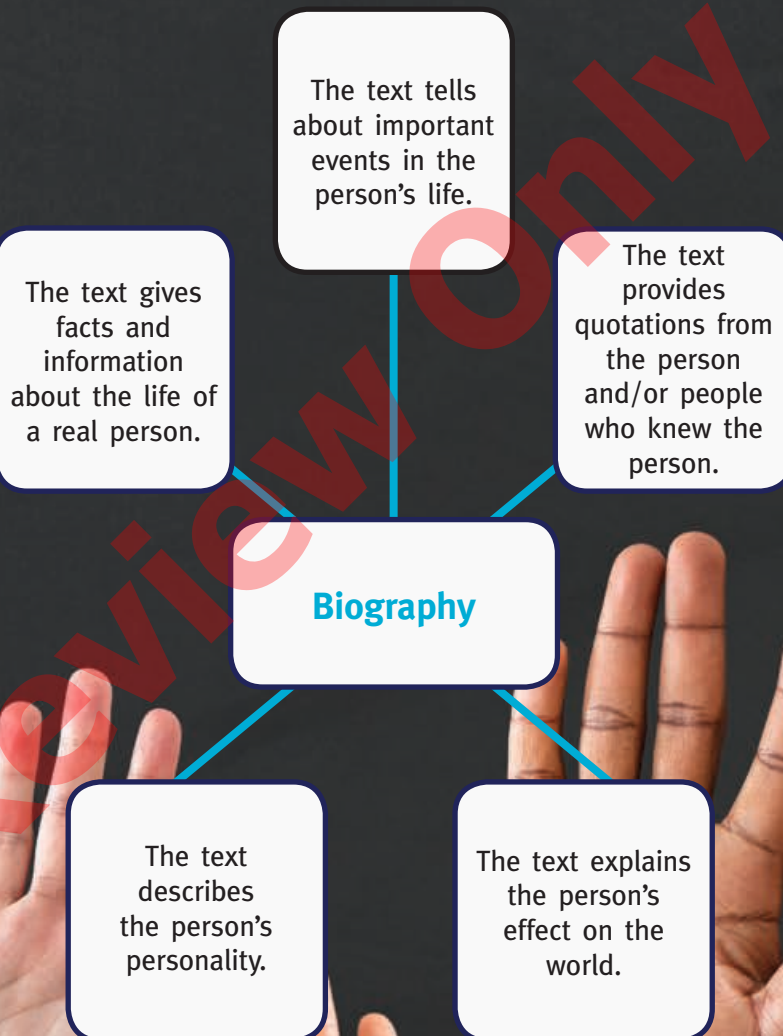


What makes a person  
a good citizen?

|         |      |
|---------|------|
| Level   | N/30 |
| Lexile® | 730L |

## Biography

Look for the genre features noted below as you read this book. Use the features to help you understand the text.



# GOOD CITIZENS

▼ Good citizens help in their community.





▲ **Good citizens work together to clean up their communities.**

**H**elping one another helps out the community. People may help out a neighbor. They may volunteer to clean up a park or help animals in need. These are citizens who care about their community and one another.

Citizens show they care in other ways, too. They might speak out to help others. They fight hard to change laws so that people are treated fairly.

All these people are good citizens. They make a difference in the lives of others, and they treat one another with respect and kindness.

Throughout history, there have been figures who have shown good citizenship. This book highlights three women who are excellent examples of good citizens. Clara Barton, Helen Keller, and Ruby Bridges dedicated their lives to helping others.



▲ **Clara Barton**



▲ **Helen Keller**



▲ **Ruby Bridges**

# CLARA BARTON:

The Angel of the Battlefield (1821–1912)

Clara Barton was born in 1821 in Massachusetts. She was educated at home, and learned at an early age to read and write. She also learned how to take care of others. When she was eleven years old, Clara helped nurse her brother back to health after an accident. It was then that she found her calling to help others.



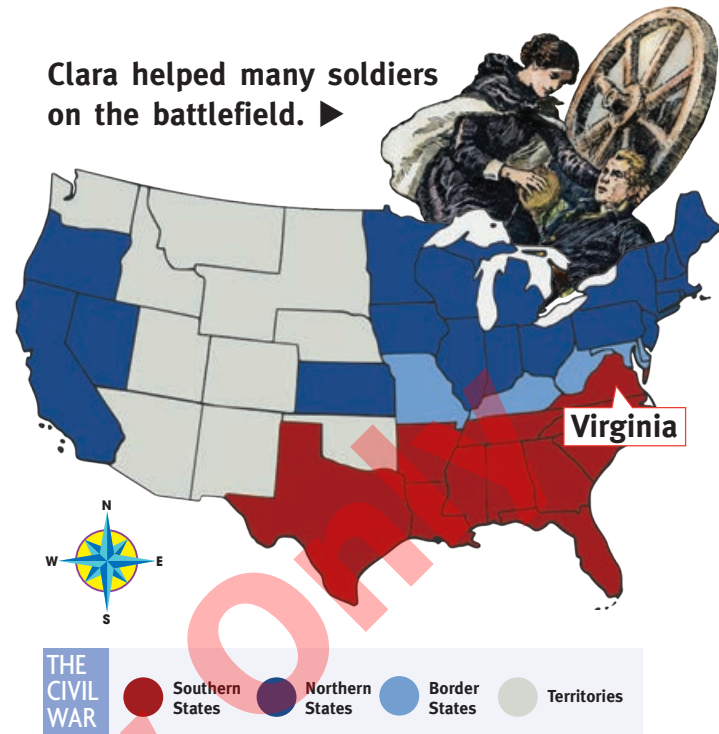
▲ Clara's school in Bordentown had only one room.

Clara became a schoolteacher at age fifteen. Later, she opened her own school in Bordentown, New Jersey. This was during a time when women were not in charge of schools. The school was very successful. As the school grew, a man was hired to replace Clara. He was paid more than she was. Clara was upset. She believed that women could have the same jobs as men, and be paid the same, too. So she decided to leave her school.

## The American Civil War

Clara then went to work as a clerk for the U.S. government. Soon after, the American Civil War began in 1861. The Civil War was a terrible conflict in the United States. In this war, the Southern states fought the Northern states. The Southern states wanted to leave the United States. They fought over slavery and their right to form another nation. Many soldiers on both sides were killed or wounded.

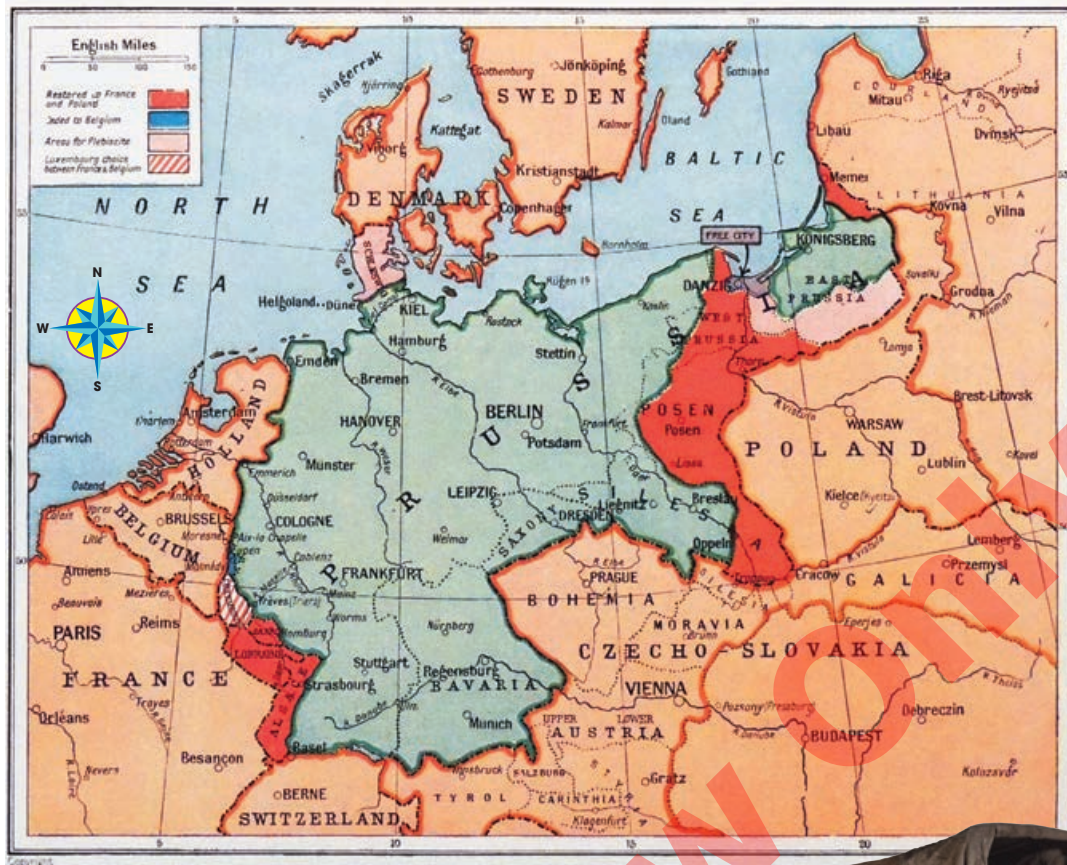
Clara helped many soldiers on the battlefield. ►



▲ Clara first saw war as a nurse in 1862 in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Clara wanted to help the Northern soldiers. She took charge of getting medicine and supplies to hospitals. She bravely went to battlefields to take care of hurt soldiers. She also searched for missing soldiers. Clara became known as the “angel of the battlefield.” She risked her own life to help others.

When the war ended, Clara continued to help find missing soldiers and get them back to their families.



▲ In Paris, France, Clara helped victims of the Franco-Prussian War.

## After the Civil War

After the war, Clara traveled to Europe to get some much-needed rest. There, she discovered the International Red Cross. The organization did many of the same things that Clara had done during the Civil War. It provided help to those in need.

At about that time, a war began between France and what is now Germany. It was called the Franco-Prussian War.



Clara worked with the Red Cross. She gave out supplies and took care of war victims in Europe. She loved the organization. Later, she worked hard to start a group in the United States that was just like the International Red Cross.

## The American Red Cross

In 1881, Clara organized the American Red Cross and served as its president until 1904. Clara made sure that the Red Cross provided help during wartime as well as during natural disasters such as tornadoes and hurricanes.

The Red Cross helped during other disasters, such as when a dam broke in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1889. The Red Cross provided food and shelter for those in need. They built hotels for people to stay in, and more than 3,000 homes.



The Red Cross helped rebuild Johnstown.

After a lifetime of helping others, Clara **resigned** from the Red Cross. She was eighty-two years old. However, she did not disappear from public life. She gave speeches about her life's work. She also wrote books about the Red Cross and her childhood.

Johnstown flood



# CLARA BARTON:

## A GOOD CITIZEN!

ILLUSTRATED BY CHRIS CHALIK



## WHAT MADE CLARA A GOOD CITIZEN?

- SHE HAD RESPECT FOR HERSELF AND FOR OTHERS.
- SHE BELIEVED THAT WOMEN DESERVED THE SAME RIGHTS AS MEN.
- SHE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST WOMEN TO BE HIRED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.
- SHE CARED DEEPLY FOR THOSE IN NEED, SUCH AS THE SICK AND WOUNDED.
- SHE WORKED HARD TO CREATE THE AMERICAN RED CROSS.

