

Name: _____

Bessie Coleman



Elizabeth Coleman, better known as Bessie, was the first African American woman to become a pilot. Bessie was born in Texas on January 26, 1892. When she was 23 years old, she moved to Chicago, Illinois.

She saved her money and applied to many pilot schools in the United States. She did not get accepted into any of them. Bessie didn't give up. Instead, she moved to France! She went to the Caudron Brothers' School of Aviation. One year later, in 1921, Bessie earned her pilot's license.

Bessie moved back to the United States. In 1922, she made her first public flight in the country. She traveled the country performing in flight shows. She would do unbelievable tricks in the air. She would do loops, rolls, and figure eights in her plane. She even would walk on the wings and parachute out of her plane!

Bessie worked hard to fight against segregation. She even dreamed of opening a school for Black pilots. She wasn't able to accomplish all of her dreams. Bessie was in a bad plane crash and died in 1926. She will always be remembered for her bravery.

1. Which word best describes Bessie Coleman?

- a. brave b. timid c. fearful d. hesitant

2. Why did Bessie move to France?

3. Bessie Coleman was a student at the Caudron Brothers' School of Aviation. What is the best definition for aviation?

- a. learning b. driving
c. flying d. school

4. What kinds of tricks did Bessie Coleman do during her flight shows?

ANSWER KEY

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