

Women's History Month ACTIVITY KIT



Based on the book
Soar, Elinor!

By TAMI LEWIS BROWN

Illustrated by
FRANÇOIS ROCA

Booksellers, Librarians, Scout Leaders, and Parents:

USE THIS ACTIVITY KIT as you create displays and events to celebrate Women's History Month in March each year. In it you'll find a board game, word search, crossword puzzle, book list, and more to introduce young children to important women in American history, including Elinor Smith, an aviation pioneer in the 1920s whose record-breaking feats still stand unchallenged.

Take the "Guess the Women in History Quiz" to test your knowledge of famous women in American history. If working with a group of children, consider giving the quiz orally with the books featuring the lives of each woman prominently displayed to aid the children as they guess.

Who knows? You just may inspire a little girl to become the subject of a future book about great women in American history!

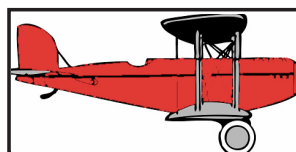
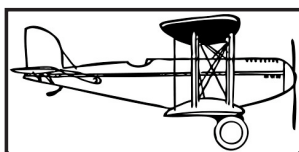
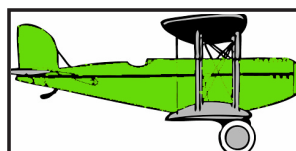
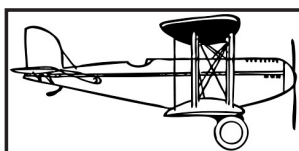
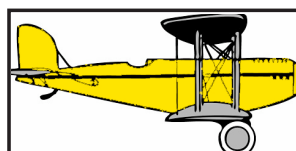
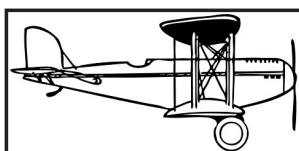
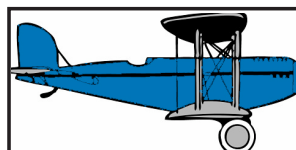
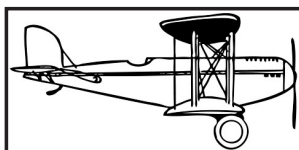
Soar, Elinor! Board Game

2-4 players
Needed: one die

*Soar along with Elinor Smith as you
play this fun board game!*

If you have a color printer, print this page and cut out the four colored airplane playing pieces. If you don't have a color printer, use the four white playing pieces and have each player color his/her plane a different color. Print out the game board on two 8.5 x 11-pieces of paper and tape the pages together.

To play, roll the die and move the number of spaces indicated. First player to reach the Statue of Liberty by exact roll wins!



Soar, Elinor! Board Game

TAKE OFF!

First airplane flight!
MOVE AHEAD 2
SPACES

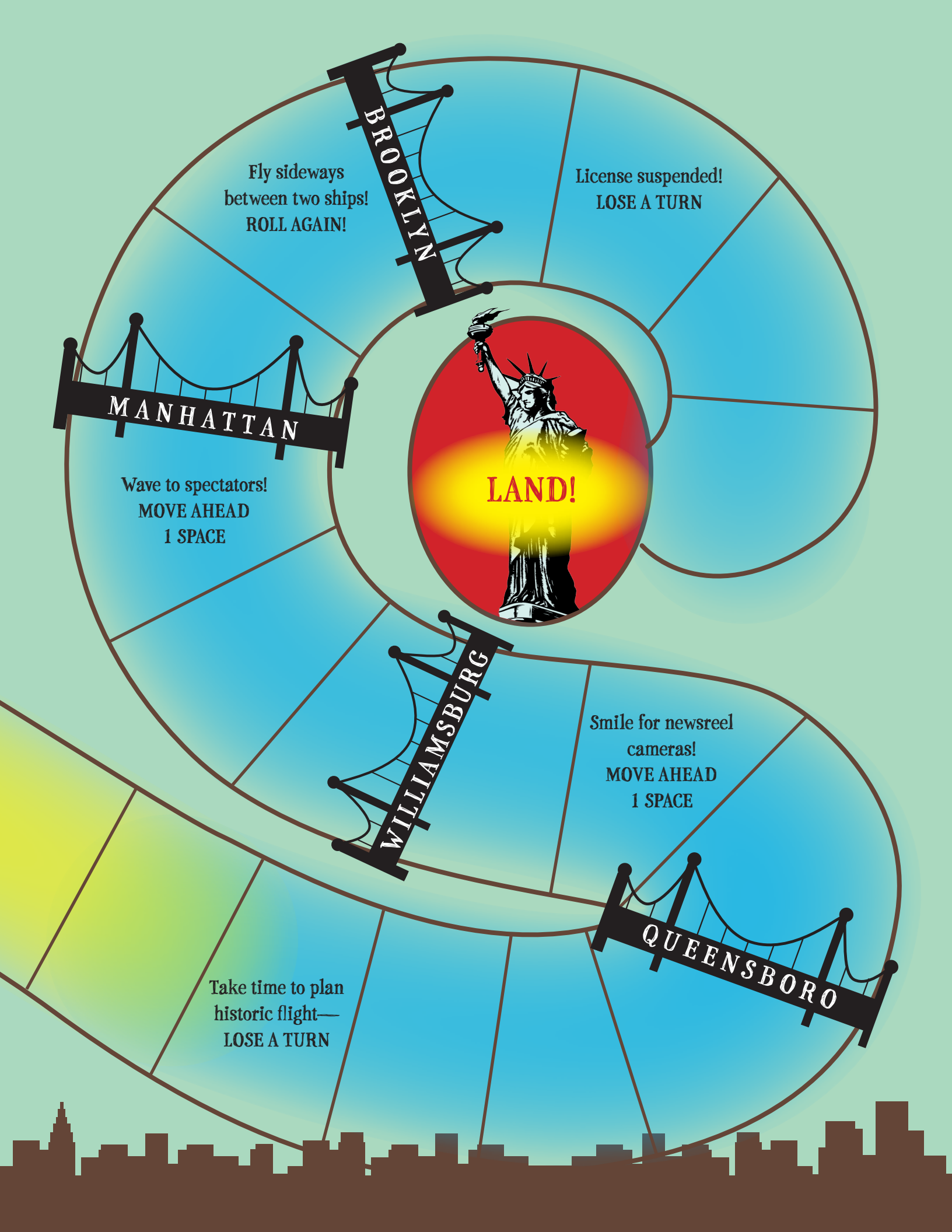
Take time to practice
touch and goes—
LOSE A TURN

First solo flight!
MOVE AHEAD
2 SPACES

Strong head
winds—
MOVE BACK
2 SPACES

Get pilot's license!
ROLL AGAIN!





BROOKLYN

Fly sideways
between two ships!
ROLL AGAIN!

License suspended!
LOSE A TURN

MANHATTAN

Wave to spectators!
MOVE AHEAD
1 SPACE



LAND!

WILLIAMSBURG

Smile for newsreel
cameras!
MOVE AHEAD
1 SPACE

QUEENSBORO

Take time to plan
historic flight—
LOSE A TURN

Soar, Elinor! Word Search

X	K	N	B	P	T	Z	G	R	N	W	U	O	D	B
H	H	G	T	T	O	N	I	S	I	A	C	Y	N	R
Z	F	N	F	E	U	Y	A	L	I	T	U	Y	E	I
A	P	R	I	O	C	H	L	T	O	X	L	Y	A	D
F	R	E	Z	X	H	I	U	B	T	K	T	A	R	G
E	D	A	T	K	A	O	E	S	O	A	I	E	I	E
E	N	V	O	M	N	R	E	O	A	M	H	Z	E	S
T	D	S	B	S	D	U	R	I	T	G	H	N	N	N
S	A	U	C	V	G	B	R	O	N	I	L	E	A	C
L	R	K	O	R	O	B	S	N	E	E	U	Q	L	M
G	H	P	I	W	E	A	V	I	A	T	O	R	P	Z
O	N	L	I	T	S	L	G	C	A	M	A	R	R	B
G	E	W	O	Q	V	U	K	O	Q	U	M	M	I	Y
B	F	R	I	G	X	E	H	F	X	T	C	I	A	F
D	D	T	K	O	I	D	O	M	U	M	R	R	S	J

Find the words below hidden in the puzzle. Like Elinor in her Waco 10, the words can fly horizontally, vertically, or diagonally and be spelled frontwards or backwards.

AIRPLANE

AVIATOR

BRIDGES

BROOKLYN

ELINOR

MANHATTAN

OCTOBER

QUEENSBORO

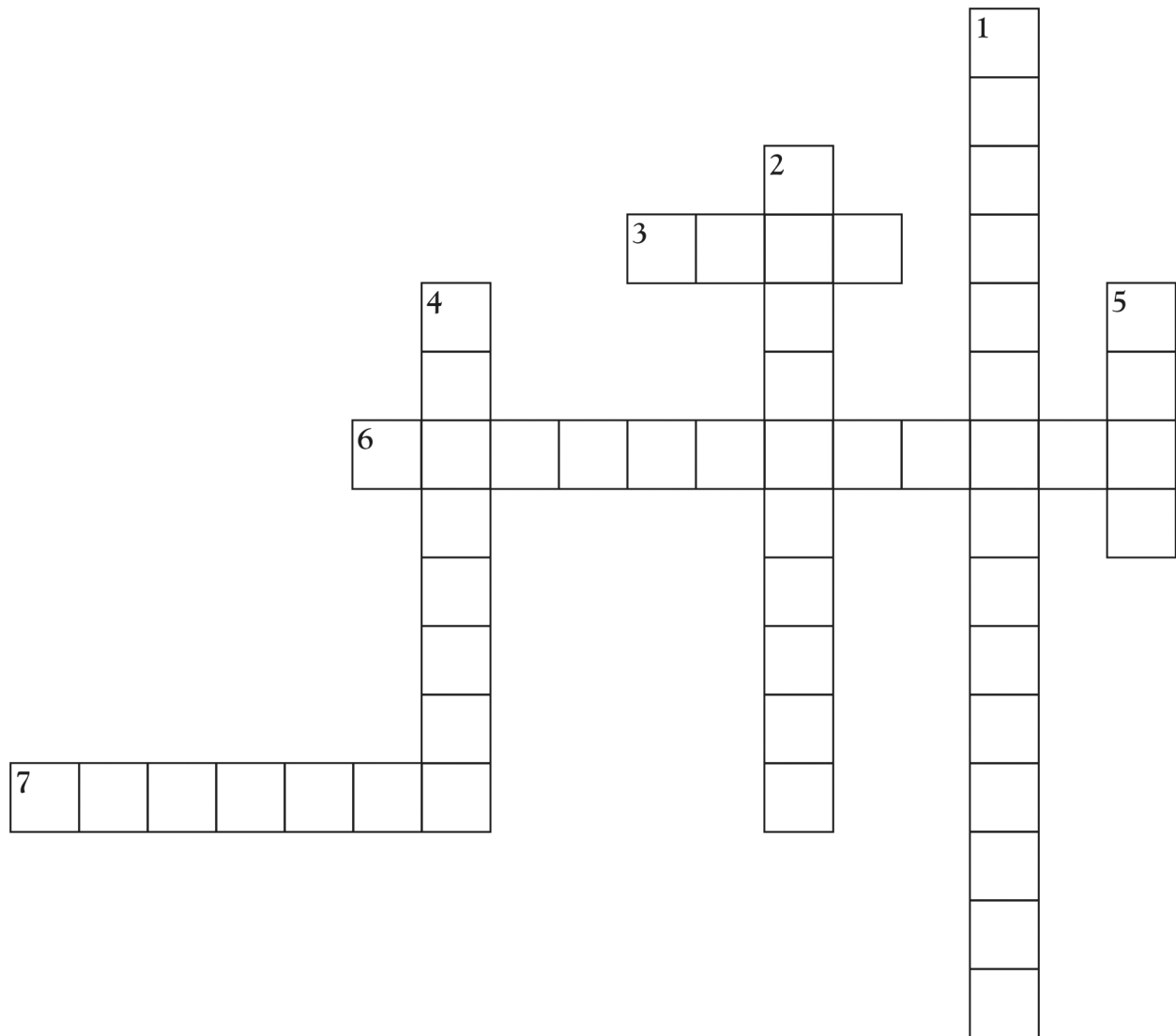
SIXTEEN

SOAR

TOUCH AND GOES

WILLIAMBURG

Soar, Elinor! Crossword Puzzle



Across

3. The number of bridges Elinor flew under in her historic flight
6. The term pilots use when they make their plane tap the ground for a moment and then climb back up in the sky
7. Elinor's age when she received her pilot's license

Down

1. The iconic New York landmark Elinor circled after her historic flight
2. The name of the first bridge Elinor flew under in her historic flight
4. The name of the last bridge Elinor flew under in her historic flight
5. The name of the river the four bridges cross.

Women's History Month Book List



Soar, Elinor!

By Tami Lewis Brown, illustrated by François Roca

The amazing story of Elinor Smith, the youngest American to receive a pilot's license, and her incredible flight—at age seventeen—under all four bridges crossing Manhattan's East River in October 1928

FSG

978-0-374-37115-9

Books about other famous aviators

Sky High: The True Story of Maggie Gee

By Marissa Moss, illustrated by Carl Angel

TRICYCLE PRESS

978-1-58246-280-6

Amelia Earhart: The Legend of the Lost Aviator

By Shelley Tanaka, illustrated by David Craig

HENRY ABRAMS

978-0-8109-7095-3

The Daring Miss Quimby

By Suzanne George Whitaker, illustrated by

Catherine Stock

HOLIDAY HOUSE

978-0-8234-1996-8

Books about important women in history

Eleanor, Quiet No More

By Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Gary Kelley

HYPERION

978-078685141-6

Independent Dames: What You Never Knew About the Women and Girls of the American Revolution

By Laurie Halse Anderson, illustrated by Matt Faulkner

SIMON AND SCHUSTER

978-0-689-85808-6

Ballots for Belva: The True Story of a Woman's Race for the Presidency

By Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen, illustrated by

Courtney Autumn Martin

ABRAMS

978-0810971103

Margaret Chase Smith: A Woman for President

By Lynn Plourde, illustrated by David McPhail

CHARLESBRIDGE

978-1-58089-234-6

Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote

By Tanya Lee Stone, illustrated by Rebecca Gibbon

HENRY HOLT

978-0-8050-7903-6

That's Not Fair! Emma Tenayuca's Struggle for Justice / No Es Justo! La lucha de Emma Tenayuca por la justicia

By Carmen Tafolla and Sharyll Teneyuca, illustrated by

Terry Ybáñez

WINGS PRESS

978-0-916727-33-8

Ida B. Wells: Let the Truth Be Told

By Walter Dean Myers, illustrated by Bonnie Christensen

AMISTAD/COLLINS

978-0-06-027705-5

Rosa

By Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier

HENRY HOLT

978-0-8050-7106-1

Julia Morgan Built a Castle

By Celeste Davison Mannis, illustrated by Miles Hyman

VIKING

978-067-005964-5

Rough, Tough Charley

By Verla Kay, illustrated by Adam Gustavson

TRICYCLE PRESS

978-1-4048-3104-9

Guess the Woman in History Quiz

1. This woman hid her female identity to become a stagecoach driver in Wyoming in the 1860s.

2. This woman was one of two Chinese-American women to join the Women Airforce Service Pilots during World War II.

3. This woman overcame a lonely childhood to become one of the world's most beloved humanitarians. She was married to a U.S. president.

4. This woman was born into slavery in 1862 and rose to national fame as a champion for African American rights.

5. In 1884, this woman was the first female to officially run for the office of President of the United States.

6. This woman was a groundbreaking female architect. She designed the famous Hearst Castle in California.

7. This woman crusaded for the rights of Mexican American farm workers in the 1920s and 1930s.

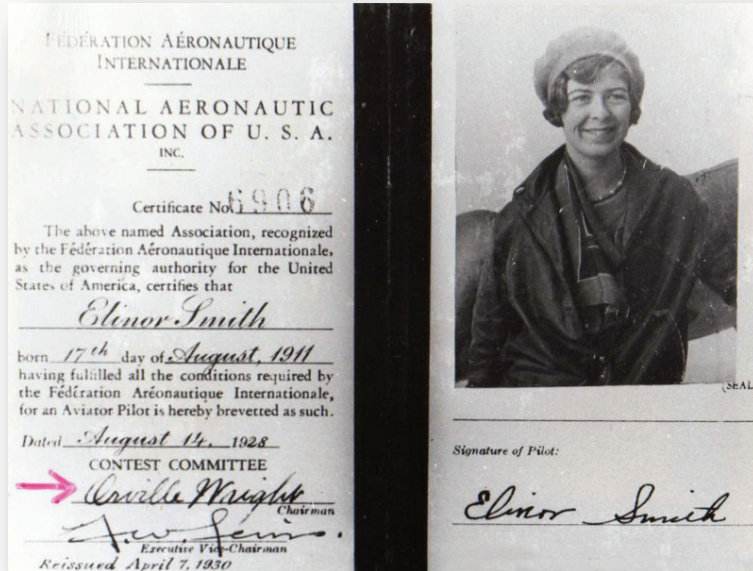
8. At age sixteen, this woman became the youngest person—male or female—to get a pilot's license in the U.S.

9. This woman refused to relinquish her seat on an Alabama bus to a white man—a quiet act of defiance that helped to begin the modern Civil Rights movement.

10. This woman was a pioneer for equal rights for women, especially a woman's right to vote.

Fascinating photos of a real woman in history, aviation pioneer Elinor Smith

WHEN WE READ nonfiction books with illustrations, sometimes it's hard to remember that these were real people. After you read *Soar, Elinor!*, take a look at these interesting photos of Elinor in real life. Cameras were a luxury in the 1920s and 30s—no one had a cell phone with a camera they could whip out at a moment's notice. But Elinor Smith was famous in her lifetime—she was photographed for magazines and newspaper articles—so there are many pictures of her that we can study. Elinor lived to be 98 years old. She died in 2010.



Here's Elinor's pilot's license. Look at her birth date and the date she got her license. Can you do the math to determine how old she was? Notice the signature of the chairman of the National Aeronautic Association. Do you recognize this famous aviator's name?



Photos courtesy Elinor Smith

These photographs were used by illustrator François Roca to help him get a true representation of Elinor in *Soar, Elinor!* Compare the photo above with the book cover. What similarities do you see? What differences? The photo on the left was used to create the painting on the title page of the book. How do these images compare? Did François Roca do a good job of capturing Elinor's likeness in his paintings for the book?



Courtesy Elinor Smith

Amelia Earhart was another famous aviator in the 1920s and 1930s. She is better known than Elinor Smith today because of the tragedy surrounding her last flight. Do you know that story? When they were young fliers, Amelia and Elinor often appeared together at public functions, like the one in this photograph. They were famous! That's Elinor wearing the fashionable hat. Amelia Earhart is the woman on the left wearing a black coat. Who are some of today's famous women? Do you think there will be books written about them in 90 years?

Here's a picture of Elinor in her airplane. How do planes today differ from the one in this photo? Have you ever ridden in a plane that holds only one or two people? How do you think it would feel to fly in an open plane like this?



Courtesy Elinor Smith



Zu Vincent

Here's a picture of Elinor Smith at age 96 with Tami Lewis Brown, the author of *Soar, Elinor!* Tami was able to visit with Elinor and talk to her about her experiences when she was writing her book about Elinor's life. How would being able to interview the subject of your biography be different from writing a book about someone who died long ago, like Amelia Earhart or Eleanor Roosevelt?

An interview with Tami Lewis Brown, author of *Soar, Elinor!*



Author Tami Lewis Brown, also a licensed pilot, in front of an antique Waco plane very similar to the one flown by Elinor Smith.

What was it about Elinor Smith's life that made you want to bring her story to children?

Elinor's life had everything that makes a great story—drama, passion, danger, and success. She discovered her passion for flight at six years old and by the age of sixteen she was the youngest licensed pilot in America, shooting for altitude and endurance records. I knew kids everywhere would love to know more.

How does Elinor's place in history compare with other, more well-known pilots like Amelia Earhart? Why do you think Elinor is less familiar to modern children and adults?

Historic accounts tend to focus on a few "heroes" and build that handful of people into larger than life characters. Elinor Smith was without a doubt a more talented pilot than Amelia Earhart but until now Elinor's place in aviation history was lost to all but a few antique airplane buffs.

Women's roles in history and how women's accomplishments are celebrated or forgotten is complicated. During the twenties and thirties, Amelia Earhart had a huge publicity machine driven by her husband, publisher G. P. Putnam. During the time Putnam was arranging a national advertising campaigns for Amelia, Elinor married and raised four children. No doubt part of the reason Elinor didn't remain more famous was her decision to have a full, rewarding life on the ground as well as in the air.

You spent hours talking with Elinor Smith while you researched this book. What did you learn about life in the 1920s and 30s that you didn't know before?

For me, the 1920s have sort of a golden aura. It was the jazz age, with new novels by F. Scott Fitzgerald, girls in flapper skirts, and jazz music. It seems long ago and far away.

But through Elinor's eyes I realized the 1920s were very modern. Society had expectations for what a woman could do with her life. Many jobs and other opportunities weren't offered to women. In 1930, *The New Yorker* magazine published an article calling Elinor Smith a "feminist." Girls like Elinor broke down barriers that gave modern girls the chance to be what ever they want to be.

Has anyone replicated Elinor's flight under the four Manhattan bridges? Does she still hold other records?

No one else has ever flown under all four Manhattan bridges. Elinor's feat was and is one of a kind. Elinor set altitude records for a certain class of plane that still stands today. Of course there are modern planes that fly faster, longer, and higher, but Elinor was the best of the best when it came to flying the latest models in the 1920s and early 30s.

You flew a biplane similar to Elinor's to research this book. How do planes from that era differ from modern jets and today's smaller airplanes? What does it feel like to fly in a biplane?

Wow! Flying in John Corradi's Waco was one of the big thrills of this project! Visibility in a Waco is very poor. The cowling (what we call a hood in a car) rises above eye level and the radiator is suspended from the top wing. A Waco pilot has to fly the plane sideways to see what's ahead before landing while pilots in modern planes just spot the runway's center line, descend, and touch down.

One wonderful thing about this biplane is the open cockpit. There's nothing like the rush of wind as you fly above the clouds. Another surprising part is the "wind in the wires." At certain low speeds wind strums the wires that steady the wings. The plane becomes a flying musical instrument. It's magic!

Was it difficult to fly the type of plane that Elinor flew? What skills did someone need to be a good pilot in the 1920s?

Pilots in the 1920s were still learning the basic "rules" of flight—how wings performed, how to escape from a stall or spin, how to land in a crosswind. There weren't computer models or flight simulators. They learned by doing.

There were no radios in planes back then, so when Elinor made her endurance flight she couldn't talk to anyone on the ground. Planes were not pressurized and there was no oxygen system. Elinor nearly had a fatal crash during one altitude test when she passed out from lack of oxygen. There was no radar so she had to figure out where she was by looking for landmarks on the ground. There weren't even specialized flight charts—pilots used road maps to navigate. Yes it was hard! And dangerous, too.

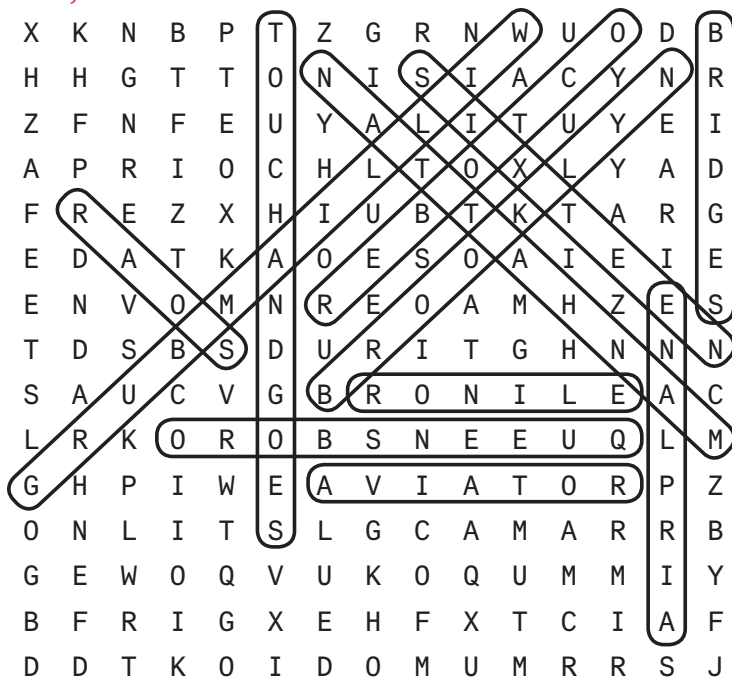
The most important skill was the same then as it is now—a love of flying. A great pilot spends many hours in the air, perfecting her skills. Like most things in life you'll never be the best if you don't have passion.

What do you hope that modern children will take away from Elinor's story?

Elinor didn't let anyone else tell her what she could or couldn't accomplish. She had a dream and she worked hard to achieve it. These are lessons we should all take to heart—young or old.

Solutions to Puzzles and Quiz

Soar, Elinor! Word Search



Soar, Elinor! Crossword Puzzle

Across

- 3: four
- 6: touch and goes
- 7: sixteen

Down

- 1: Statue of Liberty
- 2: Queensboro
- 4: Brooklyn
- 5: East

Guess the Woman in History Quiz

1. Charley Parkhurst—read about her life in *Rough, Tough Charley*
2. Maggie Gee—read about her life in *Sky High: The True Story of Maggie Gee*
3. Eleanor Roosevelt—read about her life in *Eleanor, Quiet No More*
4. Ida B. Wells—read about her life in *Ida B. Wells: Let the Truth Be Told*
5. Belva Lockwood—read about her life in *Ballots for Belva: The True Story of a Woman's Race for the Presidency*
6. Julia Morgan—read about her life in *Julia Morgan Built a Castle*
7. Emma Tenayuca—read about her life in *That's Not Fair! Emma Tenayuca's Struggle for Justice / No Es Justo! La lucha de Emma Tenayuca por la justicia*
8. Elinor Smith—read about her life in *Soar, Elinor!*
9. Rosa Parks—read about her life in *Rosa*
10. Elizabeth Cady Stanton—read about her life in *Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote*