



Lesson

# Reach for the Stars with Mae Jemison

Alison Hassenplug

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Subject Area	Grade Level	Time
Elementary History & Social Studies	Pre-K-1	<b>45-Minute Session</b> <i>Opportunities for Extension</i>

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## Description

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Using a variety of primary and secondary sources, students will engage in the discovery of perseverance, confidence, and determination shown by Mae Jemison, the first Black woman to travel into space, among many other accomplishments. Facing adversity, Mae's career path was not 'smooth sailing' and learning her story encourages young learners to believe in themselves and 'reach for the stars', no matter what obstacles arise.

## Lesson Objective

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- Students will be able to identify Mae Jemison's occupation and main contributions.
- Students will be able to engage in 'growth mindset' discussions, identifying a goal they have for their future selves.
- Students will create a rocket ship craft using geometric shapes.

## Big Idea

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- Who is Mae Jemison and what is she known for?
- What can we learn from Mae's story?
- How does Mae show courage and perseverance?
- What does it mean to 'reach for the stars'?

## C3 Framework Standards Addressed

**D1.1.K—2.** Explain why the compelling question is important to the student.

**D2.Div.10.K—2.** Compare their own point of view with others' perspectives.

**D2.Civ.14.K—2.** Describe how people have tried to improve their communities over time.

**D2.His.1.K—2.** Create a chronological sequence of multiple events.

**D2.His.2.K—2.** Compare life in the past to life today.

**D2.His.3.K—2.** Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.

**D2.His.4.K—2.** Compare perspectives of people in the past to those of people in the present.

## Essential Vocabulary

### Astronaut

A person whose profession is to travel into space.

### NASA

National Aeronautics and Space Administration; oversees United States science and technology having to do with outer space.

## Materials & Resources

### PRIMARY SOURCES

1. **NWHM Biography: Mae Jemison.** (Key facts listed are taken from this bio).
2. **Ebony Magazine's Article with Pictures.** (Pgs. 118–124).
3. **The Secret Life of Scientists and Engineers: Mae Jemison.** [PBS Learning Media Video of an Interview with Mae Jemison](#)

### OTHER SOURCES

1. **Mae Among the Stars** by Roda Ahmed. Picture book.
2. **Who Is Mae Jemison?** [Brittanica Kids Video](#)

### MATERIALS

1. **'Reach for the Stars: When I Grow Up' Worksheet**
2. **Rocket Ship Shape Templates**
3. Pastel / Neon / Multicolor Printer Paper or Cardstock
4. Black Construction Paper
5. White and Yellow Crayons, Colored Pencils, or Chalk
6. Scissors
7. Glue Sticks

## PROCEDURES

### Warm Up

#### Play ‘Body Blast Off’

Engage students in a whole body activity where they pretend to be astronauts by climbing in their spacecraft, putting on their helmet, buckling up, counting down from 10, blasting off, floating in space, then re-entering the atmosphere and landing, ready to listen to a story.

#### Read *Mae Among the Stars* by Roda Ahmed

Introduce the book and ask students to ‘Turn and Talk’ with a partner about one thing they notice from the cover and one thing they’re wondering about.

#### Read the story, stopping along the way to ask comprehension questions such as:

1. How do you think Mae feels? How would you feel?
2. What do you notice about the illustrations, about the colors specifically?
3. What do you notice about the jobs the girls are striving for versus the boys?
4. How do you think Mae felt about what her teacher said?

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### Direct Instruction

Reiterate that while the book is fiction, it tells the story of the real Mae Jemison. Show **NWHM Biography: Mae Jemison** and **Ebony Magazine’s** article with pictures (pgs. 118-124).

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### Guided Practice

Watch **Who Is Mae Jemison?** Britannica Kids Video to learn more factual information.

Use **The Secret Life of Scientists and Engineers: Mae Jemison**, a PBS Learning Media Video of an Interview with Mae Jemison, to show that Mae always dreamed of being an astronaut and she accomplished her dream.

Ask what can we learn from Mae’s determination? How can we apply that to our own stories?

## Guided Practice

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Ask what can we learn from Mae’s determination? How can we apply that to our own stories?

### Introduce the drawing/writing activity.

1. Help students brainstorm careers they’d like to pursue as they grow up. Challenge students to think about why they may like to have that career and what they may need to do to accomplish their goal.
2. Guide students to complete [‘Reach for the Stars: When I Grow Up’ Worksheet](#) according to their writing needs (several versions are included).

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## Independent Practice

### Create your own rocket ship.

1. Using the [Rocket Ship Shape Template](#), provide students with shape options to create their rocket ship.
2. Students then assemble their rocket ship and glue to black construction paper.
3. Use white/yellow crayons, colored pencils, or chalk to draw stars and other ‘space’ decorations as the background.

# Reach for the Stars with Mae Jemison

Teaching with Primary Sources Lesson Plan

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Elementary History & Social Studies

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Grades Pre-K–1 45-Minute Session

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## ASSESSMENT & HOMEWORK

### Formative Assessment

Completion of the ‘When I Grow Up’ writing activity.

Completion of Rocket Ship craft.

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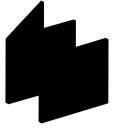
### Summative Assessment

Participation in class discussion.

## FURTHER RESEARCH & RESOURCES

### Modification & Accommodation

1. Teachers can help with cutting/assembling for younger students.
2. Different versions of the ‘Reach for the Stars’ worksheet provide the ability to tailor to writers’ needs.



# Reach for the Stars

With Mae Jemison

Supplemental Materials



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## Reach for the Stars: When I Grow Up



When I grow up, I want to be

because



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## Rocket Ship Shape Templates

Below are different shape templates used to create Mae Jemison's Rocket Ship.

Templates can be printed to white cardstock for students to color OR printed on a variety of colored cardstock to allow students to choose their shapes and colors.

**Enjoy!**



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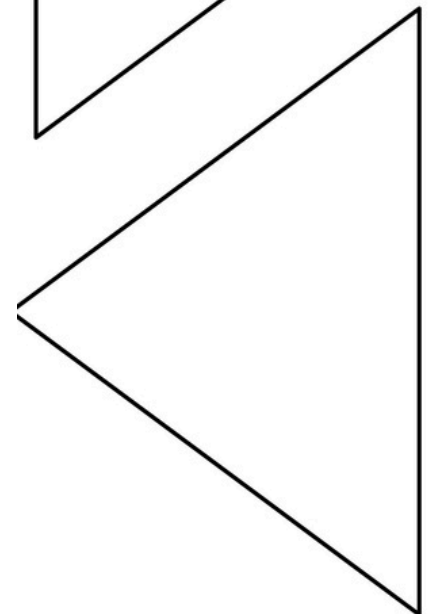
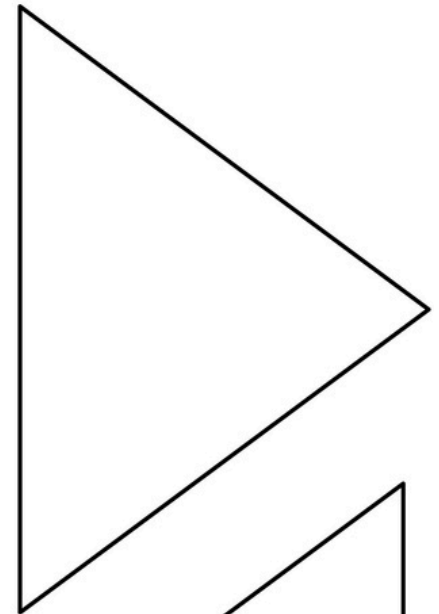
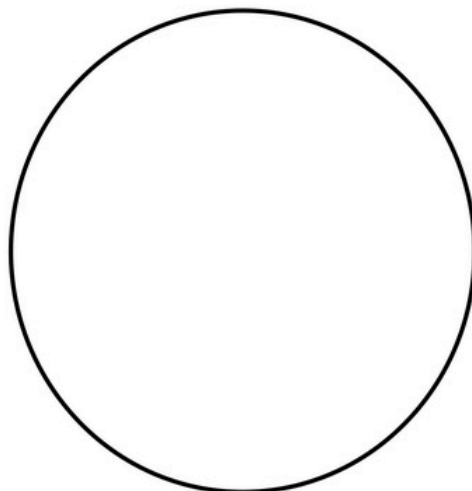
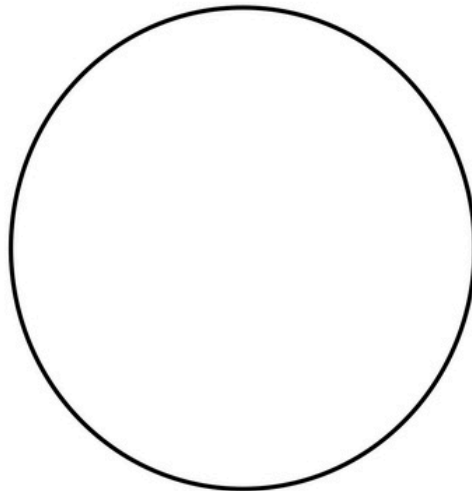
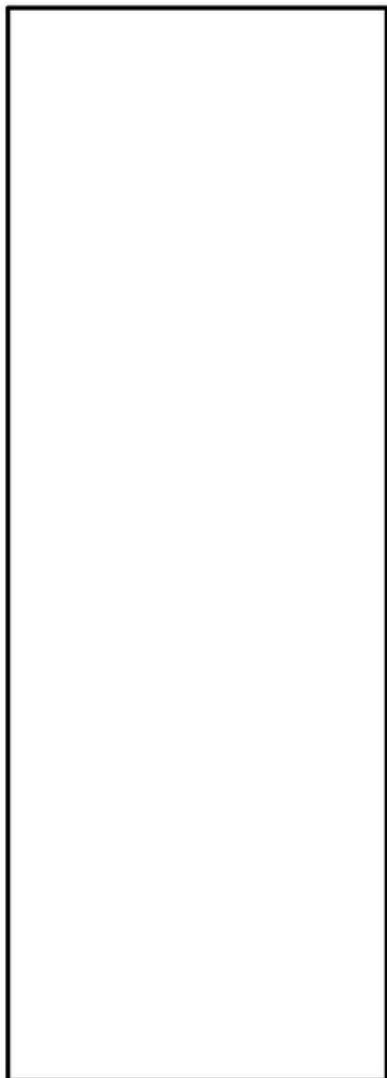
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## Rocket Ship Shape Templates





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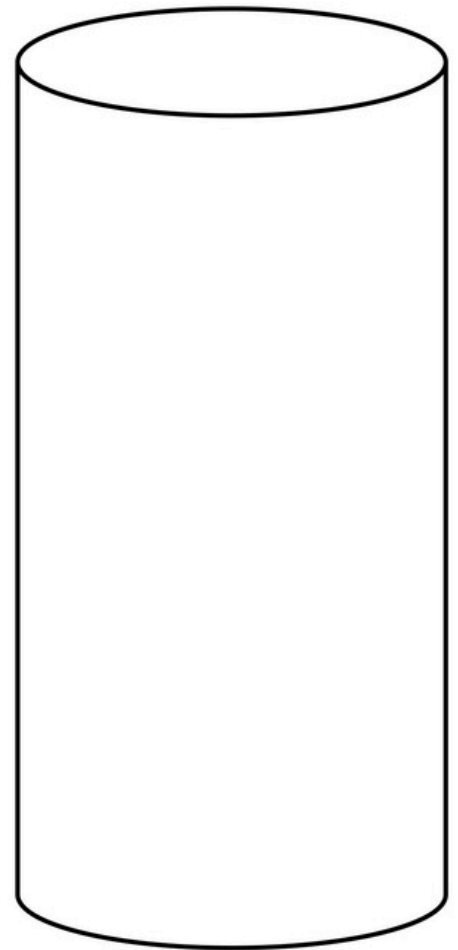
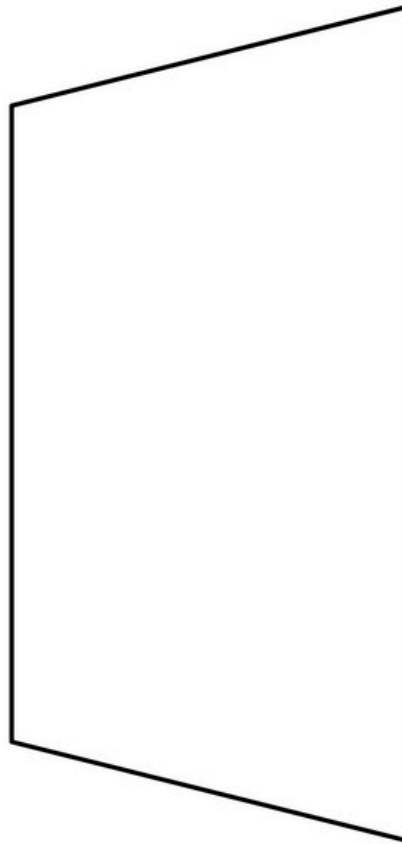
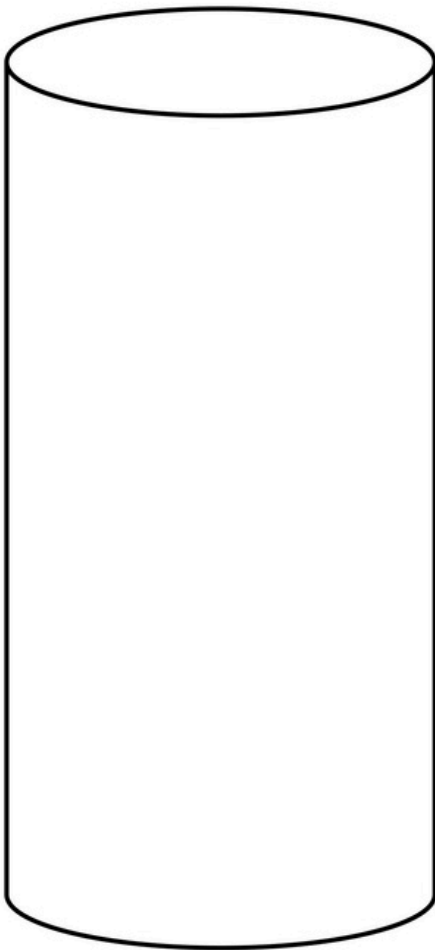
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