

**Lesson 31****Mae Jemison**

When Mae Jemison was a little girl, she had no idea she would be the first African American woman in space. She did know that she liked to go to the library and read all the books about space she could find. She also had a dream that some day she would be able to travel in space.

Mae was born in Decatur, Alabama, in 1956. Her family moved to Chicago when Mae was three. It was in Chicago that she discovered the wonders of science. She carried her interest in science to college where she graduated with degrees in chemical engineering and Afro-American studies. By 1981, she also had earned a Doctor of Medicine degree and became a medical officer with the Peace Corps in West Africa.

It wasn't long before NASA asked her to become an astronaut. She completed her training in 1988. In 1992, she became the first African American woman in space when she flew a mission on the shuttle *Endeavour*. Today, she is working on bringing better health care to people in Africa.

Follow the instructions to identify parts of a biography.

1. Who is this biography about? Underline the name.
2. What are important dates in this person's life?
3. Draw a circle around one important thing this person did.

**Biography**

- A biography tells about a person's life.
- A biography may focus on one or more important things a person did. It includes dates and the details about what the person did.

**Resource Links**

2 RDI Book 2: p. 150G

**SAM Keyword:** Biography

Use with page 150F.



**Lesson 31**

Write about one or more of the following topics.

**1. It Only Takes One**

Pick a well-known person who was important in the history of a country. For example, think about what would have happened if there had been no George Washington in America. Write a short biography that tells about this person's life. Tell why this person made a difference.

**2. The First**

Choose someone who was the first to do something. It might be the first person to fly across the Atlantic Ocean in an airplane or the first person to see the planets through a telescope. Write a short biography about this person. Include dates and details that tell how the person became a "first."

**3. No Problem**

Think of someone who had to overcome obstacles to accomplish something. It might be someone in sports who had to deal with an injury. Write about this person's life. Include dates and details that help to show why this person became a champion.

**4. Helping Others**

Write a short biography about someone who is well known for helping others. Tell what this person does, who this person helps and how, and details about his or her life that show what led this person to do this work.

**Resource Links** RDI Book 2: p. 150I**SAM Keyword:** Biography*Use with page 150F.*