

Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History

By: Vashti Harrison
Little, Brown Young Readers

Written by: Christine A. Draper
Nevada State College

Beyonce had it right in her song *Run the World (Girls)* when she said, “Who run the world? Girls!” (Knowles, 2011, track 12) and with the current world-wide focus on women and girls it is essential to showcase positive heroes and role models for our younger generations. Vashti Harrison’s incredible book highlights forty remarkable female figures of Black History from all walks of life including history, pop culture, athletics, science, and more. In the introduction Harrison states, “To be able to see yourself in someone else’s story can be life-changing. To know a goal is achievable can be empowering.” (p. viii) and through this book, children are able to see that even when others try and keep you down, one can often rise above the set-backs. Figures such as abolitionist Harriet Tubman, spy Mary Bowser, mathematician Katherine Johnson, sculptor Augusta Savage, and poet Gwendolyn Brooks highlight a few of the remarkable women brought to life in this text. One entry details Mary Seacole, a self-trained nurse and businesswoman that was turned down by the War Office in London to treat wounded and sick soldiers in the Crimean War. Feeling undaunted by this obstacle, Mary set off with a friend and medical supplies to set up a ‘hotel’ for wounded soldiers located behind enemy lines. Readers young and old will discover bold African American women that helped to make the world a better place and have inspired future generations to come through their amazing accomplishments. This informative book is written in an encyclopedia format through short but detailed biography statements with often unknown and obscure factoids for each of the forty highlighted women. Whimsical, heartwarming, and iconic illustrations accompany each of the biography statements and help to bring these remarkable figures to life right before the reader’s eyes. Don’t forget to check out the end pages that include snippets about even more little leaders that beg for further discovery. (Suggested grades 2-5) Fans should also keep their eyes open for the highly anticipated follow-up book *Little Leaders: Visionary Women Around the World* which is set to hit stores this November.

References

- Harrison, V. (2017). *Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History*. New York: Little Brown and Company.
- Knowles, B. (2011). *Run the World (Girls)*, on 4 [CD], Los Angeles, CA: Parkwood Entertainment and Columbia Records.

Biography

Christine A. Draper was a former Associate Professor of education at Georgia Southern University where she taught future and current teachers reading and language arts methods, integrated curriculum, young adult literature, and more. She is now an Instructional Designer at Nevada State College where she is a passionate advocate for engaging and innovative curriculum and supports faculty in professional development, course design, and in finding amazing literature they can utilize in their classrooms. She can be reached at Christine.Draper@nsc.edu.