

Grade 6 Informational

Obstacles

Helen Keller faced many obstacles in her life, but nothing stopped her from living a happy and successful life.

At only 19 months of age, Helen became very ill. Although this illness did not last long, it did leave Helen both blind and deaf. While growing up, Helen communicated with her young friend, Martha, by creating signs. However, Helen's parents knew that they needed to do more for her. They were in search of a teacher and found Anne Sullivan. Anne, who also lost some of her eyesight, became Helen's teacher.

Helen grew up very spoiled, but Anne knew that needed to change. Anne and Helen stayed in a little house in the garden away from her family. This isolation enabled Anne to work with Helen without distractions. Anne began by teaching Helen different signs. She was learning some new words, but it wasn't until one day that Helen really started to catch on. Anne wanted to teach Helen the word "water". As Helen held her hands under water, Anne spelled the word into her hand. Helen's face lit up with joy! Later, Helen became inspired and wanted to learn how to speak, as well. Helen would touch the lips of others as well as having words spelled into her hands. With help from Anne, Helen was able to communicate with many people.

As Helen grew older, she attended college and later became a famous author and speaker. She also won many awards for her accomplishments.

Helen's memory lives on. Her picture is on the Alabama state quarter, and she also has a hospital dedicated in her name. Helen is an inspiration to many!

Grade 6 Narrative

Part of the Family

We were all so excited to learn that Mom was going to let us adopt and add a new member to our family! My brother, my two sisters, and I had worked for weeks to convince Mom that we were responsible enough to have a new puppy. Many days after school I had visited the library and researched puppy training, the proper feeding of a puppy, how to socialize a new puppy, and even the meanings of names one might choose for a puppy. All of us had selected certain jobs that would need to be performed if we were lucky enough to convince Mom to get a puppy. In order to prove to Mom that she would not be the only person taking care of our new family member, we had divided the jobs among us and created a chart for the first month. Finally, after several weeks of cajoling and wheedling, all our hard work and extra effort had been successful. Mom gave in to our pleas and agreed to let us adopt a puppy!

Now the real work would begin. We decided to visit the Humane Society in order to select just the right puppy to join our family. Of course, once we saw all the puppies and dogs available, none of us could decide on only one. Each little face had its own special charm. Who could resist those big brown eyes? All the puppies were so thrilled we were visiting them, but each was unaware that just one would be leaving with us. They jumped, they yipped, they wagged their tails as if each had a motor attached. They joyfully licked every bare inch of skin we had. How would we ever decide?

As we strolled through the aisles of kennels, I noticed one little bundle of fur. He sat off to the side of the temporary home he shared with three other rambunctious puppies. He quietly watched as his unruly housemates tried to be the most outgoing, the cutest, and the perfect pet for us by showing their enthusiasm. As I walked closer to his corner, he peered at me and smiled a crooked puppy grin. His tail wagged his entire body. He tentatively jumped up to greet me with a playful lap of his tongue and I noticed his lopsided ears. One ear stood up just a little straighter than the other, giving the impression he was listening quite closely to the words I was saying.

“Hi there, little buddy. What do you think?” I kind of cooed to him. He seemed to know it didn’t matter that he was the smallest and the most reserved of the boisterous group of puppies occupying the kennel. I motioned for my siblings to join me at the corner and introduced them to “Buddy.”

“This is him, this is Buddy! He needs us, I can tell,” I explained to my brother and sisters.

“I don’t know, he is so tiny and kind of funny looking,” my youngest sister observed.

“He has character,” I explained, feeling rather defensive of Buddy. He was not funny looking; he was unique! “Look in his eyes. He knows what you are saying and his feelings are hurt!”

My sister looked at the little bundle of fur with the big eyes and the uneven ears. She reached out her hand, and Buddy gave her a lick. "I'm sorry, Buddy, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings," she said. She looked as if she might cry. "You're right! Buddy has character."

Mom joined our little group and introduced herself to our new friend. "Okay, Buddy, I guess you're it! Do you want to come home with us?"

As I watched the little dog's reaction to her words, I could tell he understood. He again cocked his head to one side and flashed us his crooked puppy smile as if to say he knew he was part of the family.