



Grades 5-8; Ages 9-13

Teacher's Guide: Black Women Who Dared  
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# I DARE YOU TO DO SOMETHING GREAT...

I hope you will join us in exploring and experiencing the lives of the brave women who are recognized in the book *Black Women Who Dared*. Featured are members of the Coloured Women's Club, musician Jackie Shane, pioneer Sylvia Estes Stark, businesswoman Rosa Pryor, elder and activist Sherona Hall, The Black Cross Nurses, community developer Mary Miles Bibb, freedom fighter Chloe Cooley, and educator and a founding member of *Blockorama*, Jamea Zuberi.

These Black women fought injustices daily as they faced slavery, racism, classism, homophobia, xenophobia, and sexism. Collectively, they showed courage and leadership. Their work made Canada a better country as they improved the quality of life for all Canadians. Thanks go to Naomi M. Moyer for daring to illustrate and write this timely picture book and to all who read the book and want more. What do you dare to do to help others? I encourage you to think about this as you enjoy the following activities.

In the spirit of community,  
Itah Sadu

With thanks to the mentees who helped me write this guide:  
Asha Osman, Precious Semella, Andrea Alves, Sojourner San Vicente.

## Note to the Teacher

This teaching guide works with *Black Women Who Dared* and serves as an excellent introduction to Black History Month. It is important to note that the book's content and the following activities are not only applicable to Black History Month, but can be used throughout the year.

With a focus on Canadian *sheroes*, these resources work together to introduce students to trailblazing women of the Black/African-Canadian diaspora while practising skills in geography, social studies, language arts, and history to name a few. The exercises in this teaching tool also work well to bridge February into March as Black History Month formally concludes and as International Women's day approaches.

*Black Women Who Dared* is designed for readers aged 9+ with a variety of reading levels. Please look through the book's chapters and adapt the following activities to suit your students' learning and awareness.

## Day 1: Introduction

### Goals:

- To record students' thoughts on their definition of leadership, leadership qualities, and the character traits that they believe will support them to be leaders
- To practise SMART goal setting
- To enhance students' confidence in becoming leaders in their various communities

### Activities:

#### Part 1:

After reading page 3 of *Black Women Who Dared*:

- Have students personalize a piece of writing paper and an envelope with drawings, pictures, cut-outs, words, and symbols that signify leadership to them.
- On the writing paper, write the following goals:
  - “I dare to \_\_\_\_\_ because this will make my school a better place.”
  - “I dare to \_\_\_\_\_ because this will make my community a better place.”
  - “I dare to \_\_\_\_\_ because this will make the world a better place.”
- Introduce students to SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-based) goal setting.
- Instruct them to fill in their own blanks and describe how they will work towards their goals.
- Have each student place their piece of writing paper in their envelope and store it in a safe place in the classroom.
- Periodically over the coming months, ask students to revisit their written statements and write a reflection on how they have worked toward achieving their goals. What has been the impact on others? Has their definition of leadership changed?

## Part 2:

- Divide the class in half.
- One half will make a list of the women in their families who they see as leaders and the other half will make a list of outstanding Black Canadian Women.
- Prompt students with the following questions: What is leadership? What makes these women leaders? What does leadership look like? What makes these women outstanding? What particular challenges might these individuals have faced as Black women in leadership roles?
- Come together as a class to share, discuss, and identify any commonalities in character traits between family members and recognized Black Canadian women.
- Create a leadership board decorated with words, symbols, and drawings that the students associate with leadership. Also include pictures of Black Canadian women who the students identify as leaders and find inspiring.
- Display your leadership board on the class wall as inspiration throughout the year.

**Themes:** social studies, leadership, Black Canadian achievement, goal setting



## Day 2: The Coloured Women's Club

### Goals:

- To introduce students to Black community organizations that make a positive impact on community
- To have students reflect on their community's organizations
- To have students reflect on the impact of social groups and working together

### Activities:

#### Part 1:

- After reading the section on The Coloured Women's Club as a class, have a discussion prompted by the following guiding questions:
  - What do you think drove the need for the Coloured Women's Club?
  - What might have been some of the challenges that organizers faced when establishing the Coloured Women's Club?
  - What are some advantages and disadvantages to Clubs of any kind?
  - What was innovative about this club?
  - Why do you think it was successful in influencing many professionals in what is now known today as social work?
  - What are some school and community clubs that you are aware of? What impact do they make?
  - How do you think clubs may have changed in the last hundred years?
  - How might social media and advancements in technology change how people gather and interact? How might this change with further technological advancements in the future?

#### Part 2:

- Take students to a computer lab and group them into pairs.
- Give each pair a Black community organization to research from the list below:
  - Black Business and Professionals Association (BBPA)

- A Different Booklist Cultural Centre–*The People’s Residence* (Black cultural heritage, education, and community hub)
- Women’s Health in Women’s Hands (health centre)
- African Canadian Heritage Association (youth programming and education on African-Canadian heritage)
- Festival Management Committee (organizes the Toronto Summer Caribbean Carnival)
- P.A.C.E Canada (fundraising group for basic schools across Jamaica and Canada)
- Ontario Black History Society
- Tropicana Community Services Organization (community and social services and programming)
- Dance Immersion (African and Caribbean dance education and classes)
- Jamaican Canadian Association (community institution for Caribbean and African-Canadian culture, events, and social services)
- Reaching Intelligent Souls Everywhere (RISE Edutainment) (open mic night organized by Black youth in Toronto)
- Black Physicians’ Association of Ontario (BPAO)
- UJIMA house (organization for potential and new fathers)
- TAIBU (community health centre)
- Instruct students to take notes on the above organizations. Record responses to the following if available:
  - When was the organization founded? By whom?
  - What is the purpose and intention of the organization?
  - Where is the organization located?
  - How does or how do you believe the organization impacts community?
  - How can people get involved in the organization?
  - Are you aware of any organizations in your own communities that offer various services or support?
- Ask students to prepare a summary with the findings from their research for presentation to the class. This may also include pictures and/or photos.

**Themes:** community development, civic and social engagement, research, self-directed learning, science

## Day 3: Jackie Shane—Musician and Artist

### Goals:

- To gain an understanding of the role that music and the arts play in advocacy in our society—How does art reflect the mood of a society?
- To deepen students’ understanding of intersectionality
- To deepen students’ understanding of non-violent approaches to confront discrimination

### Activities:

Begin by reading the section on Jackie Shane in the book as a class.

- Allow students to reflect on the written piece in the book and prompt questions about what it meant to have been transgender in the 1950s and 60s and if/how this has changed in today’s society.
- Divide the class into 4 groups wherein they will work on one of the following activities and present their work to the class afterward:

#### Group 1:

- Provide students with a map of Canada and the United States.
- Instruct students to mark the regions/towns where Jackie is referenced having lived and the dates that correspond to these locations.
- Through either Internet access or pre-printed information, direct students to research transgender issues in Nashville/Tennessee, Montreal, and Toronto in the 1940s–1960s.
- Prompt students to think about factors that may influence migration. (I.e., do people always have a choice to migrate? How might job opportunities, family dynamics, social conflict, natural disasters, epidemics, etc. influence migration?)



- Instruct students to collate their findings into a summary and prepare their map for presentation to the class.

Group 2:

- Provide students with the lyrics and recording of Jackie Shane’s hit, “Any Other Way”.
- Instruct students to think about the lyrics and their meaning. How might being Black and transgender influence Jackie’s work—her songs and lyrics?
- Ask each student in the group to draw items that represent who they are. For example, a button with wording in a specific language could be drawn on top of a clothing garment from a specific country/cultural group. Or, the colours that they choose may be the colours of the flags that represent their ethnic backgrounds. Students may or may not choose to include a sketch of themselves in their drawings.

Group 3:

- Play a song that reflects what is happening in today’s society; for example, you could play the song “Now” by Miguel. Have the students decode the lyrics.
- Have students identify something that is happening in today’s society and create a chorus that reflects their emotions, thoughts, and opinions (i.e. the placement of Viola Desmond on the Canadian ten-dollar bill).
- The students will present the decoded lyrics of the song that they are provided with as well as the chorus they created themselves.

Group 4:

- Create a print-out of the final sentences in the second paragraph on Jackie Shane: “Jackie’s gender confused a lot of people who called her a ‘cross-dresser’ and made fun of her. With grace Jackie laughed in the face of discrimination and continued to make a living doing what she loved.”
- Ask students to discuss the following: What strategies and tactics did Jackie use to confront discrimination? Are Jackie’s approaches violent or non-violent? What other figures, past and present, use peaceful strategies to overcome discrimination? What are some examples of non-violent liberation strategies?
- Provide students with a large piece of chart paper to create a toolkit of

strategies, ideas, and items that are important for non-violent movements against oppression.

Have the class come together and each group present their discussions and creations.

**Themes:** arts, language arts, media, geography

## Day 4: Sylvia Estes Stark—Pioneer

### Goal:

- To explore and record the skills of Sylvia Estes Stark.

### Activities:

Begin by reading the section on Sylvia Estes Stark in the book.

#### Activity 1:

- Mention key points of Stark’s story: born in 1839; in 1858 she arrived with her family in British Columbia. She lived to be 106 years of age. During her long life she served her family and community as a farmer, nurse, and midwife.
- Have students read the section in the book on the Black Cross Nurses—an international group created in 1920 by Henrietta Vinton Davis of Philadelphia—for background information on Black women who were nurses and midwives.
- Brainstorm with students what farming, nursing, and midwifery have in common (biology, chemistry, births, chemicals, water, nature, history, people, science, tools).
- Divide students into groups of four to work on a skit. They will write a script related to the history of farming, nursing, or midwifery in a province of their choice.
- Students should dive deep into these roles. The drama presentation will allow them to get together outside of school if they choose to, to research their roles, and to create costumes.
- The students can then present their skits, which should be about 10 minutes in length, in front of the class.

## Activity 2:

- After reading the section on Sylvia Estes Stark, discuss the migration and immigration that her family underwent. (Where were they from? Where did they travel to? How many times did they move? Why did they migrate?)
- Ask students to select an adult of their choice in their family, community, school, etc.
  - Students will interview the adult of their choice and ask them the following questions related to immigration and migration. They should consider historical, political, social, and environmental contexts.
    - ◇ Where was the individual born?
    - ◇ What places have they lived in?
    - ◇ What conditions caused them to migrate? Why did they move?
  - If the adult was raised and continues to live where they were born, why did they choose to stay? Was it a choice that they made? How do they feel about the location where they live?
- Students should be given a due date to conduct their interviews by.
- After the due date conduct the following in-class activity:
  - Use either a large world map or create a collage of printed world maps on letter paper and display them all together (one for each student).
  - Ask students to indicate with either a thumbtack, marker, etc. the places that their interviewee lived.
  - Each student will present to the class the findings from their interviews and provide the migration stories of their interviewees using the maps as visuals.

**Themes:** science, math, technology, drama, geography, migration, history, social studies

## Day 5 The Hour-a-Day Study Club

### Goals:

- Peer-to-peer learning
- Skills development
- To have students reflect on the impact of social groups and working together
- To have students appreciate the power and pleasure of reading

### Activities:

Begin by reading the section on The Hour-a-Day Study Club in the book.

#### Part 1: Class discussion and brainstorming

- Discuss the following as a class:
  - Why was The Hour-a-Day Study Club helpful to the Black Community in 1935?
  - Can you think of what people do today when they need help with a subject or want to learn about an interest or a new skill? (Go online, go to a library, take a night school course, go to a community centre, etc.)
  - Can you think of a community or group of people that might benefit from an Hour-a-Day Study Club? (Maybe refugees and immigrants who are learning a new language; individuals who would like to improve a specific skill—literacy, computer, artistic skills, etc.; groups of students with a common learning goal.)

#### Part 2: Each one teach one

- The Hour-a-Day Study Club would gather to share information and impart knowledge to each other. They were a hub of knowledge exchange!
- Have each student think about a skill they possess that enables them to perform a task. (E.g. gardening, riding a bike, cooking a particular dish, playing an instrument, public speaking, typing, etc.)

- Direct each student to write a procedure with a maximum of ten steps/directions. These steps should instruct on how to achieve the task that they are skilled in.
- With three rotations, group students into pairs and allow them to instruct one another on their skill.
- After the three rotations, debrief together as a class on what was learned and shared:
  - What did you learn from your peers?
  - How did you find the process of writing the steps to accomplish your skill?
  - How was the process of describing these steps to your peers?
  - Did it become easier to describe your steps with each rotation?
- Display each student's work around the class so that it can be viewed by everyone.

You may also want to encourage the students to:

- Form study clubs of their own when preparing for a test or when a particular learning challenge arises.
- Establish a schedule wherein students have a reading hour (such as once a week) where they can do homework and read for leisure.

**Themes:** language arts, peer-to-peer learning, social services, procedural writing



## Day 6: Rosa Pryor—Business Entrepreneur

### Goals:

- To allow students to explore the connections between culture, economics, and food
- To allow students to express their creativity while drawing from the past
- To engage students in thinking of how business, people, and culture change over time

### Activities:

Begin by reading the section on Rosa Pryor in the book.

Rosa Pryor's Chicken Inn was the first business in Vancouver owned by a Black woman, and it was famous for its fried chicken. Many people enjoyed the comforts that Chicken Inn provided: food, entertainment, community and a welcoming space. Pryor's Chicken Inn is an excellent example of co-operative economics as her business employed many Black women in her community and she worked with the neighbouring Chinese community who supplied chicken to her restaurant. Pryor teaches us the successes that result from determination, dedication, teamwork, and community building. The activities below are intended to honour this legacy of Rosa Pryor's Chicken Inn.

- The class will work together to design a space inspired by Rosa Pryor's Chicken Inn. On a selected date, the class will come together and transform their classroom, drawing on the summary of Rosa Pryor. Divide the class into 4 groups and instruct the following:
  - Group 1: Ambiance
    - Have students re-read the book's section on Rosa Pryor and direct them to identify how the ambiance of Chicken Inn is described.
    - Have students brainstorm ways that the classroom can be designed like Chicken Inn (arrangement of tables and chairs; area for musicians, a jukebox (or radio/ ipod/mp3 player), and dancing; lighting; restaurant signage; and décor).

- Students will work together on a plan to transform the classroom in the ways that they have identified.
  - A short, written piece should be prepared describing why they chose the particular decor and design.
- Group 2: Music
    - Have students re-read the book's section on Rosa Pryor and direct them to identify what elements related to music are described.
    - Ask students to research the following:
      - ◇ What genres of music emerge from Black communities in North America?
      - ◇ Which Black Canadian and American musicians were popular from 1910 to 1950.
      - ◇ What songs may have been played at Pryor's Chicken Inn.
    - Instruct students to create a playlist with songs from 1910–1950 as well as modern songs that they think could be played if Chicken Inn still existed today.
    - Review the students' playlist and have it accessible to play on the selected date of the event.
  - Group 3: Food
    - Have students re-read the book's section on Rosa Pryor and direct them to think about what types of food may have been served with Pryor's fried chicken.
    - Ask students to create a menu inspired by Chicken Inn.
    - Prompt students to reflect on:
      - ◇ How might the menu have changed if Chicken Inn were still open today?
      - ◇ How might the menu have been displayed? Chalkboard? Paper? Posters?
    - Also:
      - ◇ What makes a recipe great?
      - ◇ What is the role of culture in foods? What foods from other countries do you enjoy? Do you have traditional dishes that are cooked at home?

- ◇ How do people determine their meals?
- ◇ What is the role of economics in what we eat?
- Have students think of a few snacks and beverages that are popular today that may have been sold at Chicken Inn. These items can be purchased for sharing with the class on the day of the full class discussion.
- Group 4: Black Women in Business
  - Instruct students to discuss and research other Black women in Canadian business history. Visit the school library and use computers to research and find resources (see, too, the Suggested Reading/Media List at the end of this guide).
  - Have each student in the group create a poster (including a picture and a few sentences) that feature a Black Canadian business woman of their choice.
  - On the day of the full class discussion, have students present their posters and display them around the room as wall décor in the class version of Chicken Inn.

**Themes:** research, group work, presentation techniques, history, design, critical thinking

## Day 7: Sherona Hall—Policy-maker

### Goal:

- To gain an understanding of how policy is shaped, created, and implemented in society

### Activities:

Begin by reading the section on Sherona Hall in the book.

- As a class, discuss: What is policy? Who writes policy? Where it is found? What types of jobs and work does it involve?
- Discuss the different kinds of policies a classroom would have compared to a restaurant, government, organization, etc.
- Have students mention policies that they see in the school, their classroom, and in other places in their environment. For example, policies that address health and safety, conduct, dress code, diversity, accessibility, etc.
- If relevant, perhaps take students on a walking tour of their school and/or community to identify policies, rules, and guidelines that are displayed. Have students record what they find for a class discussion.

### Part 1:

- Sherona Hall advocated on behalf of immigrant women.
- The activity is for students to research articles and policies affecting immigrants, in particular immigrants who are women.
- Ask students to take note of how policies are formatted, the tone that they carry, and common language used.

**Part 2:**

- Have students create and write out some new policies for their classrooms.
- Remind students of the tone, language, and format typically found in policy-making.
- Place the students' policies around the classroom so that everyone can see them.
- Invite the superintendent, principal, and vice-principal, caretaker, office administrator, and/or anyone else who works with policies at the school to talk about how policies are created, shaped, and implemented. Perhaps the students can also present their policies to these guests.

**Themes:** language arts, social studies, policy, government, immigration, design

## Day 8: Mary Miles Bibb—Community Builder

### Goal:

- To show the capacity of Black women at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in defining and shaping Black communities in Canada

### Activity:

Begin by reading the section on Mary Miles Bibb in the book.

- Discuss with the class various Black communities in Canada— for example, the Black community on Bathurst Street in Toronto (“Blackhurst”), Little Burgundy in Montreal, Hogan’s Alley in Vancouver, Africville in Nova Scotia, as well as communities in Southwestern Ontario, Cape Breton, and Manitoba.
- Students will be creating a Black community timeline from the 1800s to the present.
- Divide the students into three groups; one group will focus on maps, another group will focus on quotes, and the third group will focus on archival footage/pictures.
- Students will be given time in the library to conduct research using books and the Internet.
- At the end of this activity, the timeline will be posted on the wall, and each group will tape their findings in the correct spots.
- The class will then come together and present their findings to their peers and teacher.

**Themes:** technology, social studies, geography, history, migration



## Day 9: Chloe Cooley—Freedom Fighter

### Goals:

- To explore the power of poetry and spoken word in advocacy and social justice
- To learn about acts of resistance to oppression that Black women displayed

### Activity:

Begin by reading the section on Chloe Cooley in the book.

- Introduce Chloe Cooley and share her biography with students. Also introduce students to Marie-Joseph Angélique, another enslaved woman who is part of Canadian history, and have the students compare their lives. Students can compare these women’s lives with the lives of Harriet Tubman, Viola Desmond, Rosemary Brown, and other Black women who also protested injustices.
  - Students will create a praise poem in honour of these women.
  - The classroom will be set up like a poetry café, with a microphone and comfortable seating—such as pillows strewn around the room.
  - Students will read their poems aloud to the class and perhaps use the PA system to share them with the rest of the school.
  - The teacher will compile the poems to create a book as an additional resource for the class library.

**Themes:** language arts, social studies, history, arts, music, design

## Day 10: Jamea Zuberi—Founding member of Blockorama

### Goals:

- Special event planning
- To understand how events can be used for social change
- To understand how spaces can be transformed and curated
- To understand the importance of celebration and celebratory events within community

Students conceive of and deliver a special event, while animating an area of their classroom, school, or schoolyard. Community members and parents can be invited to be part of the project. This is a great project for June, when the weather is warmer and Pride month is celebrated.

Begin by reading the section on Blockorama and Jamea Zuberi in the book.

### Activities:

#### Part 1:

- Educator and activist Jamea Zuberi taught people that event planning isn't only about having fun, it's a way to make a political statement and to assert your rights.
- Students can share their favourite festival or well-known festivals (e.g., festivals that happen in their own city or country such as Carnival in Quebec City and the Caribbean, Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Lunar New Year in China, Terry Fox Day, the World Cup, Pride Day, etc.).
- Prompt students to think about how these festivals and celebrations are not only fun but may make a social statement. Are festivals a good way to engage society in critical thinking and social change? How do the elements of “fun” and “togetherness” support social change?

## Part 2:

- Invite the class to create a list of things that they would like to see celebrated in their school.
- Students may also want to make creations or bring in items for display (for example perhaps a museum could be created with items that reflect the students' interests).
- Engage the class in discussion and planning of a Carnival that they could host for their school.
- Brainstorm as a group the planning process:
  - When and where will the Carnival take place? Think about your environment (outside, the school yard, or the neighbourhood) and how it can be transformed.
  - How will attendees be engaged? What is the activity's intended impact?
  - What are the learning and experiential takeaways?
  - What other factors need to be considered in the planning process?
  - Is a budget necessary to execute the event? Can the class hold a fundraiser (such as a bake sale) to generate funds?

**Themes:** social studies, media, language arts, math, planning

## Suggested Reading and Media List

- *Black Women Who Dared*, Naomi M. Moyer, Second Story Press, 2018.
- *100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women*, Dauna E. Jones-Simmonds, Jean Augustine, Denise O'Neil Green, CreateSpace, 2016 & 2018.
- *Africville*, Shauntay Grant, Greenwood Books, 2018.
- *The Kids Book of Black Canadian History*, Rosemary Sadlier, Kids Can Press, 2010.
- *Earth Magic*, Dionne Brand, Kids Can Press, 2006.
- *Viola Desmond Won't Be Budged*, Jody Nyasha Warner and Richard Rudnicki, Greenwood, 2010.
- *The Story of Albert Jackson*, A Different Publisher, 2017.
- NFB Black Women's films, *Sisters in the Struggle*, Dionne Brand & Ginny Stikeman, 1991.
- *Politics of Black Women's Hair*, Althea Prince, Insomniac Press, 2009.
- Musician and activist Faith Nolan, [www.faithnolan.org](http://www.faithnolan.org).
- Films by Black women filmmakers: Alison Duke, Frances-Anne Solomon, Jennifer Hodge.
- *Pancakes to Parathas: Breakfast Around the World*, Alice B. McGinty, little bee books, 2019.