



K-2 | Lesson 12



LESSON 12

TEXT TITLE

***Madam C.J. Walker, The Beauty Boss* by Janel Rodriguez (p. 12-15, 18-19)**



TEXT MAIN IDEA

Madam C.J. Walker is known as being America's first self-made female millionaire. She was born Sarah Breedlove in 1867 and experienced many challenges as a child and teenager. As a young woman, after she began losing her hair, she began using hair care products that helped her hair grow back. She was motivated to launch her own hair care empire under the name of Madam C.J. Walker, which not only made her a millionaire, but also employed thousands of Black women who sold her products. Madam C.J. Walker became a philanthropist and an activist who motivated her saleswomen (or "agents") to contribute to charities and social justice causes. Toward the end of her life, she built a mansion and died in 1919. The author's point of view of Walker is that she was a well-respected, admired businesswoman who had ambition and cared for others.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

The unit essential questions developed through this lesson are...

- What is entrepreneurship?
- What motivated Black entrepreneurs in Indiana in the 1900s?

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

By engaging in this lesson, students will know/understand that...

- Sarah Breedlove began selling another businesswoman's hair care products and then developed her own.
- She married a man named Charles Joseph (C.J.) Walker and started selling her invention under the name "Madam C.J. Walker", because "Madam" sounded French and fashionable.
- Her products met the needs of Black women who did not have adequate hair care options and also provided well-paying jobs to Black women.

LITERACY OBJECTIVE

By engaging in this lesson, students will strengthen their ability as a reader to...

- Use all pictures, sidebars, and captions to locate important background and additional supporting information.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

- Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently. (RI.2.5)

LAUNCH (5 MINUTES)

Yesterday we read about Sarah Breedlove. Today we're going to find out how she came to be known as Madam C.J. Walker and we'll learn about what motivated her to become an entrepreneur. During today's lesson, we'll continue to discuss our essential questions: What is entrepreneurship? What motivated Black entrepreneurs in Indiana in the 1900s?

Using the clues from yesterday's reading and the cover, does anyone have an idea of what business Madam C.J. Walker created?

Listen to partnerships as students discuss; then select 1–2 students to share their ideas, such as:

- It's possible that Madam C.J. Walker created a hair care or beauty business.

The author of this book, Janel Rodriguez, packed so much information onto each page using captions and sidebars. When we are reading today, we'll use the text boxes on the page to gather important background information about Madam C.J. Walker.

READ ALOUD/ENGAGE (15 MINUTES)

Read page 12 (everything except "Help").

I see this yellow box with additional information. It's our first sidebar. Sidebars give us background or additional information that the author thinks is important for the reader to know.

Read sidebar "Help" on page 12.

Why do you think the author included this sidebar? Give students 1-2 minutes to discuss and call on 1-2 students to share response. Possible answer: To let us know that Sarah Breedlove thought it was important to help others.

I can understand why the author made a decision to put that in the sidebar because it does seem like important information for us to know, but it doesn't quite fit into the main

idea of the rest of the information on the page. So, the author put the information in a box so we can read it separately from the other paragraphs. Otherwise it would be disorganized and confusing!

Read pages 13 and 14.

There are a lot of text boxes on this page to help us to understand the image, which is a picture of a newspaper ad. One of the captions explains to us why Sarah Breedlove changed her name. Her husband's name was C.J. Walker and then she added Madam to make it sound fashionable and fancy!

Read page 15.

The text says, "soon orders started pouring in". Wow! Madam C.J. Walker has not only invented something, but she's also started a successful business that is making money. How did Madam C.J. Walker help her business make money, therefore making her a successful entrepreneur?

Listen to partnerships as students discuss; then select 1–2 students to share their ideas, such as:

- She marketed her products well "putting it properly before the public" (see quote bubble on page 14) by putting ads in the newspaper with her husband's help.
- She changed her name to make the products seem fancy and desirable.
- She did free demonstrations to show potential customers how her products work.
- She put her picture on her products and in ads so people would recognize her and buy the product.

Madam C.J. Walker was really a savvy entrepreneur! Entrepreneurs have to be very good at marketing themselves.

Skip pages 16-17, read pages 18-19.

DISCUSS (10 MINUTES)

Students should discuss in small groups before the whole group discussion. Supporting text information for the question can be found on p. 19. Consider projecting that page for all students to be able to see during the discussion.

What motivated Madam C.J. Walker to start and run a successful hair care business?

Example Student Responses:

Since the available hair care products on the market were for white women, Black women were left no choice but to make their own products. Madam C.J. Walker recognized that Black women needed specially designed products for their hair. Since her product got results, she was able to run a successful hair care business.

Because of unfair laws and discrimination, most Black women only had access to low-paying jobs like housekeeping and farm jobs. Madam C.J. Walker was determined to create opportunities for Black women to work well-paying jobs so she hired “agents” who were paid very well. This helped Madam C.J. Walker run a successful business and helped the Black community.

Supporting Questions:

1. How did Madam C.J. Walker’s business help others?
2. Businesses are only successful if they are filling a need and if there is demand for the product. Why was there demand for Madam C.J. Walker’s products?

WRITE (10 MINUTES)

Students should write 1-3 sentences to answer the following question:

What motivated Madam C.J. Walker to start and run a successful hair care business?

I noticed that many of you wrote important information that we learned by reading all of the captions and sidebars in the text. Great job using all of the text features to gather important information.



EXIT TICKET

- 1. The heading for pages 14-15 is “A Dream Come True”. What is the main idea of that section of text?**
 - a. Sarah Breedlove created a product that worked and she was making money.
 - b. Sarah Breedlove’s dreams of getting married came true.
 - c. Sarah Breedlove was able to change her name to a more dignified name, Madam C.J. Walker.
 - d. Madam C.J. Walker was finally famous.

- 2. According to page 14, Sarah Breedlove included the title “Madam” in her new name because:**
 - b. She was now a married woman.
 - c. She was getting older.
 - d. She believed she deserved respect.
 - e. She liked that it sounded French.

- 3. In the section “Independence for Women” (page 19), the author included a picture of a check from Madam C.J. Walker to one of her employees. What does the check help the reader understand about Madam C.J. Walker and her business?**
