



A CURRICULUM GUIDE TO

The Only Woman in the Photo

FRANCES PERKINS & HER NEW DEAL FOR AMERICA

BY KATHLEEN KRULL, ILLUSTRATED BY ALEXANDRA BYE

HC: 9781481491518 • EB: 9781481491525 • Ages 4–8

ABOUT THE BOOK

Although Frances Perkins was a shy, quiet child, she grew up to become a bold advocate for the welfare of Americans, including the needy, the disabled, laborers, and seniors. She served as secretary of labor for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was the force behind creating the Social Security Act of 1935. This act helped those in need and fostered a policy of caring and concern for the needs of American citizens.

How was she able to accomplish this? Frances listened to her grandmother's wise advice: "Take the high ground if someone insults you" and "When someone opens a door to you, go forward."

Kathleen Krull's informative narrative explains how Frances Perkins boldly confronted what she considered to be the "unnecessary hazards to life," and how she created a safety net for all Americans. Alexandra Bye's illustrations show how Frances Perkins became a force for social justice, confronting unsafe conditions in the workplace and acknowledging the need for fire safety, minimum wages, and more. Frances Perkins's quotes are presented using color, shape, and style to emphasize their meaning. Words and illustrations work together to provide a memorable portrait of a strong, successful, and caring woman.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Key Ideas and Details

The discussion questions and activities below draw on Common Core State Standards for reading informational text (RI) that ask children to ask and answer questions about key details in a text (RI.K.1-RI.3.1), identify the main topic and key details that support it (RI.K.2-RI.3.2), and describe the relationship between a series of events, concepts, or ideas (RI.K.3-RI.3.3).

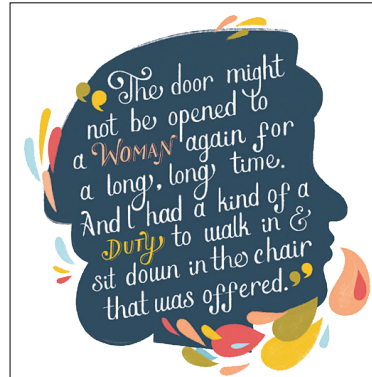
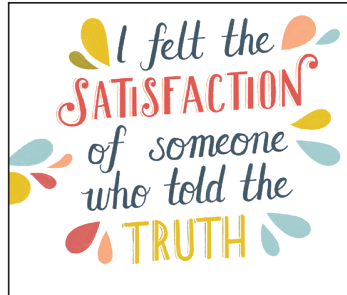
1. What advice did Frances Perkins's grandmother give her? Do you agree with her grandmother's views? How do you know whether this advice was beneficial for Frances?
2. Name a few things Frances did to help others throughout her career. Discuss how she helped the following people:
 - Children who were hungry or in pain
 - People who couldn't pay their rents
 - Women fighting for the right to vote
 - Employees in unsafe workplaces
3. Why did Frances decide to join FDR's cabinet as secretary of labor?
4. How did other members of the cabinet treat her? How did she treat them?
5. What did the author mean when she called Frances's Social Security Act a "most far-reaching dream"? Why did Frances consider it a turning point?
6. The author provides details to support statements. (See the reproducible "Key Ideas and Details Activity" at the end of this guide.)
7. Frances was a strong woman who accomplished a great deal during a critical time. Identify some of Frances's qualities that helped her through obstacles and challenges as she impacted others throughout her career. How might you apply some of Frances's attitude and beliefs to situations in your own life? What advice do you think she would give you?

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

To learn about craft and structure, the CCSS asks us to help students learn and understand vocabulary words and phrases (RI.K.4-RI.3.4), think about the features of nonfiction text (RI.K.5-RI.3.5), and assess the author's point of view (RI.K.6-RI.3.6). The questions and activities below emphasize these understandings.

1. **Visual Literacy:** The illustrator presents quotes from Frances Perkins using a variety of colors, font sizes, and word placement in a way that reveals their meanings. Examine the following quotes and share how you think the illustrator uses these features to reveal meaning:

- Color
- Size of the words
- Word placement
- Font, or style of the letters



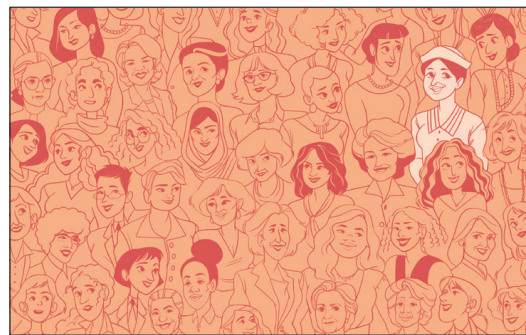
2. **Interesting Sentences:** Sometimes authors use words in interesting and surprising ways. (See the reproducible “Looking Closely at Interesting Sentences Activity” at the end of this guide.) Discuss how the author does this. Pay attention to the underlined words.
3. **Discussing Front and Back Endpapers:** Endpapers are the illustrated papers at the beginning and end of a book. They are found inside the front and back covers. As you look at the front endpapers, discuss the following questions:
- What do the front endpapers reveal about the male politicians' attitudes toward Frances Perkins?
 - What do these endpapers reveal about Frances Perkins's attitude toward them?
 - How are colors used to show meaning?

As you look at the back endpapers, discuss the following questions:

- What do these endpapers reveal about women's attitudes toward Frances Perkins?
- Do you recognize any of these women? Can you find Ruth Bader Ginsburg or Hillary Clinton?
- How is color used to show meaning?



FRONT ENDPAPERS



BACK ENDPAPERS

4. **Author's Note:** An author's note titled “The Power of Frances Perkins” provides additional information. What additional information is included about the following topics:

- How other women influenced Frances Perkins
- How FDR helped Frances Perkins
- How the time was right for change
- How Frances Perkins's character and hard work were powerful
- How Frances Perkins's voice and her ability to speak out were powerful

5. **Author’s and Illustrator’s Points of View:** What do the author and illustrator think about Frances Perkins? What makes you think so? Give examples from the book. Do you agree with their points of view? Explain your answers.

WRITING

CCSS emphasizes writing informative and explanatory text in the early grades. The writing activities below provide experience writing to give an opinion (W.K.1-W.3.1), to inform (W.K.2-W.3.2), and to explain a sequence of events (W.K.3-W.3.3).

- Use words, quotes, and illustrations to explain one of Frances Perkins’s accomplishments listed below:
 - Speaking out about women’s right to vote
 - Gathering information about unsafe workplaces
 - Investigating fire safety
 - Helping to establish Social Security
- Frances’s grandmother gave her this advice: “Take the high ground if someone insults you” and “When someone opens a door to you, go forward.” Do you think these were good pieces of advice? Write an essay explaining your answer.
- Select an illustration in the book and bring it to life by writing the conversation the people in the scene are having. Here are some examples that you could write about:



• Write the conversation Frances had with the workers when she visited a bakery to gather information about unsafe workplaces.



• Write the conversation that Frances had with FDR when she explained her ideas about helping vulnerable Americans.



• Write the conversation that occurred during Frances’s first cabinet meeting, when she was nervous, and the men were acting like schoolboys and passing silly notes about her.

EXTENDING THE EXPERIENCE OF READING THE BOOK

1. The author, Kathleen Krull, refers to the “blizzard of big moves, an alphabet soup of agencies” that Frances Perkins helped bring to life as part of the New Deal. They were called alphabet soup agencies because they were referred to by their initials.

Four of the most well known agencies are:

	Name of Agency	What the Agency Did
AAA		
CCC		
NRA		
TVA		

2. Learn more about Frances Perkins by visiting the Frances Perkins Center’s website at FrancesPerkinsCenter.org.

3. Read other books written by Kathleen Krull:

- *Hillary Rodham Clinton: Dreams Taking Flight*, illustrated by Amy June Bates
- *No Truth Without Ruth: The Life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*, illustrated by Nancy Zhang
- *Starstruck: The Cosmic Journey of Neil DeGrasse Tyson*, illustrated by Frank Morrison
- *A Woman for President: The Story of Victoria Woodhull*, illustrated by Jane Dyer
- *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*, illustrated by Yuyi Morales
- *Sonia Sotomayor: I'll Be the Judge of That!*, illustrated by Angela Dominguez
- *Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought)*, illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt
- *They Saw the Future: Oracles, Psychics, Scientists, Great Thinkers, and Pretty Good Guessers*, illustrated by Kyrsten Brooker
- *The Brothers Kennedy: John, Robert, Edward*, illustrated by Amy June Bates

4. Read other books illustrated by Alexandra Bye:

- *A Race Around the World: The True Story of Nellie Bly & Elizabeth Bisland*, written by Caroline Starr Rose
- *Leading the Way: Women in Power*, written by Senator Janet Howell and Theresa Howell and illustrated by Kylie Akia and Alexandra Bye

5. Learn more about Kathleen Krull and her books by visiting her website at KathleenKrull.com. Also, check out her section of teachers guides, tips for using biographies in the classroom, and tips for students in writing biographies.

6. Learn more about Alexandra Bye and her illustrations by visiting her website at AlexandraBye.com. Check out her available books, as well as her upcoming projects. Read her blog to find out more about what she's currently working on.





Key Ideas and Details Activity

The author provides details to support her statements. The chart below lists several key ideas with space for you to add the details that support them. The first one has been done for you.

KEY IDEAS

SUPPORTING DETAILS

<p>Little Frances Perkins was shy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She couldn't speak up when asking for a book at the library or a spool of thread at the store. • Speaking up made her uncomfortable.
<p>Frances was a watcher and a listener.</p>	
<p>A history course Frances took in college shaped her future.</p>	
<p>She realized she had to speak up and make her voice heard, even when it made her uncomfortable.</p>	
<p>Frances gathered information about unsafe workplaces.</p>	
<p>The first hundred days of her job as secretary of labor were critical.</p>	

THE ONLY WOMAN *in the* PHOTO

FRANCES PERKINS & HER NEW DEAL FOR AMERICA

BY KATHLEEN KRULL, ILLUSTRATED BY ALEXANDRA BYE | REPRODUCIBLE





Looking Closely at Interesting Sentences Activity

What makes readers pay attention to an author's writing? It could be the descriptive words and phrases, the rhythm or sound of the sentences when read aloud, or the new information presented. Examine each of the sentences below and write down what you notice in the underlined words. What makes each sentence interesting to read?

“In high school, she mastered tough classes, including Latin and Greek. She blossomed—from a whisperer to a star debater.”

What I notice: _____

“Some men would never treat her as an equal, but if she reminded them of their mothers, in her staid three-cornered hat, she seemed to have more success.”

What I notice: _____

“But her grandmother’s advice sailed into her mind, and she knew what she had to do.”

What I notice: _____

“Mostly, though, she was out of her office, initiating a blizzard of big moves, an alphabet soup of agencies.”

What I notice: _____

“Wherever she was—at steel factories, on the docks with shipyard workers in California, testifying before Congress—she was a voice for calm.”

What I notice: _____

“Hurdling one obstacle after another, boldly speaking up, she transformed the government into a force to protect people.”

What I notice: _____

THE ONLY WOMAN *in the* PHOTO
FRANCES PERKINS & HER NEW DEAL FOR AMERICA

BY KATHLEEN KRULL, ILLUSTRATED BY ALEXANDRA BYE | REPRODUCIBLE

