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INDELIBLE ANN

THE LARGER-THAN-LIFE STORY OF GOVERNOR ANN RICHARDS

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES



ABOUT THE BOOK When Texas Governor Ann Richards was a girl, she had a pretty regular life doing things that regular kids do. When she moved to San Diego, she realized that the world was bigger and more diverse than she could have imagined. Ann Richards used her public speaking superpower and ability to connect with others to break barriers and bring change to her state and across the country. Ann Richards is a part of the lineage of women in politics extending from Eleanor Roosevelt to Hillary Rodham Clinton and beyond.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When Governor Richards was a girl, she loved riding her bike, playing piano, and fishing. What hobbies do you have, and what kind of skills does each teach you?
- Governor Richards's family taught her to dream big and work hard. What is something that you have worked hard to achieve?
- How do you think young Dorothy Ann felt when she moved across the country? What happened to her view of the world when she got to San Diego?
- How did Eleanor Roosevelt inspire Dorothy Ann?
- Why did Ann get invited to go to Washington D.C. when she was in high school? What did she do there? Why was having her picture in the newspaper back home important?
- Why did everyone ask why Ann wasn't running for president when she gave her speech at the Democratic National Convention in 1988?
- What is a political appointment? Why was it important to Ann Richards that she appoint citizens who represented all kinds of Texans?
- Ann Richards was the second of only two women to ever hold the office of governor in Texas. How many women have been governor in states across the U.S.? Who was the first? Which state has had the most women serve as governor? Why have more men than women held this office?
- Governor Richards did not win her bid for reelection in 1994. Who won the race for governor of Texas in 1994? What does "peaceful transition of power" mean, and why is it important to the health of democracy?
- What does the word *indelible* mean to you?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The Great Debate

Ann Richards developed her well-known speaking prowess when she was a student in school. Allow students to brainstorm a this vs. that debate (think: dragons vs. unicorns). Practice the democratic process by voting on a debate subject and divide the class into teams to argue for each side. Explain the Lincoln-Douglas debate format, and encourage teams to work together to prepare their side of the argument. After the event is complete, discuss the importance of debate and allowing both sides of an argument to be heard.

Countless Counties

One of the ways Ann Richards led a successful campaign was by visiting counties all over the vast expanse of Texas and appealing to voters with varied needs and lifestyles. Divide your state into counties by region and assign each region to a small group. Ask the groups to identify each county's seat, population, main industry, and a fun fact. Groups can present their findings to the class.

Election Time

Like many political officeholders, Governor Richards got her start in local politics. Have students research a local election (i.e. municipal, county, school board). Have students identify each candidate's platform and invite candidates to be interviewed by students over email or otherwise. Hold a mock election in class, and have students follow the returns on election day and the inauguration process.

