

# The First American Woman Doctor

by Susan LaBella



Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman to become a medical doctor in the United States. Elizabeth was born in England more than a hundred years ago. She moved to the U.S. when she was about eleven years old.

At first, Elizabeth was a teacher. Later, she knew she wanted to study medicine.

Elizabeth applied to many medical schools in the United States, but they would not take her. These schools were only allowing men to study

medicine. Finally, Elizabeth found a school that let her in. Some men at the school did not want a woman there, however. At first, they were not kind to her.

After two years, Elizabeth graduated at the top of her class at the medical school. She and her sister opened a clinic for women and children in New York City. They gave medical care to the poor. Dr. Blackwell also opened a medical college for women. She trained women to become doctors. She also gave speeches and wrote books.

Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell had courage and strong character. She worked hard for the things she wanted to do. Her work encouraged other women to become doctors.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who was Elizabeth Blackwell?

- A. the first woman to become a medical doctor in the United States
- B. the first woman to become a medical doctor in England
- C. the first person to become a medical doctor in the United States

2. The article describes a big problem that Elizabeth Blackwell had to deal with. What was this problem?

- A. Elizabeth's family did not have enough money to send her to medical school.
- B. People did not take Elizabeth seriously after she became a doctor.
- C. Many medical schools and men did not want women to study medicine.

3. Read these sentences from the text.

"After two years, Elizabeth graduated at the top of her class at the medical school. She and her sister opened a clinic for women and children in New York City. They gave medical care to the poor. Dr. Blackwell also opened a medical college for women. She trained women to become doctors. She also gave speeches and wrote books."

What conclusion can you draw from this evidence?

- A. Dr. Blackwell did the same things that male doctors did after finishing school.
- B. Dr. Blackwell was a very successful student and doctor.
- C. Dr. Blackwell had trouble being a doctor after finishing medical school.

4. Why might Dr. Blackwell have worked so hard to help women become doctors?

- A. because she wanted to go back to being a teacher, and wanted different women to be doctors in her place
- B. because she felt that women should be able to become doctors and wanted to share her knowledge
- C. because she thought that men did not make good doctors and wanted women to be doctors instead

5. What is the main idea of this article?

- A. Elizabeth Blackwell worked hard through medical school and graduated at the top of her class.
- B. Elizabeth Blackwell did not want to be a teacher anymore, so she became a doctor instead.
- C. Elizabeth Blackwell worked hard to become the first American woman doctor, and she was very successful.

6. Read these sentences from the beginning of the article.

"Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman to become a medical doctor in the United States. Elizabeth was born in England more than a hundred years ago. She moved to the U.S. when she was about eleven years old."

Why might the author have started by saying Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman doctor in the U.S.?

- A. to show the reader why Elizabeth Blackwell is an important person
- B. to tell the reader why it's important to have medical doctors
- C. to confuse the reader by talking about Elizabeth's life events out of order

7. Choose the answer that best completes this sentence.

Some men at Elizabeth's medical school were not kind to her \_\_\_\_\_ they did not want a woman there.

- A. so
- B. because
- C. but

8. Why did Elizabeth Blackwell have a hard time getting into most medical schools?

---

---

---

**9.** What is one thing Elizabeth Blackwell did that showed courage?

---

---

---

**10.** Someone with strong character has a strong sense of what's right and wrong. What did Elizabeth Blackwell do during her life to show her strong character? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

---

---

---