

IMMERSIVE LIVING HISTORY

Chronicling the lives of influential and often forgotten women.



HISTORY AT PLAY™

Educator's Prep Kit



CHALLENGER: *Soaring with Christa McAuliffe™*

DEAR EDUCATOR:

We are thrilled to meet you and your students during our upcoming performance assembly for your school.

Our experience portraying Christa McAuliffe is always inspiring. The students feel as though they are in the classroom with Christa, answering questions for the Teacher-in-Space, as she instructs similar lessons as those she taught to her very own students. Although students may understand that the Challenger shuttle suffered a tragic end to its historic mission, they may not realize that this explosion occurred only 73 seconds into the launch.

The family of Christa McAuliffe has approved performance and requested that we not show the explosion; however, we show the lift-off of the Challenger shuttle until just before the explosion, when the video fades into this image of Christa floating in a zero-gravity test environment:

We, at *History At Play™, LLC*, humbly request that you take 5 before the performance to explain to your students that they will learn all about Christa: from her childhood, through her selection as the Teacher-In-Space, to her training for the mission. They will also see the entire shuttle mission before the explosion occurs.



If you would like your students to watch the shuttle launch in its entirety, we recommend accessing the YouTube video link: <https://youtu.be/WDRxK6cevqw> (Please note: The video says “Graphic” due to the emotional responses of those watching the explosion.)

If you have any questions, we invite you to contact *History At Play™, LLC* before the performance. Thank you kindly and have an historic day!

MOST SINCERELY,
Judith Kalaora
Founder | Artistic Director

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"When we closed our eyes and listened, it was as if Christa were in the room with us."

– Lisa Bristol, Christa's Sister



HISTORY AT PLAY™

Student Prep Kit



CHALLENGER

Soaring with

**CHRISTA
MCAULIFFE™**



Introducing America's "Teacher In Space"

A Young Adventurer

Sharon Christa Corrigan (McAuliffie) was born September 2, 1948 and grew up in Framingham, Massachusetts. She loved being a Girl Scout in Troop 315. Through the Girl Scouts Christa learned how to give of herself to her community. She also gained a passion for adventure and exploration. This adventurous spirit sometimes got Christa in trouble, but she always turned her mistakes into a learning opportunity. When she was a teenager at Marion High School, Christa watched on TV as John Glenn became the first astronaut to orbit the earth. She said that as she watched the space age being born, she wanted to participate.



Pioneering Schoolteacher

After High School Christa went to Framingham State College to learn to become a history teacher. She graduated in 1970, and got married the same year to her husband, Steven J. McAuliffe.

The 1970's was a time of change for women, African-Americans, and other minority groups who were fighting for equality. America was also at war, and people across the country protested for peace. Christa started her career as a school teacher in the middle of this great social change.

In 1983 she became a social studies teacher at Concord High School in New Hampshire. Mrs. McAuliffe inspired her students to be as adventurous as she was. She invited guest speakers into the classroom. She also took her students on many educational field trips *outside* of the classroom. She wanted her to students to experience the world.

"I touch the future. I teach."



Mrs. McAuliffe taught her students that their stories are important. She taught them to keep journals, to write down their thoughts and to keep track of ordinary life events. She told them that "Ordinary people can have an extraordinary impact on society." She also taught classes focused on Women's History, something that was considered very "radical".

Christa loved her students and they loved her back.

The only thing that could take Christa out of her classroom was the greatest adventure of her life: teaching from space.

"The Teacher In Space"

In 1984, America's National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), announced a program that would send a teacher into space on the Space Shuttle *Challenger*. Space Shuttles were special aircraft that would launch into space like a rocket, orbit the earth, and then return. The "Teacher In Space Project" would send an ordinary citizen, a teacher, into space to share the experience with their students.

Christa McAuliffe applied to become the "Teacher In Space" and she was selected from over 11,500 other teachers! Christa's name became known throughout the world. She was a celebrity.

Christa trained with NASA astronauts for 6 months to prepare for launch. As a non-astronaut, she was called a "Payload Specialist." Christa created lesson plans that she would teach live from space and kept a journal of her training. Christa intended to take the world on "The Ultimate Field Trip."

A Great Tragedy and a Lasting Legacy

On January 28, 1986, Christa boarded the Space Shuttle *Challenger* with six other crew members. Just seventy-three seconds into its flight, the aircraft broke into pieces. This terrible tragedy shocked and saddened the world.

Christa McAuliffe, and the other crew members on the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, are remembered as American heroes.

Christa McAuliffe stole the hearts of students around the world as the Teacher in Space. Her adventurous spirit, her love of teaching, and her pioneering classroom methods will never be forgotten.

Payload specialists in training.
Left to right are Gregory Jarvis of Hughes,
Sharon Christa McAuliffe, and
Barbara Morgan of the
Teacher in Space Project.

