

Career trailblazers

Student instructions

It's natural to make assumptions about careers. But it's also important to know that the ideas and biases we have about fields of work can impact our career decisions. There are laws to protect people against discrimination at work. But this doesn't mean that biases do not exist. In this activity you will work as a team to share the story of someone who overcame bias in their field of work.

- 1 Review the career-related bias assigned to your group. Can you think of a recent news story on this topic?
- 2 As a group, come up with a list of careers you think are or were in the past affected by this career-related bias. Set a timer for 4 minutes for this activity.
- 3 Review the list as a group, and discuss the career-related bias assigned to your group:
 - **Class bias:** Who is famous for overcoming bias based on their social background to succeed in their career?
 - **Race bias:** Who is famous for overcoming bias based on their skin color, nationality, or ethnicity to succeed in this career? Who was the first of their race to be represented in their profession?
 - **Gender bias:** Who is famous for being the first of their gender in their career field?
 - **Ability bias:** Who is famous for overcoming bias based on their perceived abilities to succeed in their profession?
- 4 Select 1 career trailblazer from your discussion. Research the following information to share with the rest of the class:
 - **Who** is your career trailblazer and what bias did they overcome?
 - **Why** was it thought to be unlikely for them to succeed in this career?
 - **How** did they achieve their professional success? What strategies did they use to challenge bias?