

***Vision of Beauty: The Story of Sarah Breedlove Walker*** by Kathryn Lasky  
(Cambridge, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2000) ISBN: 0-7636-1834-9

**Literature Annotation:** This book tells the inspiring story of Sarah Breedlove Walker's (better known as Madame C.J. Walker) rise from poverty in Delta, Louisiana to her successful career as an entrepreneur and philanthropist.

**Grade Level:** 3

**Duration:** 45 minutes

### **Maryland State Curriculum**

***Economics Standard:*** Students will develop economic reasoning to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.

4.B.2.a Classify goods and services according to who produces them, such as the government, business or both

### **Personal Finance Standards**

1.5.D.1 Describe market situations where buyers and sellers meet to exchange goods and services

2.5.A.4 Describe how personal characteristics and interests affect career decisions.

2.5.B.1 Identify potential sources of income

### **College and Career Ready Standards for Reading Literary Texts**

RI1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

- Apply appropriate strategies before reading to a text:
  - preview and survey the text
  - access prior knowledge about the text
  - make predictions
- Demonstrate understanding, either orally or in writing, after reading a text:
  - determine and explain the main idea (explicit or inferred) of the text
  - summarize the text
  - Participate actively and appropriately in discussions about informational text.

RI2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

RI4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to...

- describe the life and accomplishments of Madame C.J. Walker.
- identify the goods and services provided by Madame C. J. Walker and her agents.

## Vocabulary

**Entrepreneur:** an individual or group who takes the risk to start a new business or introduce a new good or service into the marketplace in the hope of earning a profit.

**Goods:** physically tangible objects that can be used to satisfy economic wants, including but not limited to food, shoes, cars, houses, books and furniture.

**Services:** physically intangible actions that can be performed to satisfy economic wants, including but not limited to medical care, dental care, haircuts, education, police protection, fire protection, and national defense.

## Materials

A copy of *Vision of Beauty* by Kathryn Lasky

Sentence strip with term “goods”

Sentence strip with term “services”

Resource 1: *Information Cards*

Resource 2: *Vision of Beauty History Frame*

## Additional Resources

- <http://www.madamecjwalker.com/index.html> The Official Madame C.J. Walker Website
- Hudson, W., *Five Notable Inventors*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1995. (Lesson plan available at [www.econed.org](http://www.econed.org))

## Motivation

Distribute the cards from Resource 1: *Information Cards* to selected students. Have them read their cards to the class. (Cards can be read in any order.) After all of the cards have been read, ask students to make predictions about the story.

## Development

1. Show students the book *A Vision of Beauty* by Kathryn Lasky. Tell them that the information cards they read told them something about the life of Sarah Breedlove Walker, also known as Madame C. J. Walker. Madame C.J. Walker was one of the first successful African American female businesswomen (entrepreneurs).
2. Distribute Resource 2: *Vision of Beauty History Frame*. Instruct students to complete the graphic organizer as you read *A Vision of Beauty* by Kathryn Lasky. After reading the entire book, discuss the History Frame.
3. Display the terms **goods** and **services** on the board. (You may need to review the definitions of these terms. See vocabulary section of lesson for definitions.)
4. Ask students to revisit *A Vision of Beauty* and identify the various goods and services found in the book. Record each good or service on a different sentence strip and place the sentence strips on the chalkboard. Have student volunteers take turns placing the sentence strips in the appropriate category.

*Services- laundress, cook (non-restaurant), teacher, nursemaid, hairdresser*

*Goods- cotton, food, hair care products*

## **Assessment**

Have students respond to the following prompt:

The Maryland Council on Economic Education is holding its annual poster contest. Your teacher has asked you to create a poster illustrating the goods and services provided by Madame C.J. Walker. Your poster must:

- Identify at least one good and one service associated with the life of Madame C.J. Walker
- Place the terms Goods and Services at the top of the page in large letters
- Be original and hand-drawn horizontally on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of white paper
- Be in color—not black and white
- Be outlined in black
- Have no spelling or grammatical errors

## **Closure**

Have student volunteers share their posters with the class.

***Note to teacher: Please consider sending posters to the Maryland Council on Economic Education to be entered in the annual "A Picture is Worth A Thousand Words" Contest. See [www.econed.org](http://www.econed.org) for more complete instructions on how to enter.***

**Information Cards**

The Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company always had a woman president.	Agents who sold Madam Walker products were trained to speak to costumers about health, beauty, and self-sufficiency.
Madam used pictures of herself to advertise her products.	Sarah's formula helped her keep her scalp healthy and her hair grow strong.
Sarah saved enough money from her job as a laundress to send her daughter Lelia to Knoxville College.	Sarah Breedlove was born in Louisiana in 1867. Her home was near the Mississippi River.
Sarah's parents were cotton farmers. They died when she was young. After their death, she moved with her sister to Vicksburg, Mississippi.	Years of poor nutrition and hard work had left Sarah's hair brittle and unhealthy. She discovered that she was going bald.
Sarah had a dream about the natural resources found in Africa. She decided to use those resources to create a formula to help her unhealthy hair.	In 1905, Sarah married Charles Walker from St. Louis, Missouri. She chose to call herself Madame C. J. Walker.
Madame C.J. Walker moved her company to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh was an ideal location because there was plenty of steel for her pressing combs and a good transportation system with which to ship her products.	Madam built the Walker Building in Indianapolis. It covered an entire city block, housed office and factory space and a movie theater especially for the city's African Americans.



**Vision of Beauty History**  
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<b>Who:</b>  <b>When:</b>  <b>Where:</b>
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<b>Problem:</b>
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<b>Proposed Solution:</b>
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<b>Key Events:</b>
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<b>Outcome:</b>
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