

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

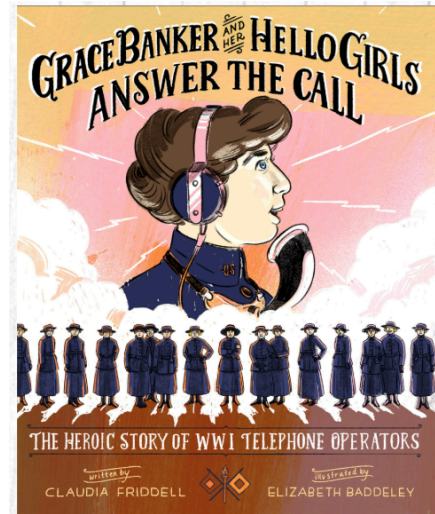
Grace Banker and her Hello Girls Answer the Call

\$18.99 US / \$24.99 CAN
ISBN: 978-1585364558

Ages: 7-10
Grades: 2-5
Content adaptable for use in
Middle and High School

Download all printables [here](#)
View the Google Slide presentation [here](#)

Guide and activities created by
Claudia Friddell and Anne McEntire



ABOUT THE BOOK

Led by twenty-five-year-old Grace Banker, thirty-two telephone operators — affectionately called "Hello Girls" back in the US — became the first female combatants in World War I.

Follow Grace Banker's journey from her busy life as a telephone switchboard trainer in New York to her pioneering role as the Chief Operator of the 1st Unit of World War I telephone operators in the battlefields of France. With expert skill, steady nerves, and steadfast loyalty, the Signal Corps operators transferred orders from commanders to battlefields and communicated top-secret messages between American and French headquarters. After faithfully serving her country—undaunted by freezing weather and fires; long hours and little sleep, and nearby shellings and far off explosions—Grace was the first and only woman operator in the Signal Corps to be awarded the Army's Distinguished Service Medal. Author Claudia Friddell and artist Elizabeth Baddeley beautifully capture this true American story that celebrates the lives of this little-known heroic woman and her team of Signal Corps Operators.

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PRAISE FOR GRACE BANKER AND HER HELLO GIRLS

NCSS/CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Book
NCSS Septima Clark Award, Elementary Level Honoree
Bank Street College of Education Best Book of the Year

★ "This picture book for older students provides material not readily available about the Signal Corps and the early role of women in the military. It also provides needed backdrop for the suffrage movement happening about the same time." —***School Library Connection, starred review***

"An overlooked hero of World War I is given her due. Quotes from Banker's diary and letters accompany Friddell's straightforward, descriptive text, bringing to life her dedication, humor, and fearlessness. Baddeley's appealing, comics-style illustrations provide a strong sense of time and place... (o)verall, this overlooked piece of history—the role of women during World War I—is presented in engaging detail, and the result is a captivating depiction of a smart, spirited woman who found a way to use her skills and intelligence to benefit her country in an unexpected way. An absorbing look at one woman's achievements during World War I." —***Kirkus Reviews***

"This picture book should hold strong appeal for both independent readers and middle grade listeners, making it an excellent selection for curricular use." —***Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books***

"Already a college graduate and an instructor at a switchboard operators' school, Grace Banker...was named chief operator of the first-ever unit of women soldiers. Friddell's narrow focus on Banker's twenty months of service highlights an inspiring, little-known story of everyday 'girls' stepping up to heroically serve their country—despite gender injustices—and making history." —***The Horn Book***

"Recounted with the same plucky spirit as its heroine, this picture-book biography of Grace Banker is a heartening story of grit, charm, and bravery." —***Booklist***

"I loved this...any conversation about women, women in war, technology advances, can use this in the collection." —***Kiss the Book***

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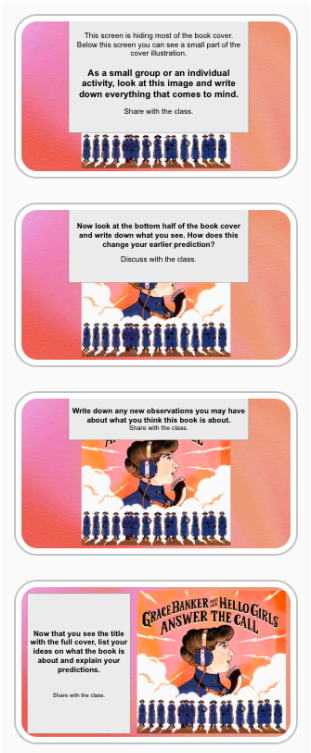
PRE-READING



- Access the [Google Slide Presentation](#) which includes pre-reading activities: Preview, Make Predictions, Predict and Purpose (the activities below are the lessons from this slideshow presentation)



- Cover Reveal Activity: Slowly reveal the cover by hiding all but the bottom with a piece of paper. 
- Preview the book: Younger students - Take a Picture Walk. Look through the illustrations with a partner and choose your favorite pages. Share why with the class.
- Prior Knowledge: List or discuss with the class what you already know about World War I and women soldiers.
- Prior Knowledge: WWI was from 1914 - 1918. Why do you think the United States didn't enter the war until 1917? Find out why.
- Prior Knowledge: Women were not yet in the Army, so why do you think in WWI General Pershing required *women* to operate the switchboards in Europe?
- Purpose: If you're curious about author Claudia Friddell's journey in writing this book and Elizabeth Baddeley's adventure in creating the illustrations, view the video linked below:



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is a pioneer? How are the Hello Girls pioneers?
- What is an unsung hero? How might the Hello Girls be unsung heroes?
- World War I was the first war with technology. What does that mean?
- Why did General Pershing require American women operators for service in Europe?
- How did the Hello Girls contribute to winning the war?
- What does the phrase “answer the call” mean? How does it have a double meaning in the title of this book?
- What does it mean to take an oath?
- Why did the operators have gas masks and helmets on their chairs?
- Why did they need to learn code words?
- The Hello Girls had a 60-year fight when they returned home from service. What does that mean?
- Why do you think the author wanted to write a book about Grace Banker for young readers?
- What does it mean to be a role model? If you think Grace Banker makes a good role model, explain why.
- Why do you think she chose the diary entries that were included?
- What is your favorite diary entry and why?
- Why do you think the illustrator chose this style to share Grace's story?

GROUP ACTIVITIES:

- Make a WW I Foot Locker for Grace Banker
- Switchboard relay: read back matter description of how to operate a switchboard and create a relay
- BINGO – create a BINGO game with vocabulary from book
- Charades: Act out various scenes from the book
- Poetry Corner: A Soldier's Poem (in back matter) Look up the Nursery Rhyme, Sing a Song of Six Pence. Compare the poems. This poem was found in Grace Banker's trunk. Why are the words “just like us” so important? What does “toll for conversation” mean?

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- Newspaper activities: Look at this [primary source](#). Write articles about Hello Girls leaving for service, returning from service, being denied veteran status, finally receiving veteran status after 60 years; partner work: “interview” Grace Banker about her service
- Learn more: Take a look at the following articles to learn more about the Hello Girls:
 - o [6 Hello Girls Help our Army](#)
 - o [Brave Girl Soldiers of the Switchboard](#)
 - o [A Hello Girl in France](#)
 - o [American Girls to act as Telephone Operators with Gen. Pershing's Army](#)
- Exploring primary sources in Back Matter: Find 3 Primary Sources: 1 photo or video, 1 document, 1 letter, 1 article/interview.
- Diary activity: Choose a page or scene from the book that does not have a quote from Grace and write your own

RESEARCH/PROJECT IDEAS:

- Research other WW I Hello Girls and make poster or trading cards with their bio's using 3 images, 2 content blocks, and 1 quote
- Research: The Signal Corps, the history of the name “The Hello Girls”, the history of the telephone switchboard, women's jobs in 1917, the use of technology in World War I, the 19th Amendment, the Army's Distinguished Service Medal, President Wilson's opinion of women's right to vote before and after World War I, why many of the Signal Corps telephone operators arrived before soldiers and returned after them in World War I, why it was so important to the Hello Girls to be recognized as veterans, the term “court martial” and why the Hello Girls were threatened with that, the camouflage ships, and the term armistice.
- Learn more about General Pershing's life. Create a trading card, make a flip book, write a biography or create a timeline.
- Read and write a review of the picture book “The Poppy Lady”
- Who were the Hello Girls? We categorize them in a group but they were individuals. Learn more about a Hello Girl: Merle Egan Anderson, Berthe Hunt, Louise LeBreton
- Research how the YWCA was connected with the

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VOCABULARY:

brisk	switchboard	operator	doughboys	curfews
barracks	trenches	engulfed	meritorious	shrapnel

- 1) View the [Grace Banker Google Slide Show](#) with students to review these vocabulary words.
- 2) Choose a word and write an acrostic poem.
- 3) Make a crossword puzzle with these words.
- 4) Choose 5 words and write each in a sentence that connects it to the story.

MAP/GEOGRAPHY BASED ACTIVITIES:

Use the back matter timeline to make a map of Grace Banker's journey in this book.



CHARACTER 3-2-1:

In this activity, students will list some things they already know, things they want to learn more about and a question they may have.

3-2-1: Grace Banker

3	2	1
Things you already know	Things you want to learn	Question you have

Before we read 'Grace Banker and her Hello Girls Answer the Call' think about what you already know about Grace Banker and WWI. In the diagram above list three things you already know, two things you want to learn and one question you have.



COME TO YOUR SENSES:

Students will explore the book for things they can imagine seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. Use the printable to list what their senses may experience.

Come to your Senses: Grace Banker

SEE	HEAR	TOUCH	SMELL	TASTE

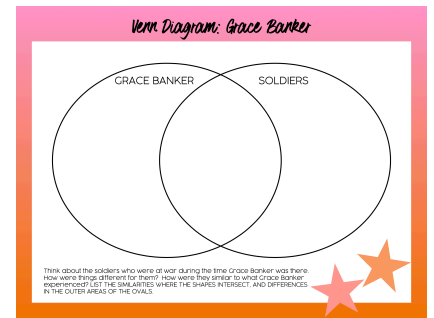
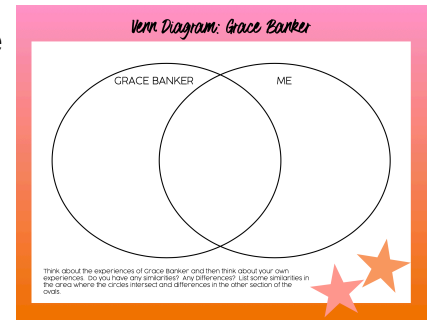
Explore the book for scenes that you can imagine hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. Try to find 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.

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VENN DIAGRAM (2):

- 1 - Students will compare some of their own experiences to Grace Banker using the printable.
- 2 - Students will compare the soldiers in the story to Grace Banker using the printable.



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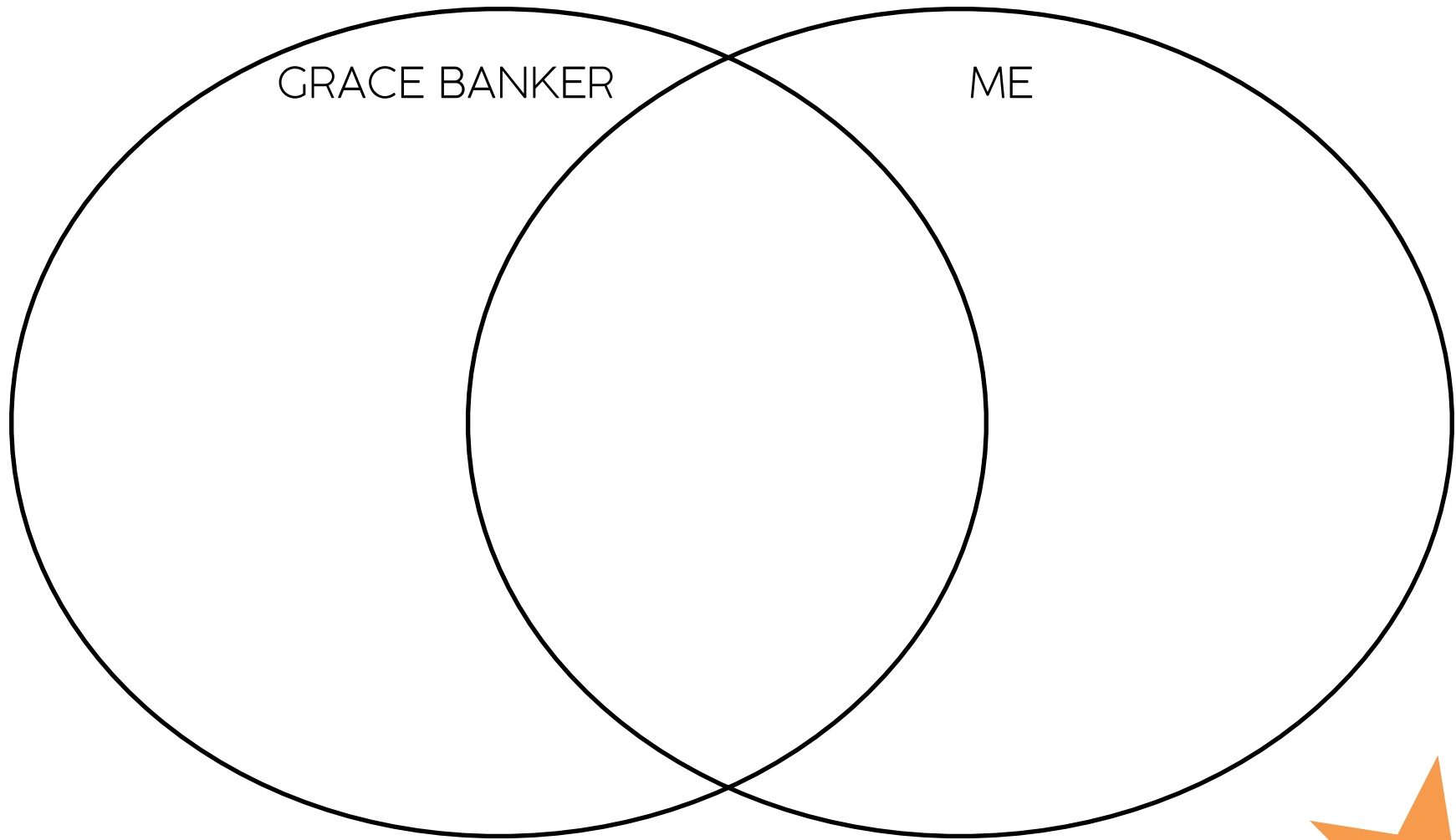
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APPENDIX:

Full size printables for items denoted with a  icon are included in the following pages. They include:

- 1 - Venn Diagram: Compare Self to Grace Banker
- 2 - Venn Diagram: Compare Soldiers to Grace Banker
- 3 - Come to your Senses
- 4 - KWL Chart 3 - 2 - 1

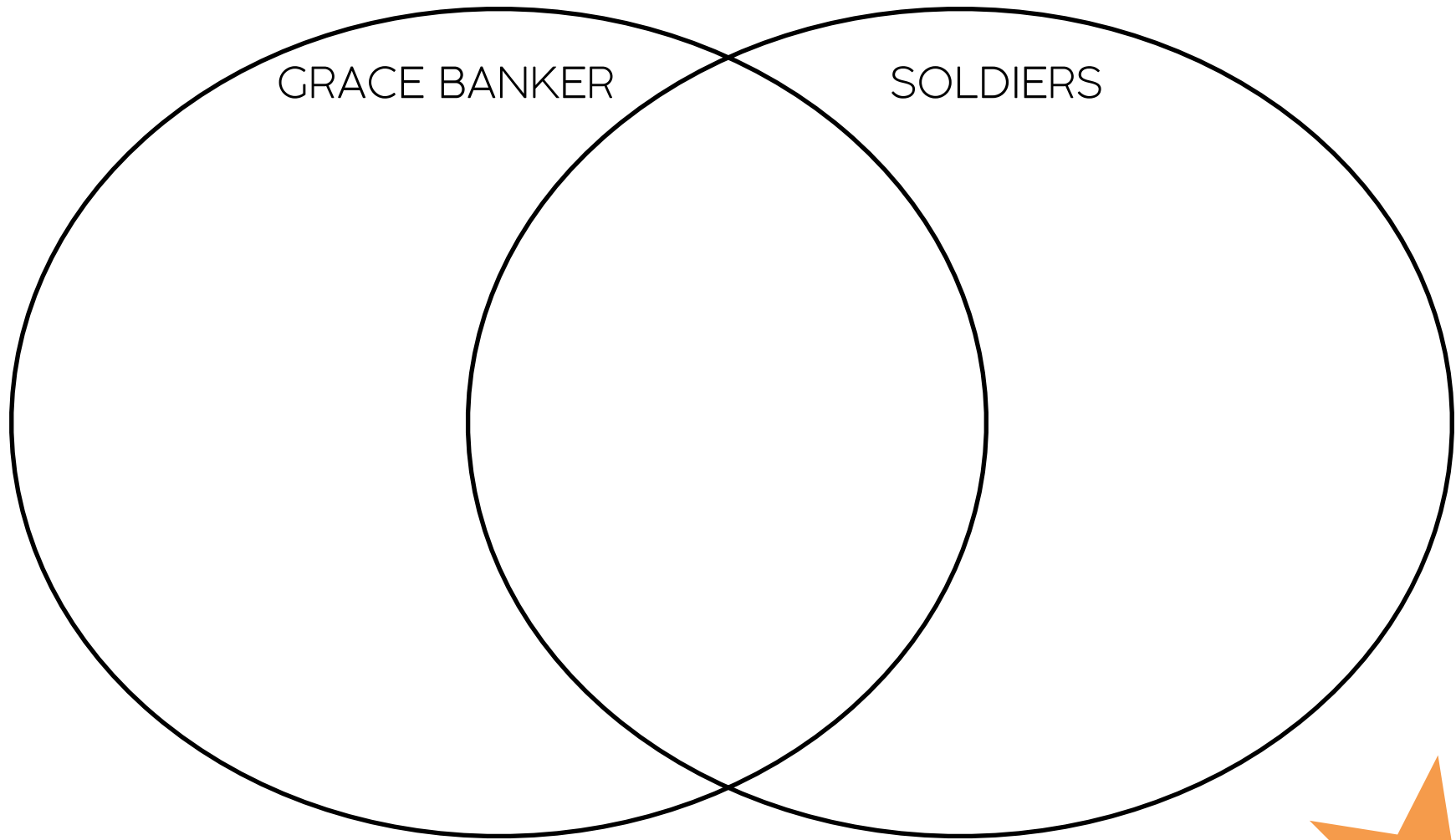
Venn Diagram: Grace Banker



Think about the experiences of Grace Banker and then think about your own experiences. Do you have any similarities? Any Differences? List some similarities in the area where the circles intersect and differences in the other section of the ovals.



Venn Diagram: Grace Banker



Think about the soldiers who were at war during the time Grace Banker was there. How were things different for them? How were they similar to what Grace Banker experienced? LIST THE SIMILARITIES WHERE THE SHAPES INTERSECT, AND DIFFERENCES IN THE OUTER AREAS OF THE OVALS.



Come to your Senses: Grace Banker



SEE

HEAR

TOUCH

SMELL

TASTE

Explore the book for scenes that you can imagine hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. Try to find 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.



3-2-1: Grace Banker

3	2	1
Things you already know	Things you want to learn	Question you have

Before we read "Grace Banker and her Hello Girls Answer the Call" think about what you already know about Grace Banker and WWI. In the diagram above list three things you already know, two things you want to learn and one question you have.

