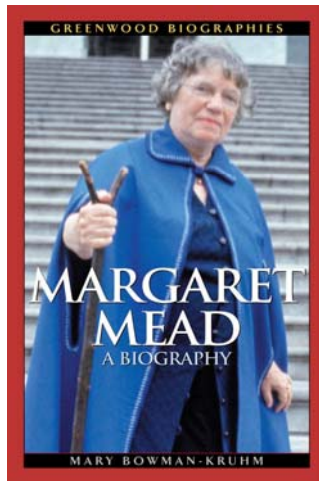


How U.S. Society Changed during the 1920s, as Reflected in the Life of Margaret Mead

Student Materials I



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Student materials for a unit that incorporates differentiated instruction using research-based instructional strategies and a variety of materials and is based on:

Bowman-Kruhm, M. (2003). *Margaret Mead: A Biography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

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Graphic Organizer, Collecting Your Thoughts





















Margaret Mead eventually became a spokesperson for 20th century Americans. Her first book, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, is still in print 75 years after it was first published. At the height of her fame, the mail Mead received each day weighed from ten to fifteen pounds. When she crisscrossed the country for speaking engagements, airline pilots told her they were honored she flew with them. During her lifetime, Mead's likeness appeared on packets of sugar that pictured well-known Americans, she wrote personal letters to Presidents and got replies, she was featured in cartoons, a regular contributor to magazines, and sought after as a guest on talk radio and television programs.

You will write on the topic:

Why Margaret Mead Became Famous: Based on your understanding of what you have read and heard during this unit, why do you think Mead became such a famous person during a century when the lives of most women centered around life in the home?

The chart that follows is to help you organize your thoughts and ideas. List as many reasons as you wish to include in your paragraph. Then review and reflect on your reasons to arrive at a conclusion. This conclusion will be the last sentence in your paper.

Note: You may want to analyze your information before writing a topic sentence.

Topic Sentence:		
Reason:	Source for Reason:	Type of Reason:
		 Personal characteristic  Change in U.S. society  Help from another person  _____
2.		 Personal characteristic  Change in U.S. society  Help from another person  _____
3.		 Personal characteristic  Change in U.S. society  Help from another person  _____
4.		 Personal characteristic  Change in U.S. society  Help from another person  _____
5.		 Personal characteristic  Change in U.S. society  Help from another person  _____
Conclusion, based on the above:		

Margaret Mead Puzzle

					M						
					A						
					R						
					G						
					A						
					R						
					E						
					T						

					M						
					E						
					A						
					D						

- M** = No matter what culture Mead studied, she related what she learned to ____.
 - A** = Initials of museum Mead liked to visit as student (and worked during her entire career).
 - R** = A group's behavior and beliefs make up its ____.
 - G** = Edward's bad investments almost kept Margaret from attending ____.
 - A** = Mead's adviser who is known as the father of modern anthropology.
 - R** = Emily Mead was pleased when, in 1920, women's ____ became law with the 19th amendment to the Constitution.
 - E** = The name of Margaret's first husband.
 - T** = One method of transportation Mead used to travel to the South Pacific.
-
- M** = The university where Margaret received her master's and doctoral degrees.
 - E** = Margaret Mead's closest friend from her days at Barnard until the friend's 1946 death.
 - A** = Mead's first best-selling book was titled *Coming of Age in* ____.
 - D** = The name given trips anthropologists make to study other culture.

A Readers Theater Father Doesn't Always Know Best

Except for the final comments made to Margaret by the doctor, which are recorded in Margaret Mead's autobiography, *Blackberry Winter*, the following is a fictionalized version of their meeting. It is, however, based on factual information. See:

Bowman-Kruhm, M. (2003). *Margaret Mead: A biography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Characters: Narrator I, Narrator II, Margaret Mead, Edward Mead (her father), Martha Meade* (Margaret's grandmother), Emily Mead (her mother), Doctor

Narrator I: Born one year after the calendar rolled over to the twentieth century, Margaret is now 17 years old and has worked hard during her final year of high school. Included in her program are French and advanced math so she can attend Wellesley College, outside of Boston, Massachusetts.

Margaret: I really want to go to Wellesley College. Most girls my age don't have parents who graduated from college. Between the two of you, you have *five* college degrees. And when my grandmother was younger, she was a teacher and principal in Ohio.

Edward: I believe in college for women. After all, I met your mother at the University of Chicago. And she has worked to earn additional degrees while four children have been growing up.

Emily: I admit that I am happier with research and writing. Household chores truly bore me.

Margaret: Then it's not fair that I can't go to Wellesley.

Edward: Wellesley is much more expensive than most colleges. And even though your mother went to college, I'm not sure you should. We're not going to talk about it anymore.

Narrator II: As Edward leaves the room, Margaret feels frustrated by her father's attitude. He himself has a doctorate in economics and teaches at the University of Pennsylvania. She also knows he teaches evening classes so he can help the average person move ahead professionally.

Narrator I: Then Margaret realizes that her father says he doesn't want her to attend college because he has made another bad business deal. Family finances bother him very little. He is a risk-taker who frequently makes bad investments and is short of money.

(Knock at door.)

Martha: Oh, good evening, Doctor. Are you here to see my son, Edward?

Doctor: No, I'm here this time to visit with Margaret. Is she home?

Martha: Yes, she is. Margaret, someone is here who wants to see you.

Margaret: Oh, I'm surprised to see you, Doctor. You want to see me rather than my father?

Doctor: Yes, I want to talk to you, Margaret. I understand that you'd like to go to college next year.

*Margaret's parents dropped the final e.

Margaret: I want very badly to go to college. I really have my heart set on Wellesley and I've studied hard this year so that I'll be admitted.

Doctor: Margaret, attending college does a woman no good. No good at all. Women are blessed with wonderful talents but they are soon married and can best use their God-given skills to support their husbands and nurture a family.

Margaret: I do plan to be married and I want lots of children. But I also want a career, one that allows me to work for a cause — a crusade I can throw myself into.

Doctor: Margaret, you're speaking silliness. By nature a woman's talents are best used to run a household, care for little ones, and cook and sew. Unlike men, women are not naturally capable of thoughtful pursuits or meaningful work outside the home.

Margaret: My mother has two degrees and has worked toward a doctorate for many years. And she is working very, very hard to gain women the right to vote. She would be upset to hear you speak this way.

Narrator: Margaret and the Doctor argue on. The more he talks, the less Margaret is swayed. At last, the Doctor, exasperated, says...

Doctor: Look at those useless little hands! Never did a day's work in their life and never will!

Narrator II: Margaret feels rage rising in her. She is tired...tired from cooking for their family of seven...tired from carrying a heavy course load at school...tired from sewing costumes for the school play...tired from her many family responsibilities. The Doctor adds...

Doctor: You'd maybe make a good mistress, but a poor wife. You'd better study nursing!

Narrator I: To Margaret, his remarks are both unjust and illogical. The argument that she is not strong enough to study but strong enough to work as a nurse makes no sense. She feels justified in her desire to attend college. She explodes with fury.

Narrator II: Eventually, her mother sways Margaret's father. Mead attends her father's alma mater, DePauw University, in the fall of 1919 and transfers to Barnard College, the undergraduate college for women associated with Columbia University in New York City, in her sophomore year.

Narrator I: Margaret loved Barnard and loved New York City. She wrote, in a book published after her death in 1979, that when asked where in the world she would most like to live, she answered, "Where I do live—in New York City."[†]

[†] Mead, M. (1979). *Margaret Mead: Some personal views*. (R. Metraux, Ed.) New York: Walker.

A Readers Theater ***From Indiana to Oceania***

This Readers Theater is a fictionalized version of Mead's conversations with Luther Cressman, her husband; Ruth Benedict, a friend; and Dr. Franz Boas, her adviser at Columbia University. It is, however, based on factual information and available dialogue with Benedict and Cressman, as recorded in Mead's and Cressman's autobiographies, is accurate. See: Bowman-Kruhm, M. (2003). ***Margaret Mead: A biography***. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Characters: Narrator I, Narrator II, Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict (friend), Martha Meade* (grandmother), Edward Mead (father), Luther Cressman (husband), Dr. Franz Boas (adviser)

Narrator I: Mead's unhappy first year of college in Indiana was put behind her with her transfer to New York City's Barnard College. She graduated in 1923 and married Luther Cressman, to whom she had become engaged in high school. They continued to live and study in New York.

Margaret: Luther is a wonderful husband for me. Most men want a wife to stay at home, but he allows me to work and even encourages me to attend Columbia University for a master's degree.

Narrator II: Margaret built on her mother's work with immigrants to earn a master's degree in psychology, but she soon grew interested in the new field of anthropology when she took a course from Dr. Franz Boas. She also made friends with Ruth Benedict, who had just earned a doctorate in anthropology and worked as an assistant to Dr. Boas.

Margaret: Ruth, I loved that exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History. I'm so glad I decided to take the course in anthropology with Dr. Boas.

Ruth: Margaret, you would be a wonderful anthropologist. I admit, the field is very limited for women. There are no jobs available except for a few teaching positions at small women's colleges or doing secretarial work for a male anthropologist, as I do. And salaries are quite low because we're married and minimum wage laws apply only to men.

Margaret: No matter what field women go into, we have problems. I know a telephone operator and she needed permission from her husband just to get the job. And once female teachers marry, they have to stop working.

Ruth: Dr. Boas is fairer to women than most men but he still gives salary raises and job advances only to males.

Margaret: But anthropology is such an exciting field! Dr. Boas says primitive societies are changing rapidly and we must do all we can to record information about them.

Narrator I: *Primitive* was the term used by early anthropologists when they were talking about societies without a written language. Dr. Boas was committed to studying these cultures.

Ruth: Yes, Margaret, to Dr. Boas, preserving the heritage of primitive cultures is more than a commitment — it's his *mission in life*. If we don't work fast, these cultures will disappear forever. I'm afraid, however, all Dr. Boas and I can offer you is an opportunity to do work that matters.

* Margaret's parents dropped the final e.

Narrator II: Even though she knew she had little chance for a job that paid well, Margaret did want to do work that mattered. On March 11, 1923, she wrote a letter to her grandmother, Martha Meade.

Martha: Edward, Emily, come quickly. I just got a letter from Margaret.

Edward: Does she say what her plans are?

Martha: It sounds as if she's going to work on a doctorate in that new field of anthropology. Here's what she wrote: "I should so like to be an Anthropologist. But it's so non-lucrative."

Narrator I: Margaret began work on a doctorate in anthropology while still completing her master's degree. When she returned from a 1924 conference in Toronto, Canada, she was excited about beginning fieldwork.

Margaret: Luther, the conference was *so exciting*. All the anthropologists there have a primitive culture they're studying. They call them "my people." Luther, I *must* find a people of my own for my fieldwork.

Luther: First, you need Dr. Boas's approval. Doesn't he want you to do your fieldwork in Arizona or New Mexico?

Margaret: Oh, Luther, you know the joke. There are so many anthropologists in the Southwest that there are five people in every Indian family — a husband, wife, two children, and an anthropologist. I'll be safe if I stay in the U. S., but I want more adventure than that.

Luther: I can see that Dr. Boas will have a problem dealing with you!

Narrator II: There were so few students in the U.S. studying anthropology that Dr. Boas controlled where he placed them for fieldwork. By doing so, he could gain crucial information about cultures that were rapidly fading from existence.

Margaret: Dr. Boas, I want to do my fieldwork in Oceania. I want to study peoples on an island somewhere in the central or south Pacific.

Dr. Boas: Margaret, Margaret, you're a very bright young woman, but I have your safety to think about.

Margaret: My father cares about my safety and he has agreed to pay for my trip.

Dr. Boas: There's still a great deal of work to do in studying our native peoples in the United States.

Margaret: There are many anthropologists willing to go to the Southwest. But I'm not. I presented a paper on Polynesian tattooing at the Toronto conference and I want to do my fieldwork in that part of the world.

Dr. Boas: Margaret, think about the trip. You would have to travel by train to the Pacific coast and then board a ship for a six-week voyage. You'd be going alone, and you're not yet 24 years old. No, no — impossible.

Margaret: You're not being fair to me. If a male student were making the same request, you would support him.

Dr. Boas (sighing) Margaret, you are not only smart and competent but you are a very headstrong young woman. All right, but you must do your fieldwork in American Samoa. The U.S. Navy governs American Samoa and ships dock there every few weeks.

Narrator I: So when she was only 23 years old, Mead traveled to the South Pacific. In 1928 her book detailing her adventures, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, made her a best-selling author. In this book and in all her future books, she related what she learned about other cultures to how Americans live and think.

Margaret: I may not change the world but I want to change the way Americans think about the world.

Narrator II: And Mead did. Her name became a household word in the United States during the twentieth century. Through her books, her articles, and her speeches, Margaret Mead pushed Americans to reflect on themselves and on other cultures. She reached so high and so wide in her ideas that she influenced how people today, in the 21st century, think.

Narrator I: And she did it with flair and panache.