



Little People, BIG DREAMS®

Little People, BIG DREAMS®

I Can Plan an Adventure to Space



Frances Lincoln



I Can Plan an Adventure to Space



KATHERINE JOHNSON

Quarto

Text © 2025 Maria Isabel Sánchez Vegara.

Illustration © 2025 Jemma Skidmore.

Original series concept by Maria Isabel Sánchez Vegara, published by Alba Editorial, S.L.U. “Little People, BIG DREAMS” and “Pequeña & Grande” are trademarks of Alba Editorial S.L.U. and/or Beautiful Couple S.L.

This Happy Readers book is produced under licence
from Frances Lincoln Children’s Books.

Frances Lincoln Children’s Books, an imprint of The Quarto Group.

1 Triptych Place, London, SE1 9SH, United Kingdom.

T +44 (0) 20 7700 6700 **www.Quarto.com**

These Happy Readers stories are taken from the
Little People, Big Dreams series of books.

Discover more inspirational stories at **www.littlepeoplebigdreams.com**

With thanks to the family of Katherine Johnson.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted,
in any form, or by any means, electrical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or
otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher
or a licence permitting restricted copying.

Made for McDonald’s 2024

McDonald’s, the Golden Arches logo, the Happy Meal box design and Happy Readers
are trade marks of McDonald’s Corporation and its affiliates.



Scan for more fun!



Tablet not included. Data charges may apply when accessing online content.

You're about to meet
one of the world's greatest
mathematicians. Katherine had
hopes, fears, joys and challenges
– and her own unique dream.

Her story shows that if you follow
your own dream and believe
in yourself, you can do anything!



Little People, BIG DREAMS®

I Can Plan an **Adventure to Space**

KATHERINE JOHNSON



Written by
Maria Isabel Sánchez Vegara

Illustrated by
Jemma Skidmore

Once in West Virginia, USA, lived a Black girl named Katherine who loved numbers.



From sunrise to sunset, she counted
the steps to school, the students in
her class, the pages in a book...



Katherine was so gifted at numbers and worked so hard that she started high school four years early.





Sadly, where she lived, the people in charge decided that only White students could go to the public high schools.



Her parents were determined to give their children the education they deserved, so they moved the family to another town 120 miles away.



Katherine was just 14 when she received her high school diploma! She wanted to keep on learning...



At college, Katherine graduated with honours in maths and French.



Next, she became the first Black woman to attend the state's top university. Until then, the unfair laws of the time had banned Black students from studying there.

After college, she became a teacher.

Seven years later, she was offered
her dream job, doing the calculations
for aeroplane missions.



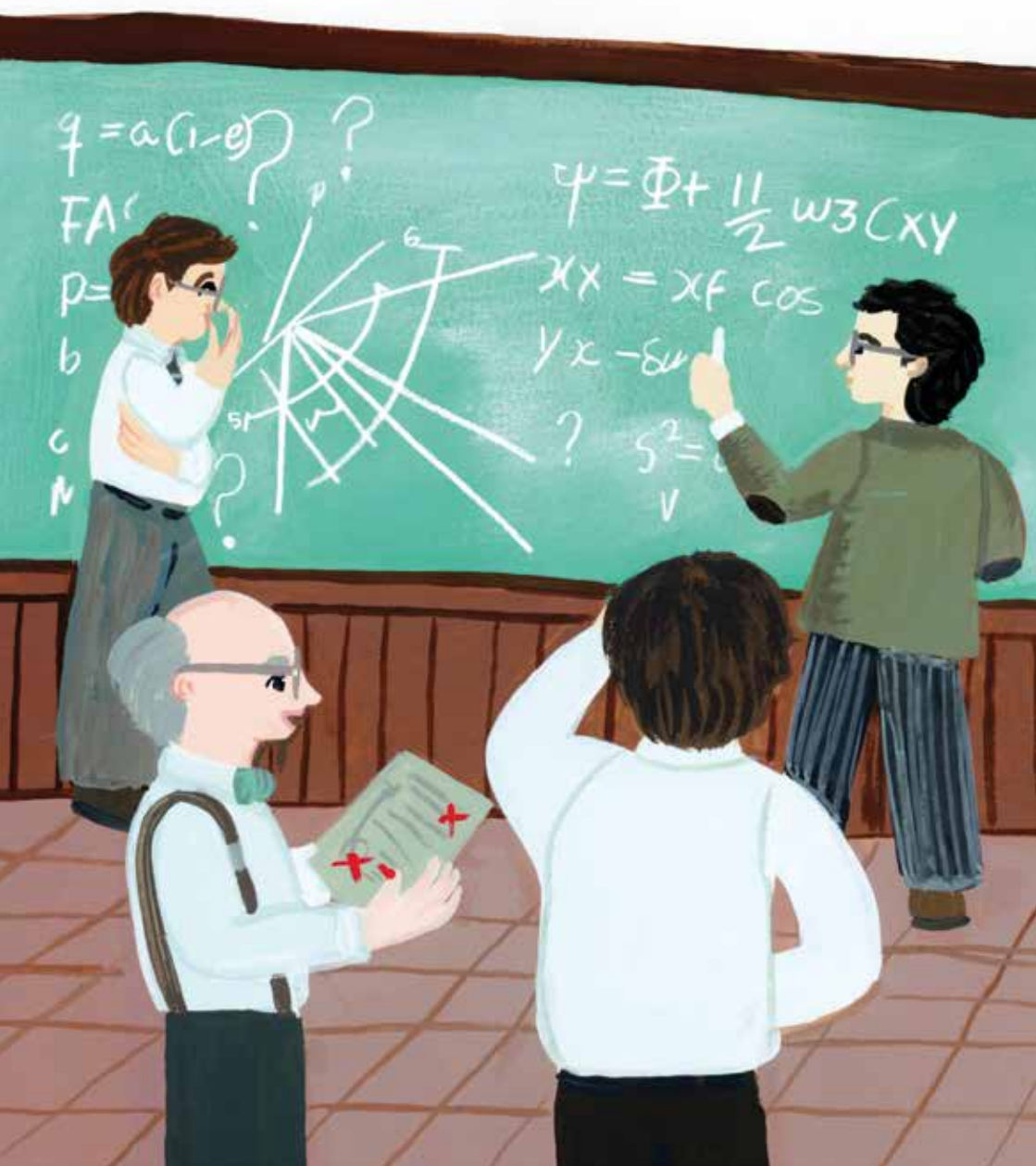
She worked with a team of brilliant Black women so intelligent that people called them 'human computers'.



Soon, Katherine was sent to another department. Her task was to review the calculations made by the engineers.



If there was a mistake, they could be sure that Katherine would find it.



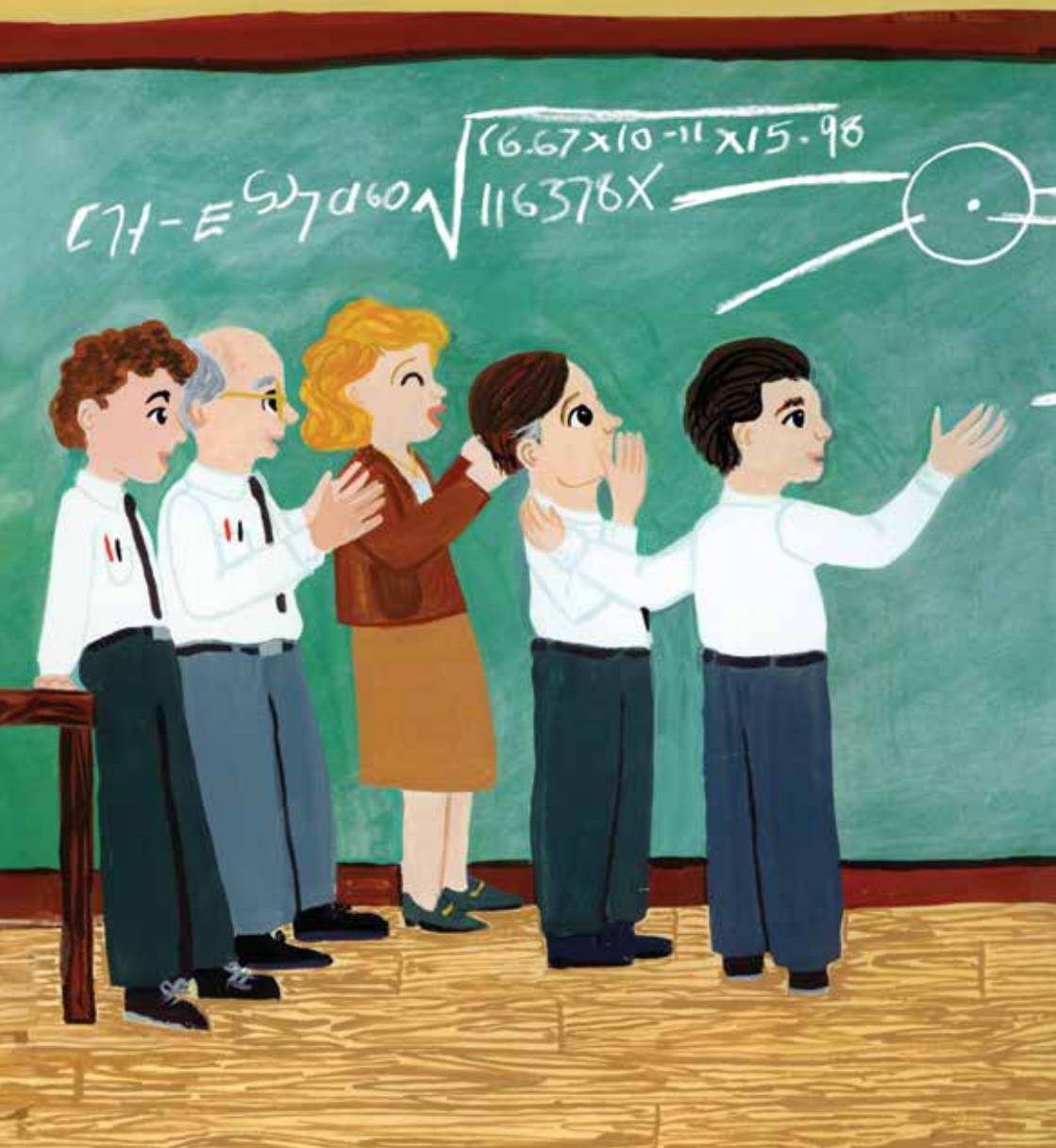


When her team began working on space travel, Katherine went from checking reports to writing them.



She was the first woman in her department to have her name on a research paper.

Katherine calculated the flight path
of the second astronaut in space...



...and when the first American circled Earth, she worked hard to make sure that he would return home safely.





But the moment that made her most proud was when Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the moon.

She helped the spacecraft land successfully.
Katherine went on to win many awards
for her work, and her calculations are
still being used today.



And through hard work and determination,
the girl who loved to count became part
of the history of space exploration.



For, as little Katherine knew well: it's when
you have found what you love to do
that you can give your best.



Glossary

Public high schools – schools that are paid for by the government

High school diploma – a qualification that is given to children in North America when they complete high school

Graduated with honours – finished university as one of the very best students in the class

Research paper – a detailed piece of writing that collects information and presents new ideas

Little People, BIG DREAMS®

I Can Plan an Adventure to Space

Discover the lives of outstanding people,
from designers and artists to scientists.
All of them achieved incredible things, yet
each began life as a child with a dream.

Little Katherine loved learning — especially
when it involved numbers. As an adult, she
became a mathematician working on space
missions, and her calculations helped land
the first person on the moon!

www.littlepeoplebigdreams.com

