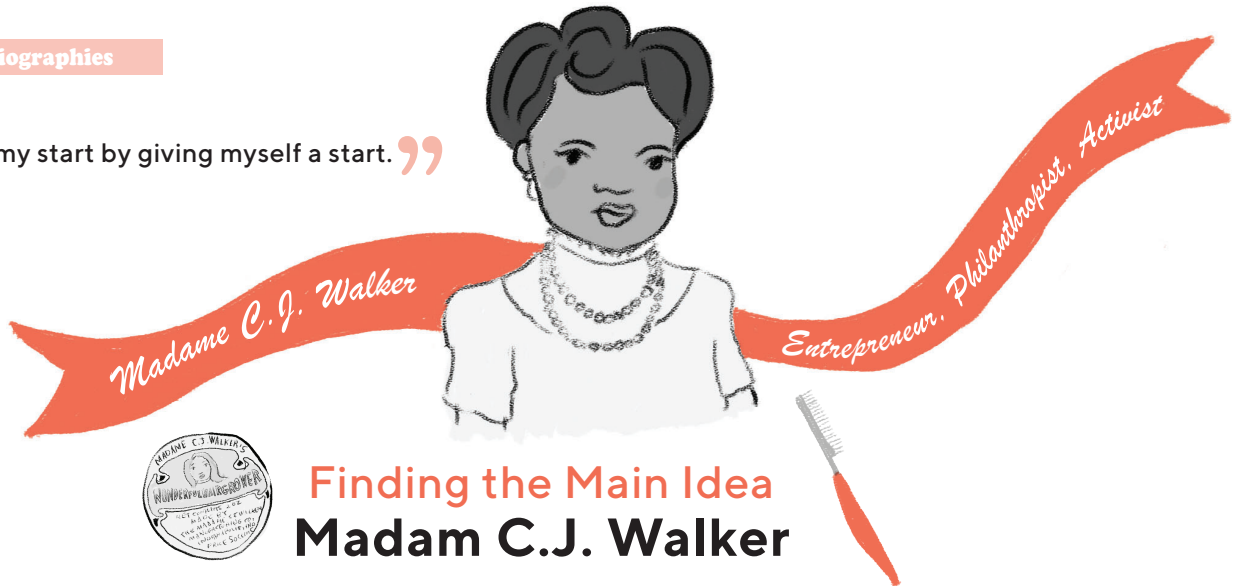


Read & Write Biographies

“ I got my start by giving myself a start. ”



Finding the Main Idea Madam C.J. Walker

When reading a biography, it is important to find the main ideas within the text. The main ideas will help you write a clear report.

Read the following passage about Madam C.J. Walker.

Madam C.J. Walker was the first woman to earn over one million dollars in America. She was born Sarah Breedlove in Louisiana on December 23, 1867, just a few years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation making slavery illegal. Her parents had been born into slavery, and she was the first child in her family to be born a free woman.

When she was growing up, her family did not have a lot of money. She had a skin disease on her head that caused her to lose her hair, and suffered many years of hair loss.

Determined to find a way to grow her hair back, she invented hair care products for African American women. She used her husband's name — Charles J. Walker — and went around the country selling her products and showing people how to use them, and soon she made enough money to start a factory and a beauty school.

Madam C.J. Walker used a lot of the money she made to help African Americans in her community, donating to organizations and community centers for African Americans. Her beauty products are still sold today.

What is the main idea of the passage above?
