

Eleanor Roosevelt The First Lady of the World  
A Reader's Theatre Script  
by Lisa Blau

Reader #1            Reader #4  
Reader #2            Reader #5  
Reader #3            Reader #6

Reader #3:            Good morning and welcome to our  
                         presentation of, "Eleanor Roosevelt The  
                         First Lady of the World."

Reader #5:            Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the most  
                         remarkable women of our time. She had  
                         more political influence than any other  
                         woman in American history.

Reader #1:            Eleanor Roosevelt was an amazing woman  
                         full of compassion for the disadvantaged  
                         people of the world and a desire to keep  
                         on learning new things every day of her  
                         life.

Reader #4:            She spoke out for women's rights, the  
                         rights of Native Americans, the homeless,  
                         and minorities. She used the money she  
                         earned making speeches to help the poor.

Reader #6:            As Eleanor Roosevelt spoke out, she  
                         implored people by saying, "Do what you  
                         feel in your heart to be right."

Reader #3:            Let's learn more about Eleanor Roosevelt  
                         by starting at the very beginning...

Reader #5:            Eleanor Roosevelt was born on October  
                         11, 1884. Her parents were Anna and  
                         Elliot Roosevelt. Her uncle Theodore was  
                         the twenty-sixth president of the United  
                         States.

Reader #1:            Eleanor's father adored his daughter and

called her, "Little Nell." Eleanor's mother however, was cold and distant.

Reader #2: When Eleanor was just eight years old, her mother died. Two years later, her father died as well. Eleanor missed her father tremendously. She grew up as a lonely young girl in her grandmother's house.

Reader #4: When Eleanor reached the age of fifteen, her grandmother decided to send her to a prestigious boarding school in England.

Reader #6: Eleanor flourished at the school. It was there that she learned the importance of helping others. While Eleanor was in England her uncle was elected president.

Reader #2: Eleanor returned to the United States in 1902. She was eighteen years old. Her grandmother thought that Eleanor should attend many fancy parties and balls.

Reader #3: But Eleanor dreaded these fancy parties, for she was painfully shy. One day while riding on a train, Eleanor met the man who would become her husband.

Reader #5: His name was Franklin Roosevelt. He was a distant cousin to Eleanor. Franklin enjoyed talking to Eleanor and listening to her hopes of making the world a better place. She desperately wanted to help the poor and disadvantaged people.

Reader #6: Eleanor married Franklin Roosevelt on St. Patrick's Day, 1905. Within the next ten years, Eleanor and Franklin had six children: one daughter and five sons. Tragically, one son died as an infant.

Reader #1: In 1921, Franklin Roosevelt was stricken

with polio. Eleanor helped to nurse her husband. She also went to political meetings in his place and reported back to him on all of the details that she had learned.

Reader #2: Franklin wanted to go into politics. He admired Eleanor's uncle Theodore and wanted to try and make a difference in the world. He was elected governor of New York in 1928 and 1930.

Reader #4: Franklin campaigned hard with Eleanor at his side and was elected president of the United States in 1932. He was reelected president in 1936, 1940, and 1944. He was the only president ever elected to serve more than two terms.

Reader #5: During the 1930's, the United States was in the throes of the Great Depression. Banks and factories were shut down and millions of Americans lost their jobs. Eleanor traveled across the country and wrote about her travels in her daily newspaper column. She brought new hope to the people of the United States.

Reader #6: In 1936, while her husband was running for his second term, Eleanor wrote a book about her life entitled, This is My Story. The book became an instant best seller and more and more people came to recognize the remarkable gifts that Eleanor Roosevelt shared with the nation.

Reader #3: In 1941, the United States entered World War II. Eleanor Roosevelt traveled around the world visiting American soldiers. She copied down the names and addresses of the young soldiers she met overseas and wrote letters to their families when she returned home.

- Reader #2: On April 12, 1945, just months before the war ended, Franklin Roosevelt died. Eleanor was alone in the world after having been married to Franklin for forty years.
- Reader #4: Some people thought Eleanor would retire after Franklin's death, but that did not happen.
- Reader #2: In the autumn of 1945, Eleanor Roosevelt received a phone call from President Harry Truman. He asked Eleanor to become a delegate for the United States at the very first meeting of the United Nations.
- Reader #1: Eleanor Roosevelt listened while leaders from all around the world talked about how to ensure world peace. Eleanor Roosevelt often said, "If we are to live together, we have to talk."
- Reader #4: Eleanor Roosevelt spent the rest of her life striving to promote peace in the world. She traveled around the world spreading her message that world peace depended upon international friendship.
- Reader #5: Eleanor Roosevelt helped campaign for John F. Kennedy when he sought to become president in 1960. She was seventy-six years old and still believed that one person could make a difference in the world.
- Reader #3: Shortly after her seventy-eighth birthday, Eleanor Roosevelt died. Her funeral was attended by scores of world leaders who came to pay tribute to this most remarkable woman.

Reader #6:           The world mourned the passing of the  
                  most important and loved woman of our  
                  time.  A woman who...

Reader #1:            "Would rather light a candle than curse  
                  the darkness..."

All:                   And her glow has warmed the world."

Reader #2:            The end.