

Name _____ Date _____

exciting shows. She did tricks like rolls, loops, and figure eights. People knew the tricks were dangerous. They started calling her "Brave Bessie."

Bessie spent five years traveling to put on shows and speak about her life. Then Bessie had a new dream. She was saving money to open a school where black people could learn to fly.

By 1926, Bessie had earned enough money to buy her own airplane. It was not a new plane, but Bessie was thrilled to own it. She hired a mechanic to work on it. On the day before a big air show in Florida, he took the plane up for a test ride. Bessie was a passenger. Suddenly, the engine failed and the plane took a dive. Bessie Coleman fell from the open plane and died. The plane crashed, and the mechanic died, too.

Bessie's funeral was held in Chicago. Thousands of people came to honor the brave young woman. Three years later, in 1929, the Bessie Coleman Aero Club opened. Bessie's dream—a flying school—had come true.

Bessie Coleman knew the importance of dreams. She inspired many people and helped others believe in themselves. Every year on her birthday, people remember Bessie. On that day, African-American pilots make a special flight. They fly high over Chicago and right over Bessie's grave, and they drop flowers in honor of Brave Bessie.

Questions 1–6: Choose the best answer to each question, or write your answer on the lines provided.

- 1. Why was it difficult for Bessie Coleman to become a pilot in the United States?**
- (A) No flying school would admit a black woman.
 - (B) She did not complete her college education.
 - (C) Airplanes were still fairly new and hard to find.
 - (D) She was not strong enough to control a plane.