

Name: _____

Main Idea Worksheet

Bessie Blount Griffin

Bessie Blount Griffin was born on November 24, 1914 in Hickory, Virginia (now Chesapeake, Virginia). As a young girl, Bessie loved solving problems. She also loved teaching herself new skills. Bessie liked writing with her left hand. But her elementary school teacher only wanted her to write with her right hand. So Bessie taught herself to write with both hands. She also taught herself to write with a pencil in her teeth. She could even write with her toes.

Bessie loved learning. She decided to become a nurse. She received her training at Community Kennedy Memorial Hospital in New Jersey. Then, she decided that she wanted to become a physical therapist. A physical therapist helps people who are injured or sick learn to move more easily. Bessie attended Union Junior College and Panzer College of Physical Education. She became a physical therapist. She then began helping soldiers who had been injured in World War II.

Some injured soldiers were not able to feed themselves, so Bessie invented an electronic feeding machine to help solve this problem. The machine helped soldiers become more independent. Bessie also invented a tool that an injured person could wear around their neck to help them eat. She received a patent for this invention in 1951. A patent is a license from the government that prevents other people from copying an invention. Bessie also invented disposable cardboard bowls that could be used in hospitals. She created the bowls by mixing together pieces of newspaper, flour, and water. Then she baked the bowls in an oven. The country of Belgium still uses her bowl design in all of their hospitals.

Write the main idea of the passage in your own words.

Write one fact you learned from the passage.

1. _____
