

# Helen Keller

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Helen Keller was born in 1880 in a small town in America. When she was eighteen months old, she suddenly became ill and nearly died. When she got better, she couldn't see or hear at all.

“Light! Give me light!” She was shouting in her heart.

When Helen was nearly seven years old, Anne Sullivan came to teach her and look after her. This teacher changed Helen's life.

Miss Sullivan gave Helen a doll. She played with it for a while. Then Miss Sullivan slowly spelled the word ‘d-o-l-l’ in Helen's hand. She was interested in this finger play. Miss Sullivan spelled the letters again and again. Helen spelled them back. In this way she taught Helen words such as c-a-k-e, m-u-g and w-a-t-e-r.

Helen learned to spell several words. But she spelled them without understanding their meanings. She soon grew tired and unhappy.

One day Miss Sullivan tried to teach that ‘m-u-g’ is mug and that ‘w-a-t-e-r’ is water. But Helen mistook one thing for the other. At last Helen got angry. She took her doll and threw it on the floor. It was broken into pieces. Miss Sullivan took Helen to the pump. She put Helen's hand under the water, and spelled ‘w-a-t-e-r’ on her other hand. Suddenly a new light came into Helen's face. She understood that ‘w-a-t-e-r’ was the name of this cool wet thing.

“Everything has a name!”

All the way back to the house she was very excited. She moved from one thing to another, and asked for their names. When she entered her room, she remembered the doll. She picked up the pieces, and tried to put them together. Her eyes were filled with tears.

After that day Helen learned very fast. She learned to write, to read and

even to talk. She went to college. Miss Sullivan helped her at the college, too.  
And Helen helped other handicapped people all her life.