***Helen’s Big World: The Life of Helen Keller* by Doreen Rappaport**

**Discussion Questions**

1. After Helen recovers from an illness when she is almost two years old, she is blind and deaf. Helen makes up her own signs to tell her family what she wants, but Helen only has a few signs and ways to make herself understood. How do Helen and her parents solve this problem?

*Her parents pay for a teacher to help her learn to communicate. Helen works hard to learn many more words and signs than she could make on her own.*

1. Annie Sullivan was a very special kind of human resource. What was Annie’s job?

*Annie Sullivan was a teacher who had special knowledge and skills for working with children who were blind and deaf.*

1. Helen wanted to read but could not see. How did Helen overcome this?

*Helen learned to read and write in Braille, a special language for the blind.*

1. There was a scarcity of books in Braille? Why do you think this was?

*Braille books are very expensive to produce because they take people with special skills and extra equipment. Because they are expensive to produce and only a few people need them or will buy them, not many are made.*

1. Going to college was difficult for Helen, and she needed Annie’s help every day. Why did Helen want to invest in herself by going to college?

*Helen wanted to learn and to be able to work to support herself with the money she would earn. She could work at better paying jobs if she was well educated.*

1. Helen worked to help others in her community who were not as fortunate as she felt herself to be. At the time, some children were required to work long hours. She worked to end this type of child labor. Why do you think children should not be made to work long hours when they are young? What is the opportunity cost of work for children?

*Children who are working a full day cannot also go to school. Going to school helps children to become more valuable human resources who can earn more and live more comfortably. The opportunity cost for working was going to school and learning.*

1. How did Helen work to earn a living?

*She wrote the story of her life called a biography, and she gave talks and answered questions. People were interested in what she had to say.*

1. Helen Keller not only accomplished great things for herself, but she also worked for the rights of others who were disabled. She believed all people were valuable and capable of making a contribution to their communities. How can you help others?