A TEACHER’S GUIDE TO THE SIGNET CLASSIC EDITION OF

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON’S

UP FROM SLAVERY

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INTRODUCTION

Booker T. Washington's commanding presence and oratory deeply moved his contemporaries. His writings continue to influence readers today. Although Washington claimed his autobiography was “a simple, straightforward story, with no attempt at embellishment,” readers for nearly a century have found it richly rewarding. Today, Up From Slavery appeals to a wide audience from early adolescence through adulthood. More important, however, is the inspiration his story of hard work and positive goals gives to all readers. His life is an example providing hope to all.

The complexity and contradictions of his life make his autobiography intellectually intriguing for advanced readers. To some he was known as the Sage of Tuskegee or the Black Moses. One of his prominent biographers, Louis R. Harlan, called him the “Wizard of the Tuskegee Machine.” Others acknowledged him to be a complicated person and public figure. Students of American social and political history have come to see that Washington lived a double life. Publicly he appeased the white establishment by remaining cautious in his charges and demands. Privately he worked tirelessly to undo the effects of institutional and cultural racism. Although he seemed to have made a grand compromise, first with the white south and then with white America, he worked in deepest secret to undermine the compromise and advance the social and economic position of blacks.

No doubt exists as to his greatness. He founded Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, the National Negro Business League, and National Negro Health Week. No one doubts his power. After all, he had the ear and praise of several Presidents. Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft especially sought his counsel. He counted Andrew Carnegie, the industrial baron, as his friend. As a speaker on the world stage, Washington gave valuable, well-received advice on racial, economic, and educational matters.

Above all, Up From Slavery makes two points quite clear. One, Washington began life as a mulatto slave, father unknown, yet he rose to worldwide prominence. Two, he had an agenda—to get money for his mission. Booker T. Washington had no false shyness in keeping company with the wealthy and powerful. Because of this he was supremely successful in achieving his financial goals.

The immense complexities of the economy of slavery and the long term economical, psychological, spiritual, moral, and ethical effects of pervasive institutional racism only begin to suggest why Washington lived a double life and why he gave no hint of that shadow life in his autobiographies. Had he made his full agenda public, he could have saved himself some pain and unmerited abuse from those of his own race who saw other paths to freedom and prosperity. However, how much more abuse might he have endured at the hands of the white majority? How much of the good that he accomplished might have been lost? We will never know the answers to these questions, but they are worth considering.

Up From Slavery appeals to a wide range of students and may serve as a primary source for students of United States history and as an autobiography for students in English classes. Those interested in psychology, sociology, economics, education, and anthropology will find it a valuable resource. For college students, this text encourages analysis and criticism.

This Signet Classic Teacher's Guide shows how Up From Slavery may be used across the curriculum. As with other study guides in this series, prereading, during reading, and after reading questions and activities are suggested. Those questions and activities appropriate only for mature students are starred (*). In addition, a bibliography offers other resources on topics such as African-American culture and history, Booker T. Washington, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Underground Railroad.

CHRONOLOGY OF BOOKER T. WASHINGTON’S LIFE

(1856-1915) IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1856 Born, Hale’s Ford, Franklin County, VA
1857 Supreme Court declared African-Americans were not citizens, Dred Scott Decision
1860 South Carolina seceded from Union 1861-65 Civil War
1862 Emancipation Proclamation signed
1864 Repeal of Fugitive Slave Laws
1865 13th Amendment outlawed slavery; Ku Klux Klan begun in Tennessee; Black Codes; Freedman’s Bureau; President Lincoln assassinated
1866 Congress passed first Civil Rights Act, freed slaves became United States Citizens
1867-78 Reconstruction Period
1867 First Reconstruction Act, suffrage for black males in former Confederate states
1868 14th Amendment gave equal citizenship and rights to blacks
1870 15th Amendment gave suffrage to all U.S. male citizens; Enforcement Acts to counter Ku Klux Klan
1871 Ku Klux Klan Act to enforce 14th Amendment
1872 Decided to attend Hampton Institute
1875 Finished regular course of study at Hampton Institute; waited tables at hotel in Connecticut; returned to Malden, WV to teach school; Civil Rights Act of 1875
1877 Federal troops left the former Confederacy states
1878 Studied at Wayland Theological Seminary, Washington, DC
1879 Received Master of Divinity from Wayland Theological Seminary; Spent three months campaigning in West Virginia to move the state capital to Charleston; Taught at Hampton Institute; pursued supplemental studies; served as house father to Native Americans
1879-80 Took charge of Night School at Hampton Institute
1881 Formed new school for African-Americans in Tuskegee, AL; July 4, opened Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute; purchased abandoned plantation with loan for a down payment of $250 from J. F. B. Marshall, Treasurer of Hampton Institute; observed local African American Christmas revelry
1882 Paid back loan; received deed to 100 acres of land; Olivia Davidson solicited funds with Washington in Northampton, MA; married Fannie N. Smith of Malden, WV
1882-83 Opened Boarding School
1883 First child, Portia M. Washington, born
1884 Opened Tuskegee Night School; Fannie died
1885 Married Olivia Davidson; Supreme Court struck down the Civil Rights Act of 1875
1886-89 Sons, Baker Taliaferro and Ernest Davidson born
1889 Olivia died
1893 Spoke to International Meeting of Christian Workers in Atlanta, GA ("Five Minute Speech")
1895 Spoke to Atlanta Cotton States & International Exposition, immediate success and sensation; President Grover Cleveland sent him a congratulatory letter; Judged an award in Department of Education in Atlanta; Married Margaret James Murray
1896 Received AM degree from Harvard; Plessy v. Ferguson decision, Supreme Court ("separate but equal" segregation established)
1897 Delivered address at dedication of the Robert Gould Shaw Monument in Boston
1898 Spanish-American War; President McKinley visited Tuskegee at Washington's invitation
1899 Received gift of a trip to Europe for himself and his wife; toured the great capitals of Europe; met Mark Twain, Susan B. Anthony, and Queen Victoria 1900 Published The Story of My Life and Work, his first autobiography; organized the National Negro Business League; wrote to Andrew Carnegie. asking for $20,000 to build a library and received positive response
1914 Founded National Negro Health Week
1915 Died
**PERSONAL WRITING TOPICS**

Encourage students to keep a journal in which they will explore through written responses their personal reactions to a variety of topics. Permit them to select those of interest. Later they may add their responses to topics relating to Booker T. Washington and the history of African-Americans. These personal responses may also be used as the basis of discussion. For example, topics can be written on index cards and drawn from a box by a member of a small group. Group members can first respond to the topic in writing for 10 to 15 minutes. Students then select another topic card. At the end of the class session, the group selects the topic they want to pursue in more depth and develop a class presentation.

Have individuals or a small group of students respond to one or more of these sample response topics:

1. What do you know about your immediate family history? (Follow up activity: Do research to learn more.)
2. How were you named and what does your name mean?
3. Remember a time when you felt helpless.
4. When have you been taken advantage of?
5. If you wrote your life story, how would you describe yourself?
6. What does the American Dream mean to you? (Follow up activity: Conduct a survey to find out what others think. Do you and your friends agree with your parents or members of an earlier generation? How might the definition change according to time and place?)
7. Remember a time when you were too tired to study.
8. Have you ever deceived someone? Did you think you had a good reason? What do you think now?
9. Are hard work and determination sooner or later rewarded? Is virtue its own reward?
10. Recall if you have ever been determined to do or get something that seemed way beyond your power to achieve. What was your goal? What happened?
11. What has your mother, father, or some other member of your family done to help you or your family?
12. In the past, most public high schools offered shop and home economics classes, at first segregated by gender, and later coeducational. Does your school still offer these classes? By what names? Does your school offer technical, industrial, or vocational training? What are the goals of these programs? Who takes these classes? What other courses, outside of the program, are students required to take?
13. What experience have you had with shadowing in the business world or other kinds of work away from school?
14. Have you ever heard the expression, “Cleanliness is Next to Godliness”? What are your thoughts on this idea?
15. Other statements associated with God are used to motivate people to some desired action. Maybe you have heard that “God helps those who help themselves.” Does this idea have a benevolent and unselfish connotation or a self-serving connotation?
16. How would you feel if you were inspected for cleanliness and orderliness of dress at school each day? Do you think it would be a good idea for schools to do this?
17. Discuss the school’s dress code. How well does it work? Do you think school uniforms are a good idea? What are your thoughts about how you dress?
18. Are different groups of students distinguished by how they dress? Is this also true in adult society?
19. Have you ever needed to raise money? Was it for personal use or did you belong to an organization such as the Scouts or the school band or an athletic team? What did you do to raise money? How did that feel? What kinds of people did you meet? What was their response to your appeal?
THE WRITTEN TEXT AND ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Students will find it difficult to comprehend *Up From Slavery* unless they are armed with knowledge of pertinent literary techniques and American history. According to the needs of the students and time constraints of the class, students can participate in activities to reinforce their knowledge of literary techniques and history.

LITERARY TECHNIQUES

Some of the following questions and/or activities should help students put *Up From Slavery* in historic and literary context. Ask the students to:

1. Explain the difference between creative writing and expository prose; fiction and nonfiction; biography and autobiography, and narrative.

2. Brainstorm a topic such as the Civil War, segregation and integration, the Civil Rights Movement, or some topic of the students’ choosing. Collect examples of this topic in: short stories, poems, songs, novels; newspaper and magazine accounts; biographies and autobiographies; and narrative (true) essays or narrative passages in fiction. Explain the differences.

3. Explain the creation of a persona(ae), mask, public vs. private image. Consider the relation of these concepts to “person” and “personality.”

4. Give examples from your own lives or popular culture. Draw or create masks to represents the face(s) you use. Make a collage of celebrity images. How many faces do you have? What about “false faces”?

5. Distinguish between persona(ae) or public self, hidden self, shadow self (unconscious self), higher self, and/or authentic self. (A good primer of Jungian psychology or a dictionary or encyclopedia of the psychology of personality are helpful sources.) Consider that a society as well as an individual may have a shadow self. (Ishmael Reed's introduction to the Signet Classic edition of *Up From Slavery* explores this concept, especially his discussion of the Ku Klux Klan and Washington's measured response to white savagery and paranoia.)

6. Do some reading on what St. Paul, St. Augustine, Mary Shelley (Frankenstein), Nathaniel Hawthorne (Scarlet Letter), Robert Louis Stevenson (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde), Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, James Baldwin, or others had to say or write about the dual/tripartite nature of humanity. Report what you find to the class. Draw a picture of your three faces: the public, the angelic, and the devilish you.

HISTORY

Without a clear understanding of the historical period surrounding Booker T. Washington’s life, students will find it difficult to understand his motivation and actions. Some of these activities and/or questions should help the students recall what they have previously learned. Ask the students to:

1. Explain the concept of “primary source”: letters, diaries, journals, autobiographies. What place does each of these have in the study of history?

2. Read one or more secondary sources about slaves, the Civil War, Reconstruction, or the history of African-Americans from the end of Reconstruction to the end of World War I. Try to find additional primary materials on your topic. Determine whether the secondary source gives an accurate account or portrait. Report your findings to the class. (See “Suggestions for Further Reading” for useful resources.)

3. Initiate research on the historical context of Washington’s narrative. Explain how to evaluate primary and secondary sources for reliability.

4. Cooperate in building a clear understanding of life from 1856 to 1900, from 1900 to 1915. Divide into groups to research the sweeping changes in technology, agriculture, economics, education, and society from before the Civil War to the twentieth century.

5. Investigate how the Civil War and the end of slavery radically changed life in the United States, for example, the need to introduce mechanized farming in the South, the opening of the American West, the mass migrations of former slaves to other areas of the country. Report your findings to the class. Construct a time line with photographs or drawings to illustrate historical events. What literature or songs, like ‘John Henry,’ commemorate these events?
6. Survey the class to determine what students may have heard or know of the Ku Klux Klan. Read Ishmael Reed's introduction to the Signet Classic edition of *Up From Slavery*.

7. Organize a fact-finding mission, via time travel, to the time and place of Reed's discussion of the Klan. Draw up a list of questions and suggestions for getting answers to those questions. You may want to break up into small groups with different localities or times assigned to each group. Where would you go and to whom would you speak? What safeguards might you suggest for the successful conclusion of your investigation? Next, consult reliable historical sources, primary and secondary, to answer your questions. Is Reed's assessment accurate and unbiased? Report your findings to the class.

**EDUCATION**

*Up From Slavery* is a wonderful primary source to use in college education classes. Prior to reading the book students should explore what they already know about its historical, literary, and educational context. Ask students to:


2. Discuss the best means to educate our citizens, including socially and economically disadvantaged children. Include models students have experienced or observed.

3. After dividing into small groups, describe and define the purposes of education. One group may consider education of the past. Decide what times in the past you are considering: Colonial? Revolutionary era? Frontier communities? Post-Reconstruction? Early twentieth century? Cold War era? Another group may consider the present and another the future.

4. React to the educational concept of combining actual manual labor (or other work) with traditional academic learning? Draw up guidelines for your vision of such a program. Who were some of the proponents of this type of education? How would John Dewey react to Booker T. Washington's approaches to education?

5. Design a radically new but workable educational system. Identify the basic needs of our citizens today and how to meet those needs. Why is this such a difficult task?

6. Explore the role/responsibility of public schools and private. How do they differ? Is there a place for both in our educational system?

7. Conduct a survey to determine what relationship exists between public schools and the communities they serve. Try to find out what the public asks of public schools. Does the public expect the schools to provide anything more than information and skills? What about moral character, civic responsibility, jobs?

8. Do some research to determine how private schools, supported with private funding, differ from public schools, supported with tax dollars. Consider admission policies, curriculum, place of religion in the classroom, dress codes, athletics. Report your findings to the class. What is the significance of your findings?

9. Explore the implications of local, state, and Federal governments placing requirements or restrictions on either private or public schools, for example, standards for graduation or standards required before teachers can be certified to teach school.

10. Brainstorm new educational requirements or restrictions; then conduct a survey to determine what is happening in your community today.

11. Search newspapers and magazines for articles on these issues. What are the positive and/or negative effects of any of the requirements or restrictions? Report your findings to the class. 12. Stage a debate on any of the above issues.

**DURING READING: QUESTIONS, QUOTATIONS, AND ACTIVITIES**

This section of the teacher's guide deals with the heart of the content, chapter by chapter. Questions, quotations, and suggested activities support each chapter. Student discussion questions and activities frequently benefit from preliminary journal writing or free writing. Prompts for thinking, discussing, and writing can be utilized in interrelated content areas, especially English, history, humanities, and/or education.

If one of the prompts applies more specifically to one of the disciplines, it is noted parenthetically.

Questions allow students to move beyond comprehension of the text to analysis and evaluation.
Quotations can be used to help start discussions or prompt writing for response journals. Any number of responses may be correct, depending upon the amount and qualities of evidence students gather to support their reactions.

Activities designed for small groups help students deal with concepts in a personal way. Any of these may be adapted to the classroom response or personal journal writing. Students should be encouraged to come up with ways to make the material come alive for themselves and each other.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES APPROPRIATE FOR ALL CHAPTERS

Following are some activities that can be completed by small groups of students. Ask them to:

1. Stage a panel discussion, make a videotaped presentation, hold a press conference or a debate, stage a trial or group interview in which the group members play the parts of persons featured in Washington's narrative.
2. Record on a cassette tape recorder and later transcribe your thoughts or your classmates' thoughts about Washington and his life and relate these to what you witness or experience in your lives.
3. Clip newspaper or magazine articles or download Internet postings on education and/or race relations.
4. Illustrate any of these articles by making a collage, drawing a picture, designing a cartoon, etc.
5. Compose follow-up questions for the articles that you would ask if you were the reporter.
6. Apply Washington's ideas to current events.
7. Assume roles and act out any of the events in the autobiography.
8. Draw, paint, or compose a piece of music that illustrates your interpretation of any of the people and/or events in Washington's autobiography.
9. Write letters to, becoming pen pals with present students at Tuskegee University.

Response journals are appropriate in all subject areas. They enable students to respond in writing to questions or quotations and relate these responses to the subject they are studying. Encourage students to respond in a variety of increasingly complex ways. This allows them to develop thinking and writing skills as they explore, analyze, and evaluate. This teacher's guide will provide questions and quotations that students can address as they read each chapter.

CHAPTER I: A SLAVE AMONG SLAVES

The first chapter opens with Booker T. Washington's obscure beginnings as a child slave in Virginia and covers his life of slavery to the eve of emancipation.

QUESTIONS

1. What was one of Washington's great fears when sent on errands to the mill?
2. What was his greatest desire? How might this influence the rest of his life?
3. What evidence suggests he saw the plight of the slaves in an Old Testament context? (History)
4. Why did he wait so long to reveal the coded language of the black songs?

QUOTATIONS

“This tenderness and sympathy on the part of those held in bondage was a result of their kindly and generous nature” (9).

“When persons ask me... how, in the midst of what... seem hopelessly discouraging conditions, I can have such faith in the future of my race...I remind them of the wilderness...out of which, a good Providence has already led us” (11).

“The slave system...took the spirit of self-reliance and self-help out of the white people” (12).
ACTIVITIES

1. Research your family genealogies. Make individual family trees. What are the nationalities and ethnic groups that compose your background? What are the nationalities and ethnic groups that compose your classmates' backgrounds? When did the people in your family first come to America? Be certain to consider the migrations of Native Americans.

2. Compose a dictionary of your coded language, especially from popular, contemporary songs. Try to define categories. Each group could select a category. Compare the examples to the coded language of a previous generation.

3. Write and present a one-act play that depicts any of the conditions of the slaves, including: field slaves, house slaves, children, family life, health conditions, how named, religion. (History)

4. Read and report your findings on any other famous autobiography of prominent American figures, including: The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, The Diary of George Templeton Strong (especially for its portrait of Lincoln and depiction of New York society), Mary Chestnut's A Diary from Dixie, Samuel Sewall's Diary, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, The Education of Henry Adams, Life on the Mississippi, In Ole Virginia, Henry David Thoreau's Journal, Mark Twain's Autobiography, Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant, or The Secret Diary of William Byrd. Compare it to Up From Slavery.* (English)

CHAPTER II: BOYHOOD DAYS

This chapter focuses on things most contemporary children do not have to worry about: finding a place to live and work; struggling to get an education; facing obstacles.

QUESTIONS

1. What factors worked against him, his family, and his neighbors in achieving an education?

2. How did attending night school influence his theories as a future educator?

3. Why did he value his own experience over other published theories?

4. With the selection of a name, what larger quest was he attempting to fulfill, and how did having a name relate to this more universal quest?*

5. What hard lesson did he learn about the relative nature of rewards and work?

6. What was his goal in telling his story? In what ways was he trying to influence the reader?

QUOTATIONS

“This experience of a whole race beginning to go to school for the first time, presents one of the most interesting studies that has ever occurred in connection with the development of any race” (20).

“I have a great faith in the power and influence of facts’ (22).

“Years ago I resolved that because I had no ancestry myself I would leave a record of which my children would be proud, and which might encourage them to still higher effort” (24).

“Every persecuted individual and race should get much consolation out of the great human law, which is universal and eternal, that merit, no matter under what skin found, is, in the long run, recognized and rewarded” (28).

ACTIVITIES

1. Locate folk songs or stories of folk heroes relating to black and white laborers in West Virginia or other mining communities. Perform these songs, give an oral reading, or tell the stories. (English)

2. Research Mother Jones. Then imagine and present a dialogue between her and Washington.* (History, Sociology)
3. Research child labor and child labor laws in England, United States, or present-day third-world countries. (History)
   (a) Illustrate your findings in a drawing or poem.
   (b) Where are such abuses still in evidence today? Locate these places on a map and name the businesses or corporations responsible for exploitation of child labor. Try to describe or draw the difference between the buyers and makers of goods produced by child labor.

CHAPTER III: THE STRUGGLE FOR AN EDUCATION

This is an important chapter for today’s students who assume that education is a right. The chapter covers Washington’s time in the coal mine and his difficult journey to Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia.

QUESTIONS

1. What values did Washington learn while performing work for Mrs. Ruffner? Comment on them.
2. What hardships of travel did he attribute to race and poverty, and why had he never before considered the effects of skin color?
3. What valuable life lesson did he learn from his experience of earning money along the way to Hampton Institute?
4. What qualities of character enabled him to pass the test to be admitted to the Institute even though he had no money?
5. What evidence did he give of continuing to value his own life experience as a basis on which to develop his ideas?*
6. How did his future life control what he revealed of his past?*
7. How does this chapter foreshadow future events?*

QUOTATIONS

Washington says, “Instead of studying books so constantly, how I wish that our schools and colleges might learn to study men and things!” (38)

“He [General Armstrong] was but a type of that Christlike body of men and women who went into the Negro schools at the close of the war by the hundreds to assist in lifting up my race” (39).

“The great and prevailing idea that seemed to take possession of every one was to prepare himself to lift up the people at his home” (42).

“Whenever it is written—and I know it will be—the part that the Yankee teachers played in the education of the Negroes immediately after the war will make one of the most thrilling parts of the history of this country” (42-43).

ACTIVITIES

1. Write a short story or a dramatic scene that illustrates any of the above themes expressed in the quotations. Perhaps you could elaborate upon Washington’s material by showing, for example, what might have happened between one of the Yankee teachers and the community into which she came.
2. Draw a map that illustrates “journey” as a metaphor for the testing and discovery of one’s true self. Who went from point A to point B, and what happened in between? What conflicts, trials, and triumphs did the hero undergo? What other characters in literature do you know or have you read about who engaged in what some refer to as an “epic journey”? (English)
3. Write about your own epic journey. What is heroic about your journey to adulthood?
4. Write a brief newspaper account of any experiences you have had with racism. Who did what to whom? For what reason(s)? What were the consequences?
5. In a well-reasoned argument, convince a skeptical authority figure or a close friend that some goals are more important than money or personal comfort. Role-play this position with a partner who assumes the role of the person of opposing opinion whom you are trying to convince. Use plenty of specific detail.
6. For a prestigious civic award, write about someone who gave you a chance to succeed or attain your goal. Next, give a speech to the committee who decides the winner. Name the organization, the award, and the committee.

7. Many believe “charity begins at home,” yet Washington lauded the Yankees who came South to educate or help African-Americans who were excluded from the benefits of citizenship. What do you think? Write your response in your journal. If you were to join VISTA or the Peace Corps, where would you go and why? Write about this in your journal.

8. Write a letter to the young Booker T. Washington. Share your experiences with traveling to some new place like school, camp, or home. Be certain to use concrete and specific detail.

CHAPTER IV: HELPING OTHERS
This chapter covers the time from the end of his first year at Hampton Institute to his return home after graduation.

QUESTIONS
1. What guiding principles of life did he develop in his stay at Hampton Institute? Explain how they developed and why he offered them as advice for others.
2. How was his experience with the debating society typical of his personality?
3. How was his experience of looking for work during the summer after his second year at school typical of those of many young African-Americans today?

QUOTATIONS
“Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others” (46).

“From my early childhood I have had a desire to do something to make the world better, and then to be able to speak to the world about that thing” (47).

“Ever since then I have had no patience with any school for my race in the South which did not teach its students the dignity of labour...I not only learned that it was not a disgrace to labour, but learned to love labour, not alone for its financial value, but for labour’s own sake and for the independence and self-reliance which the ability to do something which the world wants done brings” (50-51).

“I have referred to this unpleasant part of the history of the South [night raids of the Ku Klux Klan] simply for the purpose of calling attention to the great change that has taken place since the days of the ’Ku Klux. Today there are no such organizations in the South, and the fact that such ever existed is almost forgotten by both races” (55).

ACTIVITIES
1. Research the history of the Ku Klux Klan. Begin with Ishmael Reed’s “Introduction.”* (History)
2. Read about people who have made the world better. Tell the class about a remarkable person they may not know about. Make a class list of people who qualify as those who have made the world a better place.
3. Discuss: Who is the happiest person you know? Be sure to identify someone you believe is truly happy, not someone who may appear outwardly happy, but is inwardly discontent. Why is this individual happy? Send him or her a letter asking them what they have done to become such a happy person.

CHAPTER V: THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD
Chapter five covers the period from 1867 to 1878 when Washington was a student at Hampton and a teacher in West Virginia.

QUESTIONS
1. How and why did Washington attempt to refute the idea of doing no manual labor?
2. What objections did he have to many of his race who became teachers and preachers?

3. What was Washington's belief about the proper relationship between his people and the Federal Government?

**QUOTATIONS**

“It seemed to me that the ignorance of my race was being used as a tool...to help white men into office, and...an element in the North...wanted to punish the Southern white men by forcing the Negro into positions over the heads of Southern whites” (59).

“I am convinced that the final solution of the political end of our race problem will be for each state that finds it necessary to change the law bearing upon the franchise to make the law apply with absolute honesty, and without opportunity for double dealing or evasion, to both races alike” (60).

**ACTIVITIES**

1. In small groups share your reactions to Washington's recommendation that “mental training” for young African-American girls be supplemented with “thorough training in the latest and best methods of laundering and other kindred occupations” (63). Make a list of what you would recommend for young girls today. Next, compose and deliver a convincing speech about implementing these suggestions that could be given to the school board. Be sure to justify each recommendation by stating the benefits to be derived.

2. Write a scene to be acted before the class about how the time Washington spent in Washington, D. C., influenced his attitudes about vocational training and traditional book learning. *(Education)*

3. If your high school did not require community service, write a proposal to initiate such a program. How many hours would you require? Where would you place yourself and your peers? What benefits would result for you and your community? What do you think Booker T. Washington might say about these programs? Use quotations from his autobiography to support your argument. *(Education)*

**CHAPTER VI: BLACK RACE AND RED RACE**

In this chapter Washington provides details about his refusal to enter politics and traces his interaction and that of other African-Americans with the Native American students.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What was Washington's notion of a true gentleman? What famous example did he use?

2. What did he have to say about “the curious workings of caste in America” (70)? Give several examples of social stratification in America's society from his time.

3. How did he approach his task of being “house father” to seventy-five Native Americans at Hampton Institute? Was he successful?

4. How did his philosophy of helping others affect his work with the Native Americans? Be specific in your answers.

**QUOTATIONS**

“No white American ever thinks that any other race is wholly civilized until he wears the white man's clothes, eats the white man's food, speaks the white man's language, and professes the white man's religion” (68).

“They cannot degrade Frederick Douglass. The soul that is within me no man can degrade. I am not the one that is being degraded on account of this treatment, but those who are inflicting it upon me” (69).

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Have you ever felt like a minority who is forced to adopt someone else's dress code or eat someone else's food choice or submit to an alien language or religion? Write a short story with this as the theme.
2. Wear something to school that is not the trend. Describe how you are treated and how you feel in your journal. Does the pressure to conform to a larger or more dominant group's expectations come from your own peer group as well as from parents, teachers, church or community leaders? Break into small focus groups to write newspaper accounts of your findings.

3. Create a picture storyboard depicting how the history of Africans who came to America differed from that of other immigrants. Write a commentary detailing the accomplishments of African immigrants or the effects of this unique history on the Black community. (History)

CHAPTER VII: EARLY DAYS AT TUSKEGEE

Washington examines the background of the founding of Tuskegee Institute where he began his life-defining career.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did the term “Black Belt of the South” have a double meaning?
2. How did Washington characterize racial relations in Tuskegee? What evidence did he offer?
3. What was the economic status of the citizens in and around Tuskegee?
4. What attitude did he reveal about lifestyles and the spending habits of the African-Americans whom he observed?

QUOTATIONS

“While the colored people were ignorant, they had not, as a rule, degraded and weakened their bodies by vices such as are common to the lower class of people in the large cities” (76).

Of the educational resources he concludes: “With few exceptions, I found the teachers in these country schools to be miserably poor in preparation for their work, and poor in moral character” (80-81).

ACTIVITIES

1. In small groups, investigate the costs for land, buildings, supplies, utilities, teachers’ salaries, and maintenance for the school system in which you are currently observing. Report on how these expenses are met.* (Education)
2. Read about the history of agricultural and mining/manufacturing colleges in America. Write a recruiting brochure for such a college. Assuming that one of these schools is about to close (a fiction), write a moving appeal on its behalf. (Education)
3. Read what other published African-American authors, for example Maya Angelou, say about the separate school systems for black and white children in the South. Report on your findings. (English, African-American culture)
4. Continue the above by reading about the history and then contemporary thinking on “separate but equal” facilities in America, especially as this practice relates to education. Stage a debate on this issue.* (Education, History)

CHAPTER VIII: TEACHING SCHOOL IN A STABLE AND A HEN-HOUSE

Washington discusses his continuing struggles and what happens when he hits an emotional low point.

QUESTIONS

1. What one factor in Washington’s proposed curriculum put him most at odds with the African-American community? Why?
2. What was his estimation of the African-Americans’ educational sophistication and expectations?
3. Why did some in the local white community oppose teaching African-Americans trades and basic skills and knowledge education?
4. What particularly distressed Washington about the lives of so many African-Americans?
QUOTATION

Washington determined to offer a “solid and thorough foundation, so far as their books were concerned” (85).

ACTIVITIES

1. Using Miss Davidson as an example, write about when you have had to make and live with the consequences of difficult moral decisions. Using stick figures, drawings, clippings from magazines, or photographs, illustrate the story or essay showing those individuals involved in the incident and the relative power of each.

2. Present a mock television talk show (Oprah, Ricki, Sally, etc.) on which the guests relate stories of the value of personal integrity. Use questions from the audience.

3. Using Miss Davidson as an example, write about the value of self-sacrifice. Give examples of people you know who have put themselves in some danger to do a good deed for others. Have any of you been in such a position? For your own version of the movie It’s a Wonderful Life write and role-play some scenes illustrating life with and without these people.

CHAPTER IX: ANXIOUS DAYS AND SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

In this chapter Washington examines many examples of holiday customs in the African-American community and relates the desperate need for funding at Tuskegee.

QUESTIONS

1. What was Washington's opinion of the Christmas holiday customs of his African-American neighbors?

2. Why did the author wait twenty years to disclose General Armstrong's personal generosity?

QUOTATIONS

“From the first, I have advised our people in the South to make friends in every straightforward, manly way with their next-door neighbor, whether he be a black man or a white man” (9G).

“I knew that... we were trying an experiment—that of testing whether or not it was possible for Negroes to build up and control the affairs of a large educational institution. I knew that if we failed it would injure the whole race” (101).

ACTIVITIES

1. Consider the personal satisfaction that would come from being able to envision, design, and execute with your own mind and hands the building of a home in which you live or a school in which you learn. Write about some personal project that gave you great satisfaction. Bring it or some memento of this project to class. Show these and share your thoughts with your classmates.

2. Look into other schools that combine traditional book learning with labor, such as Berea College in Berea, Kentucky and Warren Wilson College in Asheville, N.C. What variations do you find? What kinds of work-study programs do these schools offer?

3. After some preliminary research, describe how contemporary mentoring and internship programs on the high school and college level compare with the programs at Tuskegee. Using the best features of these programs, write a proposal for this idea that you might present to your school board or academic dean. * (Education)

CHAPTER X: A HARDER TASK THAN MAKING BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW

Chapter ten shows how Washington’s “Can do” creed won the day.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the title of this chapter?
2. As Washington recounted the details of the students building the campus with their own hands, what qualities of mind and/or character did he reveal in himself and the students?

3. By sticking to his principles, what long-range benefits to the community did he hope to achieve?

4. What did the larger community learn from and about educated African-Americans?

**QUOTATIONS**

“My experience is that there is something in human nature which always makes an individual recognize and reward merit, no matter what colour of skin merit is found” (107).

“We can’t even get water to drink at this school. I think no one remark ever came so near discouraging me as that one” (112). (Washington overheard this lament from the young woman who did not get any breakfast and then could not pull water from a well as the rope had snapped.)

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Research the teachings of other famous proponents of love and/or non-violence such as Jesus, Henry David Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Dalai Lama who stood against military aggression and racial intolerance. Determine how they practiced non-violent and even loving responses. Compare them to Booker T. Washington. Write a scene based on history or create a scene in which any of these figures interacts in a contemporary conflict. Act out the scene. *(History)*

2. Perhaps you have heard the expression “This hurts me more than it will hurt you.” Do you agree with Washington’s idea that the hurtful act of one group against another eventually hurts the perpetrators?

3. Find photographs from current events and recent history to illustrate the conflict and write about your reactions.

**CHAPTER XI: MAKING THEIR BEDS BEFORE THEY COULD LIE ON THEM**

In chapter eleven Washington traces the continuing growth of the school and reveals his developing social philosophy.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What is the significance of the chapter title?

2. According to Washington, what were the economic, political, and moral repercussions for the white community when they abused African Americans?

3. What evidence did he offer that his educational ideas were succeeding, and succeeding beyond the fields of Tuskegee?

4. What was his idea about avoiding strikes at the workplace?

**QUOTATIONS**

“I learned...that great men cultivate love, and that only little men cherish a spirit of hatred” (115).

“I...resolved that I would permit no man, no matter what his colour...to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate him” (115).

Washington says, “With God’s help, I believe that I have completely rid myself of any ill feeling toward the Southern white man for any wrong that he may have inflicted upon my race” (115).

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Design an advertising campaign to promote Washington’s ideas in your school.

2. Hold group discussions about hate crimes in America. Talk about the feasibility of applying his ideas, as found in the above quotations.
3. In your journals, write about self-respect. Use examples from your own life and comment on Washington's emphasis on self-respect.

CHAPTER XII: RAISING MONEY

This chapter serves as a primer on raising funds.

QUESTIONS

1. How would you characterize Washington's philosophy of fundraising?
2. Why did he appeal successfully to hardheaded businessmen?

QUOTATIONS

“[General Armstrong] was too big to be little, too good to be mean” (125).

General Armstrong's advice for speaking engagements: “Give them an idea for every word” (126).

“The most useful and influential people in [the world] are those who take the deepest interest in institutions that exist for the purpose of making the world better” (128-129).

ACTIVITIES

1. Review and discuss in a small group Washington's appeal to Andrew Carnegie: “Such a building as we need could be erected for about $20,000. The students would do all of the work for the building, such as brick making, brick-masonry, carpentry, blacksmithing, etc. The money which you would give would not only supply the building, but the...opportunity to learn the building trades, and the students would use the money paid to them to keep themselves in school” (134). Brainstorm ways in which our school could seek funding that serves two purposes. Do you think this is a better way to appeal for money than merely to ask for money to build a building. Why?
2. Work individually or in a small group to compose a letter of appeal for funds for some special project. Use specifics. Read the letters to the class. Have the class as a whole or a special group of “philanthropists” judge the letters. What makes one appeal more successful than another?

CHAPTER XIII: TWO THOUSAND MILES FOR A FIVE-MINUTE SPEECH

In this chapter Washington summarizes advances in his professional and personal life.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was starting a night school so dear to Washington's heart?
2. How did being indispensable to a community differ from being a slave?
3. Why was his address at the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition the most famous speech of his life?
4. Why was delivering this speech filled with personal and professional risk?

QUOTATIONS

“I early learned that it is a hard matter to convert an individual by abusing him, and that this is more often accomplished by giving credit for all the praiseworthy actions performed than by calling attention alone to all the evil done” (140).

In Washington's mind's eye civilization was moving "in the direction of giving mankind more intelligence, more culture, more skill, more liberty, and in the direction of extending more sympathy and more brotherly kindness” (142).
One Alabama farmer remarked, “Washington, you will have before you the Northern whites, the Southern whites, and the Negroes all together. I am afraid that you have got yourself into a tight place” (148).

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Debate the wisdom and/or effectiveness of Washington’s positive approach to race relations. Consider his advice to members of his own race: to use their “skill, intelligence, and character,” establishing their “undeniable value to the community” so that the white community “could not dispense with his presence” (141).

2. As a group, brainstorm an incident when a lot was accomplished by praising someone rather than criticizing. Write a one-act play to dramatize the incident and present it to the class.

**CHAPTER XIV: THE ATLANTA EXPOSITION ADDRESS**

In chapter fourteen Washington reveals his position on his famous speech.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Why did this speech of September 18, 1895, at the Atlanta Exposition, become a historical touchstone that separates black activism from black moderation?

2. Why did he use the parable of the parched sailors searching for water who are told, “Cast down your bucket where you are” (152)?

3. What was the likelihood that African-Americans could make friends in “every manly way” with their Southern neighbors?

4. Why did he ask that they be given a “man’s chance in a commercial world” (153)?

5. What have been the positive and negative effects of his grand compromise, that socially the races should be separate as the fingers of one hand, yet united in the hand “In all things essential to mutual progress” (154)?

**QUOTATIONS**

“The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized” (155).

“My experience... convince [s] me that the thing to do, when one feels sure that he has said or done the right thing, and is condemned, is to stand still and keep quiet. If he is right, time will show it” (161). This refers to the controversy over black ministers.

“I do not believe that any state should, make a law that permits an ignorant and poverty-stricken white man to vote and prevents a black man in the same condition from voting” (164).

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Washington offered white America the choice: a prosperous minority and so a fully prosperous whole, or a degraded minority and so a stagnated and dying whole. What do you think? Apply these choices to any contemporary social setting and project its dynamics 100 years into the future.*

2. Read what others have had to say about the famous Atlanta Exposition speech. Present the positive and negative reactions to your class. (History)


4. Draw or paint a portrait of Washington presenting his speech. Include the audience if it enhances your portrayal.
CHAPTER XV: THE SECRET OF SUCCESS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

In chapter fifteen Washington offers a survey of his public speaking successes and offers advice to others.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the purpose of the paper casting him in the glory of a ray of sun that would not be denied its target and then showing him as he “turned his wonderful countenance to the sun without a blink...and began to talk” (167)? What do these passages and the fact that Washington quoted them five years later suggest?

2. Why did Washington advise public speakers to “forget all about rules” (170)?

3. Why does he say that he needed to “really master...my audience...[so] that we have gotten into full and complete sympathy with each other” and why did he desire to have “a great audience...completely within his control” (170)?

QUOTATION

“There is a physical and mental and spiritual enjoyment that comes from a consciousness of being the absolute master of one’s work, in all its details, that is very satisfactory and inspiring” (183).

ACTIVITIES

1. Make a two-column list. Head one column “Fact” and the other “Opinion.” Write down examples of each from this chapter. Do you detect any disparity between them? If so, what are the implications?

2. Research charisma. Do you think Washington had charisma? To whom would you compare him today or in the recent past? Write and produce a one-act play depicting someone with charisma.

3. Research Aristotle’s Rhetoric or other Greek masters of public speaking to see commentary on such concepts as ethos and persona. Report to the class about what advice to public speakers or writers these ancient masters give?* (English)

CHAPTER XVI: EUROPE

In this chapter Washington discusses the time before and during his three-month trip to Europe with his third wife.

QUESTIONS

1. How did Washington’s friends counter his claims that Tuskegee could not manage financially without him?

2. What familiar theme of Washington’s did Henry O. Tanner serve to illustrate?

3. What was Washington’s estimation of French morality and moral earnestness?

4. What was Washington’s estimation of English society and servants?

QUOTATIONS

“I could not go to Europe for the reason that the school could not live financially while I was absent” (190).

“In the long run, the world is going to have the best, and any difference in race, religion, or previous history will not long keep the world from what it wants” (196-197).

ACTIVITIES

1. Do some reading on Frederick Douglass or W. E. B. Du Bois. List the similarities and differences between their life stories. Invent a plausible dialogue between Washington and either or both of these African-Americans. Consult Ishmael Reed’s “Introduction” for help on Du Bois. (History)
2. Trace Washington's sea and land voyage on a map. Estimate the cost of such a trip today. Plan a cruise and travel itinerary. What famous and influential people would you like to travel with and meet? What would you hope to learn or share? Write about this in your journal.

3. Consult Mark Twain's Autobiography to see if he mentioned meeting Booker T. Washington. By the time of their meeting, Twain had entered his pessimistic period. Washington was consistent in his optimism. Invent a plausible dialogue between these two world-famous Americans.

CHAPTER XVII: LAST WORDS

In this final chapter, Washington surveys the symbolic events in his life and philosophy.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did General Armstrong visit Tuskegee in the last year of his life?
2. What President came to Tuskegee, and how did Washington get him there?
3. What was Washington's stand on lynching?

QUOTATION

“The great human law that in the end recognizes and rewards merit is everlasting and universal. The outside world does not know, neither can it appreciate, the struggle... going on in the hearts of both the Southern white people and their former slaves to free themselves from racial prejudice” (223).

ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss Washington's insistence that all connected with Tuskegee Institute consistently strive to do their best in whatever jobs they had and to value the dignity of all labor. He offers this advice to the world in general. Do you agree? Apply his advice to yourself. Write and produce a one-act play about someone your age that does his/her best no matter the job.
2. Collect articles on Affirmative Action and labor issues from your local newspapers, national news. Create a scrapbook of those you have found in magazines or other media. Compare Washington's stance with today's Affirmative Action laws and commentary.
3. Collect Dilbert, Sally Forth, or other cartoons that comment on the world of work. Interview people in your family, neighborhood, and community about their experiences as workers in and out of the home and their opinions on working. What are their cares and concerns? Do they have a sense of self-worth? Draw your own cartoons or comic strip to illustrate what you discover.
4. Try to determine how the people you interview about work attain and/or maintain their dignity. Does race, gender, or ethnicity seem to play in their experience? What role does race, gender, or ethnicity play in books or articles you have read that examine the world of work. Write a poem or song about what you discover and share it with the class.
5. Imagine Booker T. Washington coming to your community to address the Chamber of Commerce or the school. His topic might be Affirmative Action and the Dignity of Labor. What do you think he might say to his audience? Write and deliver his speech. *(History)*

FOR ADDITIONAL READING AND RESEARCH ON THESE TOPICS CONSIDER:


**AFTER READING ACTIVITIES**

Select from the following:

1. When you have finished reading *Up From Slavery*, discuss with the class or in a small group any of the following themes: The Orphan; Inequities of the Accident of Birth; Quest for Identity; Mutual Victimization of Slavery; Dream of Freedom, Responsibility of Freedom; Dream of a Better Life; Benefits of Labor; Negative Effects of Unrelieved Labor; Necessity of Education to Humanity; Making of a Virtue out of Necessity; Power of Positive Attitudes; and Pride of Being a Negro.

Select one theme that is particularly interesting to you or to the members of your small group. Trace the development of this theme throughout the autobiography. Outline the development of the theme on chart paper. A timeline format may be appropriate. You might place the pages on which the theme is illustrated by chapter on the top of the timeline and your comments and reactions under the time line.

As an alternative write a three-act play using the autobiography as your basis and focusing on the theme you have selected.

2. Washington's social and educational philosophies were inseparable. Discuss with your small group how well his ideas fit his times, especially during Reconstruction. How are these ideas appropriate for the conditions in which you live today? Write an essay on positive reconstruction for your neighborhood, community, or state.

As an alternative, develop a plan for the positive reconstruction of the school or the community. Prepare a Power Point presentation of this plan for the class. Pretend the class is the school board or the city council.

3. Review with your small group the details of Washington's life. Develop and present a game show such as Jeopardy using these details. Think of appropriate prizes.

As an alternative, develop a slide show, an album, a play, an opera, or any other creative work that appeals to the group members that highlights the most important events and people of his life.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

FOR THE GENERAL AND YOUNGER READER

AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENCYCLOPEDIAS AND WORKBOOKS


AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY/LIFE: NONFICTION


**AFRICAN-AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS/HISTORY: NONFICTION**


**AMERICAN CIVIL WAR**

**FICTION**


**NONFICTION**


**RECONSTRUCTION: NONFICTION**


**UNDERGROUND RAILROAD**

**FICTION**


**NONFICTION**


**GENERAL**

**FICTION**


**NONFICTION**


Root, Nina J. “Portraits of Tuskegee,” *Natural History*, 106 (Feb. 1997), 82+.

**FOR THE MORE ADVANCED READER**

**EDUCATION**


**ENGLISH**


**HISTORY/SOCIOLOGY**

“Booker T. Washington was Right. Interview with Shelby Steele,” *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 7 (Fall 1990), 23-5.


**INTERNET SITES**

A word of caution: Some websites are only for the most mature and even then the content should be carefully analyzed and processed. The Southern Poverty Law Center has identified over 250 websites devoted to racial, religious, and/or ethnic hatred. Be aware that students will find one or more and may raise questions about the content.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

ACADEMIC INFO African-American HISTORY at http://www//academicinfo.net/africanam.html with access through: Directory of Internet Black History from BLACK QUEST POWER

RESOURCES LINKS (see below). Table of Contents includes: Digital Libraries and Archives; Leaders; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Slavery; Civil War; Civil Rights Movement; Jazz; Online Publications; Museums and Exhibits; Libraries, Institutes, and Print Archives; Teaching Materials; Additional Resources.


Berea College, Berea, Kentucky at http://viww.berea.edu/. This college in Appalachia was founded upon the same principles of Tuskegee Institute.


**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

http://minerva.acc.virginia.edu/~history/courses/fall.97/hius323/btw.html

http://ushistory.net/washington.html
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON AND THE TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE

Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site: http://www.nps.gov/tuin/

Tuskegee University: http://www.tusk.edu

http://www.letsfindout.com/subject/america/bookert.html

EDUCATION OF NATIVE AMERICANS: HAMPTON INSTITUTE 1878-1923


Virginia State University: http://www.vsu.edu/history.html In 1920 land grant programs for blacks moved from a private school, Hampton Institute, where it had been since 1872, to Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute that became Virginia State College for Negroes in 1930 then Virginia State College in 1946, and finally Virginia State University in 1979.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THIS GUIDE

Formerly Professor of English at West Liberty State College, West Liberty, WV, VIRGINIA L. SHEPHARD is currently a Learning Specialist and Mentor at Florida State University’s Athletic Academic Support Center. She previously taught English and writing for 29 years on the college level in addition to teaching adults in Elderhostel programs and creative writing for gifted high school students at the Regional Academic Institute. She received her B.A. (Waynesburg College), her M.A. (University of Pittsburgh), and Ph.D. (West Virginia University) in English. In addition to teaching, she was Director of the Honors Program at West Liberty State College and has authored numerous academic articles and theatre reviews for several newspapers in West Virginia and Ohio. She has also written the Training Manual for the Upper Ohio Valley Crisis Hotline, the Rural Manual for the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the Tutorial Manual for the Athletic Academic Support Center at Florida State University.
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