

Name _____

Date _____

George Washington Carver

Reading Comprehension

George Washington Carver was born to slave parents on July 12, in Diamond Grove, Missouri. One night, as an infant, he and his mother were kidnapped by raiders. Though George was unharmed and returned to the farm, his mother disappeared and that would be the last George would see of her. Therefore, Moses and Susan Carver, owners of the farm, took responsibility for George and raised him and his brother.

Unlike children today, George's education didn't start until he was twelve years old. At the time, schools were segregated and George was unable to attend the local school. As an alternative, he moved to a different county in Missouri where he attended a one room schoolhouse. George excelled in his studies and was accepted into Iowa State's College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (now known as Iowa State University). Upon graduation, he was offered a position on the school's faculty.

Soon after that George invited by Booker T. Washington, the founder of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (now Tuskegee University), became the head of the agricultural department at the school. George accepted and spent nearly fifty years developing new farming methods and techniques and improving crop production. During his work, George created almost five hundred agriculture-based inventions. George never patented many of his discoveries. In regard to why he didn't, he said, "God gave them to me, how can I sell them to someone else?"

Because of George's new and improved farming techniques, farmers were able to produce more crops than they could use. For example, with the extra peanuts that farmers had, George developed over 300 different uses for them. He did the same with the sweet potato and the pecan.

Over the years, his discoveries brought him fame across the country. His opinion and ideas were sought after by leaders. But George remained humble and steadfast in his work. He donated his life savings to the George Washington Carver Foundation. In 1916, he was appointed to The Royal Society of Arts in London and in 1923 he was awarded the Springarn Medal. On January 5, 1943, George died on the campus of Tuskegee Institute.

George's contributions to agriculture were monumental. Since his death, George has been honored in multiple ways, including having been inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

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George Washington Carver
Reading and Comprehension Worksheet

1. What state was George born in? _____
2. What happened when he was an infant? _____
3. Who raised him? _____
4. At what age did George start his education? _____
5. What state did George attend college in? _____
6. What did George do after he graduated from college? _____
7. Who invited George to work at Tuskegee Institute? _____
8. How many agricultural inventions did George create? _____
9. What did George say when asked about his patents? _____
10. How many different uses did George create with the excess peanuts? _____
11. Other than peanuts, what other two crops did George invent uses for?

12. What was the name of the medal George received in 1923? _____
13. In what year did George die? _____
14. After his death, what Hall of Fame was George inducted into? _____

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George Washington Carver

Reading and Comprehension Answer Sheet

1. What state was George born in? **Missouri**
2. What happened when he was an infant? **He and his mother were kidnapped.**
3. Who raised him? **Moses and Susan Carver**
4. At what age did George start his education? **12**
5. What state did George attend college in? **Iowa**
6. What did George do after he graduated from college? **Joined the college's faculty.**
7. Who invited George to work at Tuskegee Institute? **Booker T. Washington**
8. How many agricultural inventions did George create? **Over 500**
9. What did George say when asked about his patents? **He gave credit to God.**
10. How many different uses did George create with the excess peanuts? **Over 300.**
11. Other than peanuts, what other two crops did George invent uses for? **Sweet potato and pecans.**
12. What was the name of the medal George received in 1923? **Springarn**
13. In what year did George die? **1943**
14. After his death, what Hall of Fame was George inducted into? **National Inventors**