

Teacher Resource 5A: Biographies of Washington and Du Bois



Booker T. Washington

- Booker Taliaferro Washington was born a slave on a small farm in Franklin County, Virginia
- In 1865 following the Emancipation Proclamation moved to West Virginia with his family
- At sixteen Washington moved back to Virginia and enrolled in the Hampton Institute
- At age twenty-five Washington founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama; The Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute focused on teaching African Americans skills in the trades and agriculture
- After giving a speech called the “Atlanta Compromise” (1895), became popular with whites who liked his ideas about peaceful, but separate, coexistence
- He had dinner at the White House in 1901 and was an advisor to Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft
- Published an autobiography called *Up From Slavery* (1901)
- Died at home in Tuskegee, AL in 1915

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W.E.B. Du Bois

- Born William Edward Burghardt Du Bois in Massachusetts on February 23, 1868
- Attended Fisk University [then Fisk College] in Nashville, Tennessee from 1885-1888
- Proceeded to attend Harvard University where he became the first African American to get a Ph.D. where he studied philosophy and history. He also studied at the University of Berlin (Germany) for two years.
- He later studied African American society and the prejudices that African Americans faced.
- In 1903 this research was published in his book *The Souls of Black Folk*
- Wanted progress for African Americans and pushed for immediate civil rights and political representation - he advocated for more higher education and political participation on the part of African Americans.
- He helped to found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 and served as director of publications and editor for almost 25 years
- Died on August 27, 1963 in Accra, Ghana (Africa), where he lived the last several years of his life. He passed away the evening before the March on Washington (D.C.) where Martin Luther King, Jr. made his famous “I have a dream speech”