

41 Carver's Early Years

Who was George Washington Carver? Where did he come from? Let's start from the beginning. Carver was born of slave parents in 1859. Soon after his birth, night raiders stole the baby and his mother. The plantation owner, Moses Carver, was able to get the baby back. The mother could not be found. The plantation owners nursed the baby back to health. They treated him as if he were their own child. He was too frail to work in the fields, so he worked as the cook.

How did Carver become interested in education? As a child, he could not read, spell, or write. He was illiterate. But at the age of 10 he found an ancient speller. The plantation owners told him the words and their meanings. After that, he was on his own. He memorized each word.

It was now 1869. The slaves had been freed in 1865, so the boy was free to leave. He heard about a school in Missouri. It beckoned him. He bid a final goodbye. Then, barefooted, he tramped miles of dusty roads to the school. In town, as a cook, he earned food and shelter. He studied at night under a dim lantern. In only a year, he learned all that the school had to offer.

The next step was high school. But it was far away in Fort Scott, Kansas. Undaunted, he took to the road again. And again, as a cook, he found food and shelter. But school was not easy. He faced math and science and history. Everything was so new to him. Again, under the dim light of a barn lantern he studied. He worked and studied there for seven years. He was now 17. With diplomas under his arm, he returned home. He returned to the Moses Carver plantation. They welcomed him like a son. It was a restful summer. There he planned his next step.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5

- Education was some slaves' way to freedom.
- George Washington Carver's parents were slaves.
- George Washington Carver worked hard to become educated.

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Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 The best alternate title for this passage would be
- ☐ a. Education Is All You Need.
 - ☐ b. Learning to Read.
 - ☐ c. Learning in Spite of It All.
 - ☐ d. A Breakthrough.

- Supporting Details** 3 Carver became interested in reading when he
- ☐ a. was 12 years old.
 - ☐ b. went to Fort Scott.
 - ☐ c. went to school in Missouri.
 - ☐ d. found an old speller.

- Conclusion** 4 The passage suggests that during Carver's youth
- ☐ a. there were not many schools.
 - ☐ b. many whites tried to educate blacks.
 - ☐ c. all slave owners were mean.
 - ☐ d. it was hard for a black person to get an education.

- Clarifying Devices** 5 The meaning of the word "illiterate" is explained
- ☐ a. in the sentence that comes after the word.
 - ☐ b. in the sentence that comes before the word.
 - ☐ c. by telling a story about a speller.
 - ☐ d. by examining its prefixes and suffixes.

- Vocabulary in Context** 6 As used in the passage, the word undaunted means
- ☐ a. not understanding.
 - ☐ b. frightened.
 - ☐ c. not aware.
 - ☐ d. bravely.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 212.

Total
Score

42 Carver's Legacy

George Washington Carver had a goal. This was to help southern farmers. They needed good crops. They needed crops that didn't hurt the soil. Carver went to Simpson College in Iowa. He studied there for three years. Then he went to Iowa State. He got two degrees there. The college knew he was smart. They wanted him to stay. He joined the staff. He was put in charge of a huge greenhouse. There he grew over 20,000 kinds of fungi. This work brought him much fame.

Carver had many job offers. Thomas Edison offered \$175,000 a year. Henry Ford tried to hire him too. Stalin invited him to the Soviet Union. He wanted Carver to help with cotton. But Carver refused all offers. Instead, he took a job at Tuskegee Institute. This was a school for African Americans. Carver was paid only \$1,000 a year. But he was happy. He had goals to reach. He knew he could reach them at Tuskegee.

Carver worked at Tuskegee for 47 years. He never asked for a raise in pay. And he never received one. He died on January 4, 1943. He died in his office chair.

Carver came up with over 300 products from peanuts. All could have been patented. He could have made millions. But he did not want to. Here is what he said. "Mr. Creator did not charge to grow the peanut. I cannot accept money for my work with it."

He wanted research to continue. He started a foundation. He gave his life's savings to it. This came to \$40,000. One honor came after his death. His birthplace was made a national shrine. How surprised the humble Carver would have been!

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5

- George Washington Carver devoted his whole life to achieving his goals.
- Carver refused many job offers that would have made him rich.
- Some scientists would rather do good than make a lot of money.

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Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 This selection is about
☐ a. Carver's life and research.
☐ b. growing peanuts.
☐ c. Tuskegee Institute.
☐ d. the many products that come from peanuts. _____
- Supporting Details** 3 One job offer Carver accepted was working for
☐ a. Thomas Edison.
☐ b. Joseph Stalin.
☐ c. Tuskegee Institute.
☐ d. Henry Ford. _____
- Conclusion** 4 From reading this passage you can guess that the author
☐ a. attended Tuskegee.
☐ b. admires Carver.
☐ c. is a researcher like Carver.
☐ d. knows a lot about peanuts. _____
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The quotation from Carver suggests that he was
☐ a. a simple and humble man.
☐ b. a poor speaker of English.
☐ c. a narrow-minded person.
☐ d. a person used to a lot of attention. _____
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 In this passage foundation means
☐ a. the base of a building.
☐ b. a kind of makeup.
☐ c. the money needed to start up a school.
☐ d. an organization that provides research money. _____

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 212.

Total
Score _____

43 The Mighty Amazon

The longest river in the world is the Nile. Its length is 4,160 miles. But the Nile is not the mightiest river. The Amazon is. The Amazon is also the second longest river in the world. It is 3,900 miles long. How long is that? It is longer than a road going from New York City to San Francisco.

The Amazon is mightiest for this reason. It flows the greatest amount of water. More water flows out to sea than from the Nile, Mississippi, and Yangtze rivers combined. That's a lot of fresh water! The force of its current is great too. The current can be seen 200 miles out in the sea. Here's a story to show the Amazon's amazing current. A sailing ship was far out of sight of Brazil. It ran out of drinking water. A passing ship drew alongside. The captain of the first ship asked for water. The captain of the second ship said, "Just dip your buckets over the side."

Here are a few more facts. At its mouth, the Amazon is 90 miles wide. Even up the river, you can't see the opposite bank. The river is also very deep—from 75 to 250 feet! During rainy season, the river rises about 53 feet more. Big ocean ships can sail about 1,800 miles upstream. Smaller ships can sail 1,000 miles farther.

What's the most bloodthirsty fish in the world? No. It's not the shark. It's the Amazon's piranha. It is only about four to eight inches long. It has razor-sharp teeth. And its jaws are massive. Thousands travel in a group. No animal can swim across the river. The fish will attack it. A 1,000-pound horse would be just bones in three minutes.

Are you planning a trip to the Amazon? Here's a good tip. Leave your bathing suit at home.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5
a. The Amazon is a mighty—and in many ways amazing—river.	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. In the world there are many well-known and famous rivers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. The Amazon has the greatest amount of fresh water in the world.	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter 2 This passage mostly deals with
- ☐ a. a comparison between the Amazon and the Mississippi.
 - ☐ b. interesting facts about the Amazon.
 - ☐ c. piranha in the Amazon.
 - ☐ d. sailing in the Amazon.
- Supporting Details 3 The Amazon
- ☐ a. is surprisingly shallow.
 - ☐ b. has many cities along its banks.
 - ☐ c. is not as long as the Mississippi.
 - ☐ d. is 90 miles wide at its mouth.
- Conclusion 4 After reading this passage it seems clear that
- ☐ a. people do not drink the Amazon's water.
 - ☐ b. sailing on the Amazon requires a knowledge of its current.
 - ☐ c. the Amazon flows through the rain forest.
 - ☐ d. it would not be good to visit the Amazon during rainy season.
- Clarifying Devices 5 The writer helps you to visualize the length of the Amazon by
- ☐ a. telling how long the Mississippi is.
 - ☐ b. describing its banks.
 - ☐ c. comparing it to a distance on land.
 - ☐ d. telling you how it compares to other rivers.
- Vocabulary in Context 6 In this passage massive means
- ☐ a. tiny.
 - ☐ b. huge.
 - ☐ c. useful.
 - ☐ d. sharp.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 212.

Total
Score

44 The Crusades

World War II was fought from 1939 to 1945. That is a total of seven years. We think that a seven-year war is long. But there have been much longer wars. For example, there were the wars called the Crusades. These wars went on for over 200 years. They started in the year 1097 and lasted until almost 1300.

You might wonder what the word *crusade* means. It comes from the Latin word *crux*, which means "cross." The cross was the sign of the Christians. Each soldier had a cross sewed on his jacket. This marked him as a Crusader.

The Crusaders were fighting the Turks. The Turks were Muslims. They had control of the Holy Land. The Christians wanted that land. They yearned to have control of the place where Jesus lived.

History shows that there were eight Crusades. Here is the reason. The First Crusade was a smashing success. Excitement ran high. Separate armies from England, France, and Germany set out. Some sailed. Some marched over 2,000 miles. (This is the distance from New York City to Salt Lake City.) The armies finally arrived at Jerusalem in 1099. They captured it after only six weeks. The Crusaders held the city for about 50 years. But many Crusaders sailed home. The remaining force was weak. The Turks fought to regain the city. They succeeded.

Seven more Crusades were launched. All failed. The Christians were never able to retake the lands they wanted.

Main Idea

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	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5

- a. The First Crusade was the most successful of the eight that took place.
- b. The Crusades were a series of wars.
- c. The Crusaders' mostly unsuccessful fight for the Holy Land lasted over 200 years.

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Score

45 More Facts About Eskimos

Eskimos probably came to North America from Siberia. This does not mean they are Russian. There was once a land bridge there. The bridge connected Siberia and Alaska. The Eskimos simply crossed it. This was more than 10,000 years ago. Then the oceans rose. The Ice Age was over, and mountains of ice melted. The area is covered by water now, the Bering Strait.

The Eskimos settled near the sea. That was where the food was. They hunted seals. They even hauled in whales with harpoons. They also caught lots of fish. At times, hunting parties would go inland. One thing they hunted was caribou. The skins were prized for clothing. Why not use seal skins instead? Seal skins were very warm. But they were very heavy. Seal skins were best used for covering cold floors. Caribou skins were warm and much lighter. They were good to wear when traveling and hunting.

Caribou skins also made fine tents. These were used in the summer. In the winter, Eskimos lived in igloos. Igloos were made from blocks of hard-packed snow. The blocks were three feet long. They were one-and-a-half feet wide. They were about five inches thick. The blocks were fitted together. But they were not piled up straight. They were set in spiral form. The spiral became smaller toward the top. In this way, a dome was formed. You may wonder about light. How did it enter an igloo? The Eskimos used ice. They set a thin slab of it into a wall. This was the window. There was no danger of melting. The winter temperature is very low. It is about 20 to 30 degrees below zero. Eskimos live in one of the coldest and harshest regions in the world.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
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Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5

- The Eskimos made their homes from blocks of snow in the winter.
- Alaskan Eskimos learned how to adapt things in their environment to help them live.
- Alaskan Eskimos lived in cold conditions.

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Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

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|--------------------------|--|-------|
| Subject Matter | <p>2 In general, this passage is about</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a. igloos.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> b. how Eskimos hunted in winter.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. Eskimos' life in Alaska.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. the land bridge.</p> | _____ |
| Supporting
Details | <p>3 The igloo was made by</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a. fitting snow blocks together.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> b. making thin slabs of ice.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. building the blocks straight up.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. forming blocks that were 5 feet long.</p> | _____ |
| Conclusion | <p>4 What conclusion can you draw from this passage?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a. Eskimos disliked living in Alaska.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> b. The winters were too hard for any other group of people.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. Alaska is not a place someone should visit.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. Eskimos were hardy and strong people.</p> | _____ |
| Clarifying
Devices | <p>5 The author describes the Eskimos' homes by using</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a. steps in a process.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> b. comparison and contrast.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. a list.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. a firsthand story.</p> | _____ |
| Vocabulary
in Context | <p>6 The word <u>hauled</u> means</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a. carried.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> b. caught.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. pulled.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. threw.</p> | _____ |

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 212.

Total
Score