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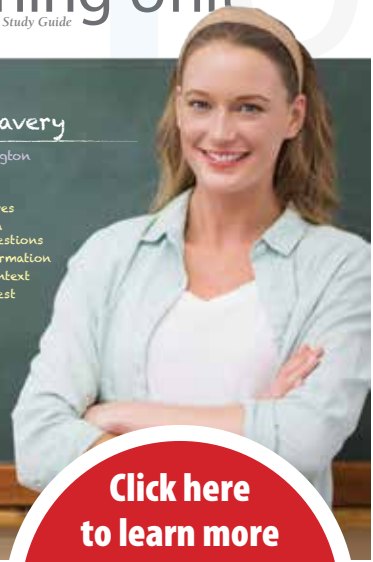
Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



Up From Slavery

by Booker T. Washington

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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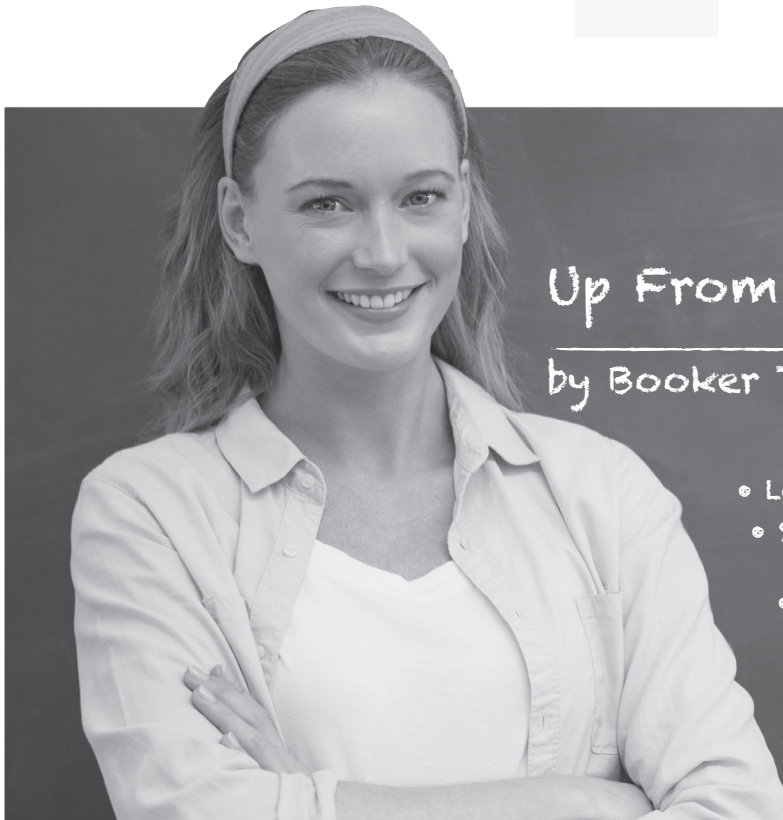
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Up from Slavery

Notes

Up from Slavery is the autobiography of Booker T. Washington, a former slave who founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. Although Washington's political and social ideas were generally accepted at the time, they are controversial today. He advocated an industrial education for freed slaves and emphasized the necessity of manual labor. Washington stressed the importance of learning those skills that would help blacks become economically self-reliant, and he believed that through those skills, blacks would earn the respect of the white race over time, thus eliminating racial prejudice.

At the time his autobiography was written, the word "Negro" was politically correct, and students should be aware that the term is used frequently in both the book and Teaching Unit. No disrespect is intended by the use of this word, as it is part of the era being studied.

It might be interesting to compare the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* with this book, particularly in the following areas: education, equal rights for both races, attitude of the author toward Southern whites, future vision for the races, and the slave experience each man recounts.

All references come from the Dover Thrift Edition of *Up from Slavery*, copyright 1995.

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. relate details from the autobiography regarding Booker T. Washington's early life as a slave.
2. discuss Washington's forgiving attitude toward Southern whites before, during and after the Civil War, and comment on why Washington, at least publicly, expressed benevolence toward those who oppressed his race.
3. discuss the extent to which the autobiography is an accurate and reliable measure of the feelings and concerns of freed slaves in this era. Consider Washington's philosophy on how to improve race relations in the South.
4. identify what political and social conditions existed at the time the book was written, and how these conditions influenced Washington's views on how to best educate former slaves to be productive, respected citizens in their communities.
5. cite incidents from the autobiography to trace how Washington achieved an education, and discuss how these incidents shaped his beliefs in the following areas:
 - the power of an industrial education to lift up his race
 - his interest in night school
 - his belief in the beauty of manual labor
 - his insistence on order and cleanliness at his school.
6. discuss why names are important to former slaves and how Washington selected his own name.
7. cite incidents from the story to illustrate the life lessons Washington learned from both Mr. Ruffner and General Armstrong.
9. discuss the following generalizations about life, and cite incidents from the autobiography illustrating how Washington applied these generalizations to his life:
 - In the long run, merit is recognized and rewarded regardless of the color of a person's skin.
 - The best education a person can receive is to be in contact with great men and women.
 - People who are the happiest in life are those who do the most for others.
 - Great men encourage love while little men hold onto hatred.
 - Anything worth having comes from hard work.

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Would you rate the difficulties Washington faced as a slave as easy or hard? Cite incidents from the story to support your evaluation.
2. To what extent do you think Washington's experiences as a slave impacted his later philosophy on education and opinions about race relations? Cite incidents from the story to support your answer.
3. How did Booker T. Washington get his name? How did he obtain an education?
4. What life lessons did Washington learn from his contact with Mrs. Ruffner and General Armstrong?
5. How did Washington define success? What advice might Washington give to a young student who wants to know the secret of his success?
6. Cite incidents from the story to support the following statement: Booker T. Washington's autobiography is a vehicle he used to educate people about the quality of education the Tuskegee school provided for people of his race.
7. Describe Washington's relationship with his family, including his mother, father and siblings.
8. Briefly identify the ways each of the following people influenced Washington's life: Miss Lord, Miss Mackie, Miss Margaret James Murray, Sir Henry M. Stanley, Miss Olivia A. Davidson.
9. While in Washington D.C., Booker T. Washington observed the lives of the former slaves who had relocated to the nation's capital. List two ways he believed life in Washington D.C. was beneficial for former slaves and two ways he believed life in Washington was not good for members of his race.
10. Summarize Mr. Washington's educational philosophy. How did he believe his race could best be educated so that it could arise from the oppression of slavery?
11. There is an implied accuracy in the information contained in autobiographies, because the facts are coming directly from the person involved. To what extent do you think this autobiography is believable and accurate? For example, Mr. Washington stated that former slaves did not hold bitter feelings towards former slave owners. Do you believe this statement? If not, why do you think he might have included it? Cite additional examples of your own.

Up From Slavery

Chapter I - A Slave among Slaves

VOCABULARY

agitate—to stir up interest and support for
ante-bellum—before the Civil War
deprivation—the act of preventing from having
Emancipation Proclamation—a proclamation issued by President Lincoln in September 1862, effective January 1, 1863, freeing the slaves in all territory still at war with the Union
engrafted—established firmly; implanted
fervent—passionate; ardent
flax—a plant whose fibers are spun into linen thread
imbibed—absorbed
pallet—a small bed or pad filled with straw and used directly on the floor
parched—dried up
pervade—to be prevalent throughout
providence—the care or guidance of God or nature
refuse—anything thrown away or rejected as worthless or useless
retail—to repeat or pass on to others, as in gossip
veranda—porch
William Lloyd Garrison (1805 – 1879)—an abolitionist leader

1. Where was Booker T. Washington born? Who were his parents? How did he feel about his father?

2. Describe the interior of the cabin shared by Washington, his siblings and their mother.

3. What was Washington's earliest memory of school?

Chapter IV – Helping Others

VOCABULARY

articulation—enunciation; clear way of talking or pronouncing
Ku Klux Klan—a secret society of white men founded in the Southern states after the Civil War to reestablish and maintain white supremacy
pathetic—pitifully unsuccessful; ineffective
Reconstruction—the process, after the Civil War, of reorganizing the Southern states which had seceded and reestablishing them in the Union

1. In the following excerpt from this chapter, Washington discussed his ideas on how to be successful:

“I will not say that I became discouraged, for as I now look back over my life I do not recall that I ever became discouraged over anything that I set out to accomplish. I have begun everything with the idea that I could succeed, and I never had much patience with the multitudes of people who are always ready to explain why one cannot succeed. I have always had a high regard for the man who could tell me how to succeed.”

In what way(s) might you apply these ideas to your life goals in today’s world?

2. At Hampton, Washington gained not only an education from books but also some valuable lessons about life. List one lesson he learned at Hampton outside of the textbooks.

3. How did Washington feel about labor strikes?

3. The above address was very well accepted by both races at the time it was given. However, today there are many ideas in the speech that do not seem to be in the best interests of the freed slaves. One example is the passage included in the second question in this chapter. Find another example of an idea presented in this speech that would be unacceptable in today's world. Explain why you believe the idea would be unacceptable.

4. Washington seemed to recognize the importance of good race relations in the South. He believed that the way to improve these relations was through industry. In his opinion, "the time will come when the Negro in the South will be accorded all the political rights which his ability, character, and material possessions entitle him to."

Based on your life experience, do you think Washington's prediction in the above statement has come true? Cite instances from your life, television, books, or movies to support your answer.
