

Black History Month

BENJAMIN BANNEKER



Benjamin's wooden clock operated reliably for over four decades, a testament to his skill and craftsmanship that endured until a tragic fire consumed it. The clock became a symbol of Benjamin's remarkable abilities and his unique contribution to the understanding and measurement of time during an era when such devices were a rare novelty.

BENJAMIN BANNEKER

On November 8, 1731, in Baltimore County, Maryland, Benjamin Banneker was born. He was a free man, not subjected to the slavery that afflicted many African American children of his time. Banneker studied alongside his white peers, excelling in mathematics, science, and astronomy.

He was particularly interested in the mechanics governing their world. He was curious to predict an event between his self-made mathematical prowess.

His journey extended to the Revolutionary War, where he was recruited to help the Continental Congress. He was the first African American to be named to the celestial surveying mission.

His scientific inquiry and the results of his work were widely recognized.

He was a luxury and a rare sight in America, relying on church bells to tell the time. He was a chance encounter with Joseph Levi, who had a pocket watch. Intrigued by the workings of the watch, Banneker began his study of mathematical concepts.

Over several years, fueled by his growing passion for timekeeping, he crafted a wooden clock. It was a masterpiece, showcasing Benjamin's ingenuity in attracting visitors from all over the world. The precision of the watch was a testament to his skill and craftsmanship that endured until a tragic fire consumed it.



BENJAMIN BANNEKER

Comprehension Questions

ON: CHOOSE THE RIGHT ANSWER?

was Benjamin Banneker born?

I was Benjamin Banneker's first exposure to mathematics.

at impressed Joseph Levi about Benjamin Banneker's work?

What important role did Benjamin Banneker play in the development of Washington, DC?

NO-PREP & EDITABLE

READING COMPREHENSION

READING PASSAGES WITH TEXT DEPENDENT QUESTIONS

Ready to Print &
Editable



BENJAMIN BANNEKER

Born on November 8, 1731, in Baltimore County, Maryland, Benjamin Banneker was a Freeman, not subjected to the shackles of slavery that plagued many African American children of his time. Growing up on the Family Farm, Benjamin toiled alongside his family, contributing to tasks like cultivating tobacco crops, chopping wood, and managing various chores.

NOT A SLAVE

Benjamin's lineage traced back to Molly Welsh, an English servant girl turned landowner. Molly's daughter, Mary, married a Freed slave named Robert, adopting the name Banney. Benjamin, born in 1731 to Mary and Robert, inherited his family's Freedom. Unlike many of his peers, he wasn't bound by the chains of slavery.

EDUCATION

Despite limited schooling opportunities, Benjamin's grandmother imparted basic literacy using the Bible. Brief attendance at a Quaker school fueled his interest in science and mathematics. Borrowing books became his avenue for continual learning. An adept problem-solver and mechanic, Benjamin left school to support his aging Father on the Family Farm.



CLOCK

In the time of Benjamin Banneker, clocks were a luxury and a rare sight in America. People relied on church bells tolling or observed the sun's position to estimate the time of day. Benjamin's journey into clockmaking began with a chance encounter with Joseph Levi, a merchant in possession of a pocket watch. Intrigued, Benjamin meticulously sketched the watch and delved into understanding its inner workings. Joseph Levi, impressed by Benjamin's grasp of mathematical concepts, allowed him to borrow the watch.

Over several years, fueled by determination and a growing passion for timekeeping, Benjamin crafted a larger, functional wooden clock. This creation, showcasing Benjamin's ingenuity, became a sensation, attracting visitors from various places who marveled at the precision of his handmade timepiece.



Benjamin's wooden clock spoke testament to his skill and craft. He consumed it. The clock's abilities and his unique design measurement of time drew rapt attention.

ASTRONOMY:

Benjamin's fascination with astronomy began through his friend John's connection that would span the realm of astronomy. In the celestial sphere, with the wonders of the night sky, Benjamin's passion for astronomy and telescopes was kindled, embarking on a self-guided journey of discovery.

Driven by an insatiable curiosity and a desire to understand the movements of the stars, Benjamin, in 1781, showcasing his astronomical knowledge, predicted the occurrence of a total solar eclipse.



Benjamin's pocket watch was a marvel of craftsmanship, reflecting his deep understanding of time and mechanics.

In mastering both the art and science of clockmaking, Benjamin Banneker epitomized a practical application of his knowledge, leaving a lasting legacy in the fields of astronomy and surveying.

ALMANAC:

Benjamin Banneker's Almanac, first published in 1792, titled "The Almanac of Benjamin Banneker, a Free Black Man, and a Slaveholder, Maryland and Delaware." This influential almanac provided weather predictions, tide tables, and yearly contributions to the community.

Benjamin Banneker's almanac, a testament to his knowledge and skill, was embraced by all.

Benjamin Banneker's almanac, a testament to his knowledge and skill, was embraced by all.

A stamp was issued in 1976 to honor Benjamin Banneker, recognizing his contributions to science and the nation's earliest civil engineer, remaining a source of inspiration and a course of history.

READING COMPREHENSION

COLORED & B/W
VERSIONS INCLUDED

Name: _____

Date: _____

BENJAMIN BANNEKER

Comprehension Questions

DIRECTIONS: CHOOSE THE RIGHT ANSWER.

1. Where was Benjamin Banneker born?

- a) Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- b) Baltimore County, Maryland
- c) Washington, DC
- d) Richmond, Virginia

2. What was Benjamin Banneker's first exposure to learning how to read?

- a) Public school
- b) Quaker school
- c) Self-taught
- d) Private tutor

3. What impressed Joseph Levi about Benjamin Banneker?

- a) His athleticism
- b) His knowledge of literature
- c) His mathematical knowledge
- d) His artistic skills

4. What was the

Answers Key

1. Where was Benjamin Banneker born?

- b) Baltimore County, Maryland

2. What was Benjamin Banneker's first exposure to learning how to read?

- b) Quaker school

3. What impressed Joseph Levi about Benjamin Banneker?

- c) His mathematical knowledge

4. What did Benjamin Banneker construct out of wood that gained widespread attention?

- c) A clock

5. What important role did Benjamin Banneker begin publishing his development of Washington, DC?

- c) Surveyor

6. In what year did Benjamin Banneker begin publishing his famous almanac?

- b) 1792

7. What did Benjamin Banneker hope to achieve by sending letters to Thomas Jefferson?

- c) Abolition of slavery

8. What was Thomas Jefferson's response to Benjamin Banneker's letters regarding slavery?

- b) He ignored the letters

9. When did Benjamin Banneker pass away?

- b) 1806

10. What was the presumed reason for the destruction of Benjamin Banneker's cabin after his death?

- b) Arson by those opposed to his anti-slavery views

Explanatory Questions:

1. Describe Benjamin Banneker's early education and how he developed an interest in science and mathematics.

Answer: Benjamin has the opportunity for school as a child. His grandfather taught him to read using the only book she had, the Bible.

7. What did Benjamin Banneker hope to achieve by sending letters to Thomas Jefferson?

- a) Equal rights for women
- b) Native American rights
- c) Abolition of slavery

Freedom

8. What was Thomas Jefferson's response to Benjamin Banneker's letters regarding slavery?

Immediate action to end slavery. He read the letters, considered Banneker's views and supported abolition. He decided to consider the matter in the future.

9. When did Benjamin Banneker pass away?

10. What was the presumed reason for the destruction of Benjamin Banneker's cabin after his death?

Arson by those opposed to his anti-slavery views. The fire was caused by a candle and not a fire alarm intervention.

EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

1. Describe Benjamin Banneker's early education and how he developed an interest in science and mathematics.

2. How did Benjamin Banneker become involved with the study of surveying, including the role of his friend George Ellicott?

3. Discuss the significance of Benjamin Banneker's wooden clock and how it affected his reputation.

4. Describe Benjamin Banneker's role in the development of Washington, DC, and his notable achievements as a surveyor.

5. Discuss Benjamin Banneker's efforts to address the issue of slavery, including his correspondence with Thomas Jefferson.

MCQ'S & QUESTIONS

ANSWER KEY INCLUDED

READY TO PRINT

NO-PREP !

JUST PRINT AND GO!



EASY EDITING

EDITABLE

***FONTS ARE EMBEDDED FOR CONVENIENCE**

