



Benjamin Banneker Lesson Plan

Overview:

Benjamin Banneker was a free Black man in early America who achieved fame and renown due to his remarkable, self-taught mathematical abilities, his astronomical knowledge, and his involvement in surveying the boundaries of what is now called Washington, D.C. This lesson offers students the chance to discover more about the impressive accomplishments of this undercelebrated American, despite the apparent limitations of his situation.

Lesson Prompt:

Benjamin Banneker (born November 9, 1731; died October 19, 1806; Baltimore County, Maryland), was a mathematician, astronomer, compiler of almanacs, and writer. He was one of the first important African American intellectuals.

Share the prepared PowerPoint slide deck with the students.

Have students consider, discuss, and respond to the accompanying critical thinking and discussion questions.

There are also multiple choice questions and activities that you may use with your students, to test their understanding and enlarge their comprehension.

Vocabulary:

Farmstead, Surveying, Transit, Astronomy, Satellite, Polemics, Celestial, Navigation, Ephemeris, Eclipse, Perimeter, Almanac, Abolition, Repute, Polymath, Denigrated, Definitive, Unequivocal

Recommended Resources:

To learn more about Benjamin Banneker, visit:

<https://friendsofbenjaminbanneker.com/history/benjamin-banneker-2/>

For more math content, the CollegeBoard / AP Central website has all of Banneker's puzzles and their solutions:

<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/mathematical-puzzles-benjamin-banneker>