**W.E.B. Du Bois**

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, better known as W.E.B. Du Bois, was born on February 23, 1868, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. While growing up in a mostly European American town, W.E.B. Du Bois identified himself as "mulatto," (mixed race) but freely attended school with whites and was enthusiastically supported in his academic studies by his white teachers. In 1885, he moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend Fisk University. It was there that he first encountered Jim Crow laws. For the first time, he began analyzing the deep troubles of American racism. After earning his bachelor's degree at Fisk, Du Bois entered Harvard University. Du Bois became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1895.

Du Bois published his landmark study—the first case study of an African-American community—***The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*** (1899), marking the beginning of his expansive writing career. In the study, he coined the phrase "the talented tenth," a term that described the likelihood of one in 10 black men becoming leaders of their race.

While working as a professor at Atlanta University, W.E.B. Du Bois rose to national prominence when he very publicly opposed Booker T. Washington's "Atlanta Compromise," an agreement that asserted that vocational education for blacks was more valuable to them than social advantages like higher education or political office. Du Bois criticized Washington for not demanding equality for African Americans, as granted by the 14th Amendment. Du Bois fought what he believed was an inferior strategy, subsequently becoming a spokesperson for full and equal rights in every realm of a person's life.

In 1903, Du Bois published his seminal work, ***The Souls of Black Folk***, a collection of 14 essays. In the years following, he adamantly opposed the idea of biological white superiority and vocally supported women's rights. In 1909, he co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and served as editor of its monthly magazine, The Crisis. Du Bois was an early proponent of Pan-Africanism, an ideology and movement that encourages the solidarity of Africans worldwide. It is based on the belief that black unity is vital to economic, social, and political progress and aims to "unify and uplift" people of African descent. Du Bois helped organize several Pan-African Congresses to free African colonies from European powers.

W.E.B. Du Bois died on August 27, 1963—one day before Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington—at the age of 95, in Accra, Ghana, while working on an encyclopedia of the African Diaspora.

1 .**Where was Du Bois born?**

**2. Du Bois considered himself to be a mulatto. What is a mulatto?**

**3. Where and why did Du Bois first encounter deep racism in America?**

**4. Where did Du Bois receive his education?**

**5. Describe the “talented tenth”?**

**6. Why did Du Bois oppose Booker T Washington’s beliefs? How did his views and opinions differ from Washington’s?**

**7. What association did Du Bois help start?**

**Complete the Venn diagram together.**

**Answer the following questions together:**

1. **How did the different upbringings of Du Bois and Washington influence their beliefs on the speed and methods that African Americans should progress?**
2. **Whose path to progression would be more agreeable to White Americans? Why?**

**Booker T. Washington**

Born to a slave on April 5, 1856, Booker Taliaferro Washington's life had little promise early on. In Franklin County, Virginia, as in most states prior to the Civil War, the child of a slave became a slave. Booker's mother, Jane, worked as a cook for plantation owner James Burroughs. His father was an unknown white man, most likely from a nearby plantation. After the Civil War, Booker and his mother moved to Malden, West Virginia, where she married freedman Washington Ferguson. The family was very poor, and 9-year-old Booker went to work in the nearby salt furnaces with his stepfather instead of going to school. Booker's mother noticed his interest in learning and got him a book from which he learned the alphabet and how to read and write basic words.

In 1872, Booker T. Washington left home and walked 500 miles to Hampton Normal Agricultural Institute in Virginia. Along the way he took odd jobs to support himself. He convinced administrators to let him attend the school and took a job as a janitor to help pay his tuition. The school's founder and headmaster, General Samuel C. Armstrong, soon discovered the hard working boy and offered him a scholarship, sponsored by a white man. Booker T. Washington graduated from Hampton in 1875 with high marks.

In 1881, the Alabama legislature approved $2,000 for a "colored" school, the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (now known as Tuskegee University). General Armstrong was asked to recommend a white man to run the school, but instead recommended Booker T. Washington. Classes were first held in an old church, while Washington traveled all over the countryside promoting the school and raising money.

Under Booker T. Washington's leadership, Tuskegee became a leading school in the country. Washington put much of himself into the school's curriculum, stressing the virtues of patience, enterprise, and thrift. He taught that economic success for African Americans would take time, and that subordination to whites was a necessary evil until African Americans could prove they were worthy of full economic and political rights. He believed that if African Americans worked hard and obtained financial independence and cultural advancement, they would eventually win acceptance and respect from the white community.

In 1895, Booker T. Washington publicly put forth his philosophy on race relations in a speech at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia, known as the "Atlanta Compromise." In his speech, Washington stated that African Americans should accept disenfranchisement and social segregation as long as whites allow them economic progress, educational opportunity and justice in the courts. This started a firestorm in parts of the African-American community, especially in the North. Activists like W.E.B. Du Bois (who was working as a professor at Atlanta University at the time) deplored Washington's conciliatory philosophy. Du Bois criticized Washington for not demanding equality for African Americans, as granted by the 14th Amendment, and subsequently became an advocate for full and equal rights in every realm of a person's life.

President Roosevelt and his successor, President William Howard Taft, used Washington as an adviser on racial matters, partly because he accepted racial subservience. His White House visit and the publication of his autobiography, Up from Slavery, brought him both acclaim and indignation from many Americans. While some African Americans looked upon Washington as a hero, others, like Du Bois, saw him as a traitor.

Booker T. Washington was a complex individual, who lived during a precarious time in advancing racial equality. On one hand, he was openly supportive of African Americans taking a "back seat" to whites, while on the other he secretly financed several court cases challenging segregation. Booker T. Washington remained the head of Tuskegee Institute until his death on November 14, 1915, at the age of 59, of congestive heart failure

1. **Where was Washington born? What conditions was he born into?**

**2. Where did Washington receive his education?**

**3. What school did Washington run?**

**4. In his “Atlanta Compromise” speech, what did Washington state?**

**5. Why did Du Bois criticize Washington?**

**6. What role did Washington serve for Presidents Roosevelt and Taft?**

**Complete the Venn diagram together.**

**Answer these questions together:**

**1. How did the different upbringings of Du Bois and Washington influence their beliefs on the speed and methods that African Americans should progress?**

**2. Whose path to progression would be more agreeable to White Americans? Why?**