

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Benjamin Banneker

This is the story of Benjamin Banneker born in 1731,  
Right out in Maryland, a slave state, so conditions to live in were rough.  
Benjamin's dad was formerly enslaved, so conditions he lived in were cruel.  
Unlike his dad, Ben was born free and attended a Quaker school.  
In love with the books, all of the knowledge was flying whenever he held the pages.  
Not too surprising, hunger for knowledge resulted in being self-educated.  
He ran through the books with the quickest speed;  
No level of novel was in his league.  
Until a friend gifted a pocket watch  
And spiraled him into a mystery.  
What makes it tick?  
How many hours it takes for the sun and the moon to switch places?  
Would it be quick?  
The watch was a puzzle, and he would keep working nonstop until all of the pieces fit.  
Fascinated by how it all worked—that was Ben's superpower,  
Pushed him to making the US's first clock that struck on every hour.  
Now, Ben couldn't stop there, he was steadily learning.  
Borrowing top-tier books about science and how the world's working.  
The world was a marvel, and up in the sky was always some wonders he got to see.  
The twinkles and sparkles from all of the stars got him into astronomy.  
Like which one is this? Is that Orion?  
Or is it just meteors flying?  
All of the questions indeed excited him.  
Looking for answers never got tiring,  
So he would study, going from book to book, could memorize every chapter.  
Helping out farmers with growing their crops, learned to predict the weather patterns.  
Do it look like rain today?

The way the wind's blowing, could it be snow or a new hurricane on the way?

See Ben had got wise with that.

The farmers had trust in all his predictions, so it's unsurprising that

Ben's predictions were written inside of a guide called the almanac.

Ben couldn't miss; he had a gift,

Predicting the weather patterns and a solar eclipse.

Trading letters with Thomas Jefferson about slavery's end,

Advocated for civil rights every chance he could get.

Now Ben got invited to come take a peek on a new project that wasn't complete.

He had been asked to survey the land now known as Washington, DC,

Working under Pierre L'enfant, who left the project midway.

Legend has it that Ben made his mark, recalled the plans from memory.

This is the story of Benjamin Banneker, born in 1731.

But in 1806, that is the year that our story is done.

74 when he left this world, but his life will forever inspire us.

Who could've guessed? In the US, he's the first well-known Black scientist.

He always questioned the ways of the world.

He always pushed when he could learn more.

He always found his way to a book,

Found new ways for his brain to explore.

Showing us if we continue to push,

we'll just get better and better.

How a boy that loved the books

Grew to a man that could weather whatever.