

Name _____

Date _____

Booker T. Washington - Answer Key

Use the text to answer each question below.

1. Booker T. Washington was born into slavery on a Virginia plantation in 1856. After emancipation, he excelled in school despite working as a servant throughout his childhood in the Jim Crow South. After attending and teaching at Hampton Institute in Virginia, he went on to co-found and run Tuskegee Institute in Alabama—a school focused on technical education for Black people. He became a national figure after an 1895 speech at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta. In this speech, Washington preached the importance of self-help, patience, and compromise when it came to civil rights. He encouraged technical education in industrial and agricultural trades and urged African Americans to accept segregation in exchange for economic opportunity. Washington believed this approach would gradually lead White people to fully accept Black people as citizens. Through hard work and accumulation of wealth, Black people would earn their position in society. For now though, they should set aside their quest for full civil rights and remain separate. Washington had plenty of Black supporters and was lauded by White people from both the North and the South for his conciliatory position.

Booker T. Washington believed African Americans should accept segregation in exchange for {}.

A. reparations

B. voting rights



C.
economic opportunity

D. access to higher education

According to the passage, Washington “urged African Americans to accept segregation in exchange for economic opportunity.”

2. Read the following passage from Booker T. Washington's 1895 speech at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta:

With which of the following statements would Booker T. Washington most likely *disagree*?

"In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress... Cast down your bucket where you are... Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. And in this connection it is well to bear in mind that whatever other sins the South may be called to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world... Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labour, and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life... No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities."



A.

Most Black Americans should pursue the fine arts.

According to the passage, Washington said, "Cast [your bucket] down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions" and "Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands." He argued, "No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem."

B. Rights will be earned gradually if Black people work hard and develop technical skills.

C. Social segregation is acceptable as long as White and Black people can cooperate in business.

D. If Black Americans receive full civil rights immediately, it may cause a lack of appreciation for existing opportunities.

3. When it came to the attainment of civil rights for Black Americans, Washington and his main detractor, W.E.B. Du Bois, had very different philosophies. How much of this divergence can be attributed to each man's upbringing and life experience? Washington, born enslaved in the South, offered a pragmatic and conservative ideology. His insistence that African Americans appreciate the opportunities they have is likely a direct reflection of his ascent from enslavement to a successful, self-made educator and public figure. Du Bois, born free in the North, rebutted Washington's philosophy, advocating for a more idealistic and radical ideology. His stubbornness and sense of possibility is likely a result of his more progressive upbringing and access to elite education. As the 20th century continued, Du Bois's philosophy flowed directly into the civil rights movement. All the while, the disagreement between accommodationist thought and calls for radical change has persisted.

Which of the following statements best summarizes the passage?

- A. Booker T. Washington's perspective is no longer relevant.
- B. W.E.B. Du Bois won the debate without having to rely on life experience.
- C. Washington's upbringing had less to do with his philosophy than Du Bois's did.
- ☒ D. Washington and Du Bois's life experiences most likely informed their ideologies.
- According to the passage, Washington's philosophy is "likely a direct reflection of his ascent from enslavement to a successful, self-made educator and public figure," and Du Bois's philosophy is "likely a result of his more progressive upbringing and access to elite education."*