

## Seven facts about Black Americans we bet you didn't know!

1. It is believed that the real “Lone Ranger” was inspired by a black man named Bass Reeves. Born a slave he escaped and went West during the Civil War. He eventually became a Deputy U.S. Marshal, was a master of disguise, an expert marksman, had a Native American companion, and rode a silver horse.
2. The next time you're running through the sprinkler, remember that it was invented by Elijah McCoy. Ever heard the expression “the real McCoy?” It comes from another invention by McCoy that allowed trains and other machines to be lubricated while running. When many imitation lubricants showed up, people insisted on the real McCoy.
3. Love Peanut Butter? Peanut Butter was invented by George Washington Carver, who discovered 400 uses for peanuts, soybeans, sweet potatoes, and pecans. In the process, he transformed lunchtime sandwiches forever. Yum!
4. Have you ever heard of Garrett Morgan? He was a voracious inventor! He is best known for inventing a device called the Morgan safety hood and smoke protector in 1914. He made national news for using his gas mask to rescue 32 men trapped during an explosion in a tunnel 250 feet beneath Lake Erie. His safety hood, became the prototype and precursor for the gas masks used during World War I, protecting soldiers from toxic gas used in warfare.
5. Thurgood Marshall was a mischievous kid, and was once forced to write copies of the U.S. Constitution as punishment for his misbehavior. (Are you thinking what I'm thinking?) He later became the first African American to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. By the way, he was the lawyer who argued for Brown vs. Board of Education.
6. Former Air Force veteran and NASA engineer, Lonnie G. Johnson is best known for creating the world-famous Super Soaker water gun, which has earned more than \$200 million in sales. Perhaps you've contributed to that number every summer!
7. The first licensed black female pilot was Bessie Coleman. After she learned to fly in 1921, she performed at numerous airshows, performing heart thrilling stunts, encouraging other African Americans to pursue flying, and refusing to perform where Blacks were not admitted.



CULTURAL  
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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February 2017  
Activity Book



**Lieutenant Henry O. Flipper**  
was the United States Military Academy's first African-American graduate—and commissioned officer—in the regular U.S. Army. West Point now gives an award in his honor to the graduating senior who has displayed “the highest qualities of leadership, self-discipline, and perseverance in the face of unusual difficulties while a cadet.”



**Black History Month**, also known as African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing the central role they have played in our nation's history.

Credit for the evolving awareness of the true place of African Americans in history can, in large part, be attributed to one man: **Carter G. Woodson**.

In 1915, he established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Woodson wanted to change the world's perception of African Americans and recognize their contributions to American society and culture.



**Notable Fact:** Fifteen states have honored Woodson by naming parks, schools, and roads after him.

What do you want to do when you grow up?

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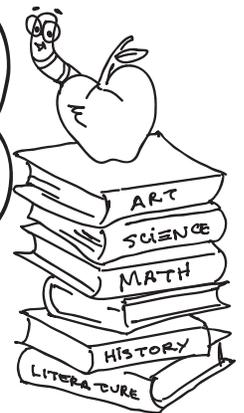
What is your favorite subject?

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How far will your education take you?

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**James Meredith** was the first black graduate at the University of Mississippi. He was initially denied admission because of his race. He endured threats, harassment, and extreme isolation, but still graduated on August 18, 1963 with a degree in political science.

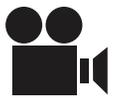


**Notable Fact:** After graduating from Ole Miss with a political science degree, Meredith continued his education. He received his master's degree in economics from University of Ibadan in Nigeria, then a law degree from Columbia University.



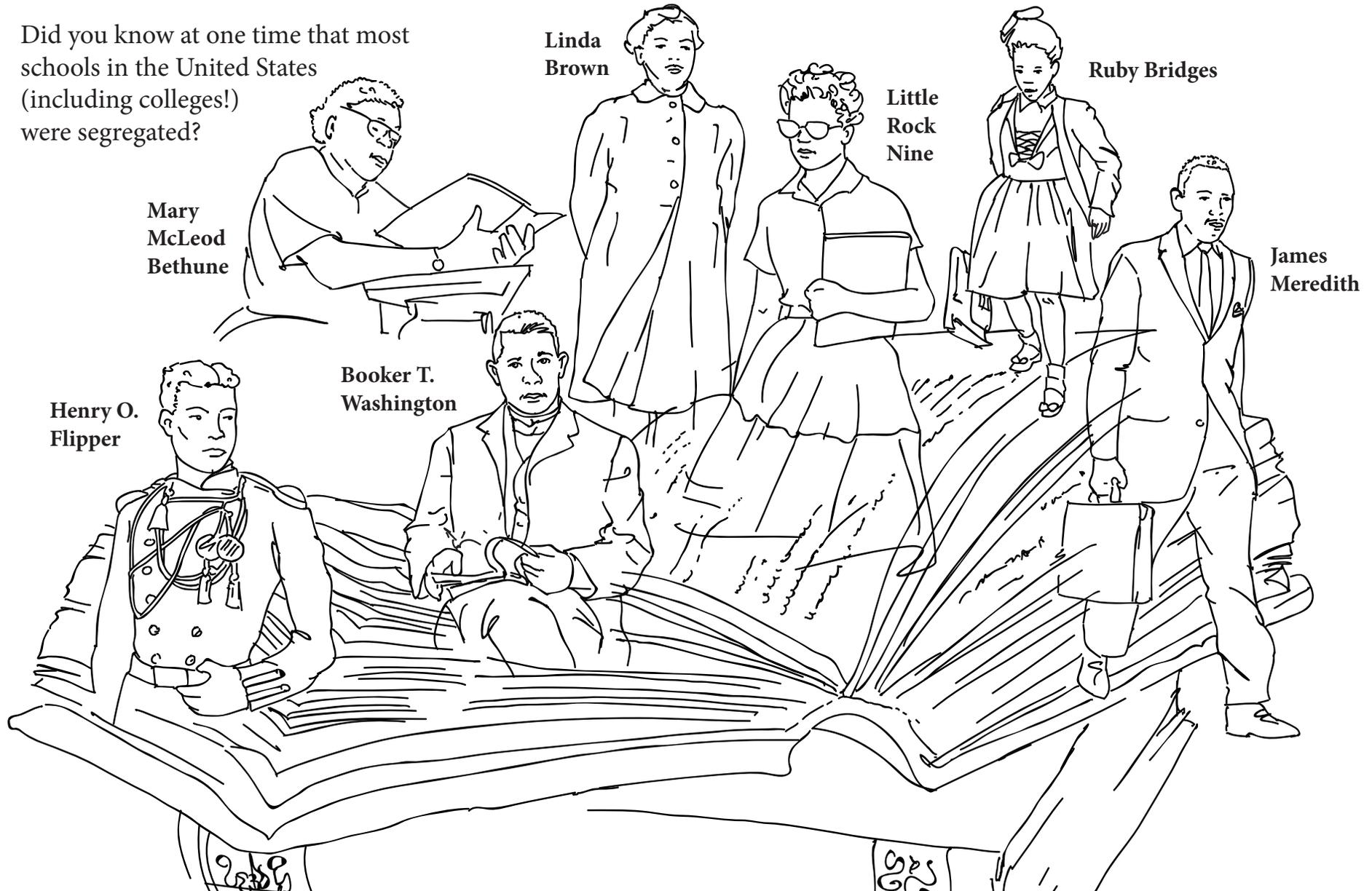
Ten-year-old **Linda Brown** was forced to walk four miles to school when there was another school just four blocks away from her home because she was black and the school by her home was for white children only.

Brown became the lead name in the landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education*. The 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision declared all laws establishing segregated schools to be unconstitutional. The ruling called for the desegregation of all schools throughout the nation.



**Notable Fact:** By the time of the U.S. Supreme Court declared its ruling, Linda Brown was in junior high school.

Did you know at one time that most schools in the United States (including colleges!) were segregated?



**Segregation** means the separation of humans into racial groups in daily life. It may apply to activities such as eating in a restaurant, drinking from a water fountain, using a public toilet, attending school, going to the movies or riding on a bus.

Progress takes time. Change occurs when people continue to persevere over difficult challenges. Some of those champions are featured on this page. Even today, positive change is happening. How can you be a positive change in our world today?