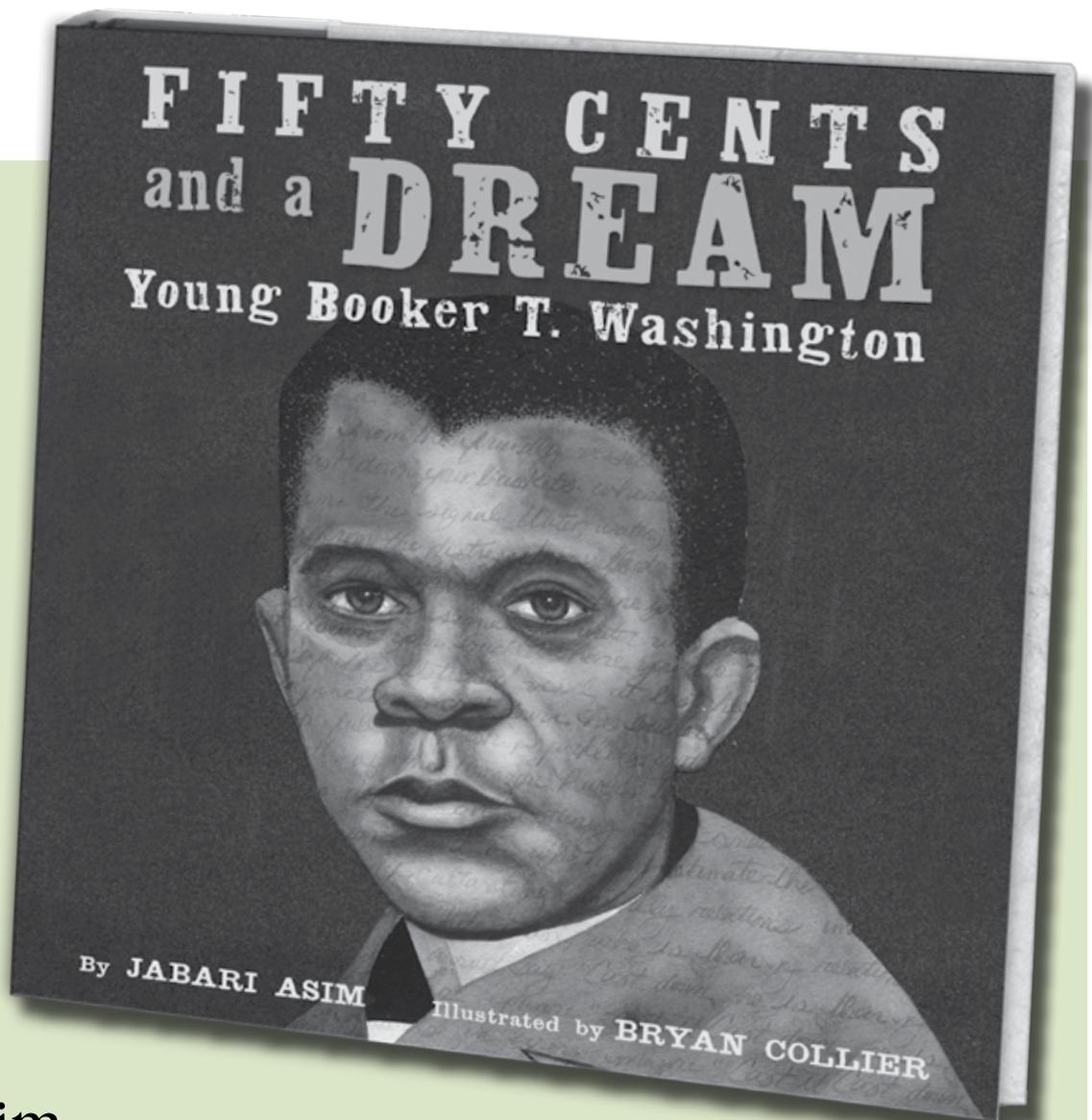


# FIFTY CENTS and a DREAM

## Curriculum connections

- ❖ African American Heritage
- ❖ History

Ages 3 - 8



by Jabari Asim

illustrated by Bryan Collier

# FIFTY CENTS and a DREAM

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Before beginning the book, ask students to share what they know about slavery in America. Ask them what they think a slave would have to do in a typical day. If your students do not have a strong understanding of slavery, Julius Lester's *From Slave Ship to Freedom Road* (Dial, 1998) offers an excellent introduction.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In the first illustration depicting Booker sitting against a tree, how old do you think he is? What does Booker want most of all? **RI 7.3**
2. The author writes that “slaves like [Booker] were not allowed to read” and that “A black boy with a book could be whipped—or worse.” Why do you think slaves were forbidden from learning how to read? Why would it be dangerous for a slave to know how to read books? **RI 7.3**
3. What do books represent to Booker? **RI 7.3**
4. What is life like for Booker and his family after they are freed from slavery? What are some things that were different after Emancipation? What are some things that remained the same? **RI 1.4, [5]**
5. What gift does Booker receive from his mother that changes his life? **RI 1.1, [2], 3**
6. Why do so many people come to see the young stranger from Ohio? **RI 1.4, [5]**
7. Why does Booker want to go to Hampton Institute? How does he get there? **RI 1.4, [5]**
8. When Booker arrives in Richmond, he is almost ready to give up. What makes him push on? What does Booker do to earn some money? **RI 1.4, [5]**
9. How is Booker able to pay his way at Hampton? How does he feel about his life there? **RI 1.4, [5]**
10. In the illustration depicting Booker's class listening to their teacher, what do you think the lights rising up and out represent? **RI 7.1, [2]**
11. In the last page spread, what do you think the tree beneath the text represents? **RI 7.3**
12. Bubbles appear over Booker in several illustrations. What do you think they represent? **RI 7.3**
13. The author says that in writing this story, he was most interested in Washington's “advocacy of hard work, discipline, and self-reliance as effective means of racial uplift.” What are examples from Booker's life that reflect these virtues he advocated? **RI 4, [5]**

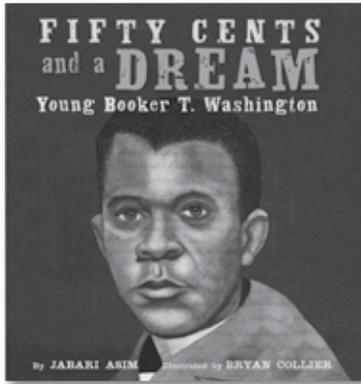
## POST-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Write a paragraph about the illustration you like best. Describe what about it you find most appealing. What feelings and thoughts does it evoke? How does it relate to the text? **W 1.2**
2. Visit Tuskegee University at **[www.tuskegee.edu](http://www.tuskegee.edu)** and read the history and mission statement of the university. Write two paragraphs explaining how Booker T. Washington's strong commitment to education and self-reliance is reflected in Tuskegee's history and mission. **W 9.4b**
3. Bryan Collier is an award-winning illustrator renowned for his stunning collage and watercolor style. On his website (**[www.bryancollier.com](http://www.bryancollier.com)**), Collier says: "Collage is more than just an art style. Collage is all about bringing different elements together. Once you form a sensibility about connection, how different elements relate to each other, you deepen your understanding of yourself and others." Create your own collage that imagines a day in the life of the young Booker T. Washington. **RL 7.1, [2]**
4. Booker T. Washington learned to read using Noah Webster's *American Spelling Book*. The endpapers of this book were reproduced from select pages of the spelling book. Students can see a digital reproduction of the *American Spelling Book* at Google Books. Working in pairs, have students look at the book and record 10 observations about it that they can share with the rest of the class. **W 8.2, W 7.2**
5. The author says Washington's salary as a janitor covered only his room and board at Hampton Institute (now University), which was 10 dollars a month. His tuition, 70 dollars a year, was paid by a scholarship. Research what it would now cost for room, board, and tuition per year to attend Hampton University. See **[www.hampton.edu](http://www.hampton.edu)** to locate this information. **RI 10.2**
6. In 1856, Booker T. Washington was born a slave near Hale's Ford, Virginia, on a tobacco farm owned by James Burroughs. Working in small groups have students use print and electronic sources to research what life would have been like for slaves working on a tobacco farm and have them share their findings with the class. **RI 7.6**



# FIFTY CENTS and a DREAM

## about the book



### **FIFTY CENTS AND A DREAM** *Young Booker T. Washington*

by Jabari Asim

illustrated by Bryan Collier

978-0-316-08657-8

Born into slavery, Booker T. Washington could only dream of learning to read and write. After emancipation, young Booker began a 500-mile journey, mostly on foot, to Hampton Institute, taking his first of many steps toward a college degree. When he arrived, he had just 50 cents in his pocket and a dream about to come true.

## about the author



Jabari Asim is an associate professor of writing at Emerson College and a recipient of the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship. He has written for the *Washington Post* and is the editor of the NAACP magazine, *The Crisis*. He lives in Boston, with his wife and five children.

## about the illustrator



Bryan Collier began painting at the age of 15 and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with honors from the Pratt Institute in New York. He has illustrated more than 25 picture books, such as the award-winning *Dave The Potter* and *Rosa*, and has received numerous awards, including three Caldecott Honors and three Coretta Scott King Awards. He lives with his wife and children in Marlboro, New York.



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*The questions and activities in this guide are aligned with Common Core Reading and Language Arts standards.*

*This guide was created by Edward T. Sullivan, a librarian and author who has written many articles about and reviews of children's and young adult books.*

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