

Teaching Notes for 'Black Botanists from Past to Present'

as part of Black History Month 2020

Age group: 8-11 years

Learning Objectives:

To find out more about Black Botanists, their contribution to our history and how they are working in the field today.

When people think of famous botanists, they usually come up with Charles Darwin, Carl Linnaeus, Joseph Banks, Gregor Mendel... they are all white and all male. But there are important black botanists in our history and working today (male and female), and in this lesson these are the ones that will be celebrated.

The PowerPoint is composed of 21 slides, so it is quite long. You could always cover Black Botanists from the Past in one lesson and those in the Present in another lesson.

Regarding George Washington Carver, the shorter video link (4.5 minutes) for students is this one

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdz8XTNttdc>

but there is a longer, more informative one (13 minutes) that you may want to watch beforehand.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yi1Z3aRmx1k>

Here is the link to the Marie Clark Taylor colouring page:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tVR5y8IGNrTRnyUSmXgEtoT9Qkyc2IHx/view>

Ideas for Activities:

- Create a wall display of black botanists for your classroom or school. Each group of children could choose one botanist, research them and create a poster. Alternatively each group could present their botanist to the rest of their class .
- Prepare an assembly where your class presents what they have found out about Black Botanists Past and Present to the rest of the school.
- Write a poem or short story about being outside in nature, like Zakiya McKenzie the nature writer did.
- As a class discuss the different ways young people can be more involved in nature, the environment or gardening. What would encourage more young people, especially from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, to join in? We'd love to hear your responses.
- Come up with a list of 'how to be botanists' in your own school – what sorts of things could you do to make your school a greener, healthier and more plant-life friendly place?
- Pretend you are a TV presenter and make a programme on how to get more young people interested in botanical careers.
- Design a garden that you would like to spend time in – which plants and trees would you choose and why? Draw a picture of your design.

Please share any photos or feedback by emailing us at: info@slbi.org.uk