

George Washington Carver: Welcome to the 21st Century

No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it.

George Washington Carver

As a leader in the agricultural community of the American South during the start of the 1900s, George Washington Carver realized that in order for poor farmers to improve their financial outlook they would have to learn new agricultural techniques. Unfortunately, most African Americans in the South were denied an education due to racism and violence. Many farmers and their families could not read. For this reason, George Washington Carver had to develop alternative teaching methods that would reach these individuals.

George Washington Carver developed many techniques that continue to be used today. The informational bulletin was a great resource he would use to reach out to individuals who did have some education and the ability to read. The bulletins contained information about methodologies that farmers could use to increase the productivity of their land. George Washington Carver wrote 44 bulletins on a variety of topics. These bulletins were printed and distributed through the region of Tuskegee Institute, Alabama.

However, understanding that reading was a limited skill among his primary audience, George Washington Carver also utilized the Jesup Wagon. He would travel the region surrounding Tuskegee Institute and teach farmers about growing crops like soybeans, sweet potatoes, and peanuts. He taught farmers how much the land would improve by adding these crops to their land and not just focusing on the cash crops of cotton and tobacco, which had been the case for the last two hundred years.

While George Washington Carver was a leading agricultural scientist and focused on farmers, he was also a renowned humanitarian and conservationist. Carver believed that everything a man needed could be found in the land.

So, what would George Washington Carver say about the problems facing us today? Climate change, melting ice caps, acid rain, trash islands, and other concerns have all developed since his death. Your job will be to research a current topic of ecological concern and create a presentation from George Washington Carver's point of view. **Remember: you are writing as George Washington Carver (or as an environmentalist) not yourself.**

Step 1: Pick your audience

Who do you want your audience to be?

- Young children
- Politicians
- CEO's
- Teens
- Young adults
- Educational leaders

Step 2: Pick your presentation method

Keep in mind that your audience should drive your choice of presentation.

- Children's book
- Vlog
- Essay
- Blog
- Podcast
- Other: check with your teacher
- Documentary
- Data driven slide show

Step 3: Review the expectations

- The expectations for each of the presentation methods are listed below. Make sure you review them thoroughly and are willing to fulfill them before moving forward.
- **REMEMBER:** this is a roughly set of expectations. Items like proper grammar, spelling, neatness, creativity, etc. are required regardless of your presentation method. Also make sure for a written presentation you choose a font type, size and color appropriate to your presentation method.

Blog

Your Blog **MUST** have a minimum of 10 entries. You should create an actual blog platform like Wix or Blogger (focus on free platforms). Each of your entries should be at least a paragraph long. You can spread out your answer to the questions below (a good idea would be to do one question per post).

Children's Book

Your children's book must be illustrated. You need to **DRAW** your pictures (do not just cut and paste generic pictures from google). Your book should answer all the questions but be creative, colorful, and in a language young students could understand.

Data driven slide show

For use with politicians or CEOs your presentation will focus on the data around your topic. Be sure that you can correctly interpret your data. You should have some sort of data for the majority of the questions and each data set should have an explanation.

Documentary

Your documentary should be 10-15 minutes long. You can use no more than 2 minutes of clips from other sources, otherwise you can use video and pictures from other sources as long as any voice over is your own. You can take one of two roles: you can be the interviewer and have a guest to represent Dr. Carver or you can act as Carver creating his own documentary. You must post your documentary to YouTube.

Essay

Your essay should be 5-7 pages. You need an introduction and conclusion paragraph. You should follow all proper grammar rules and use in text citations for your sources. Your paper should be double spaced, Arial or Calibri, font size 11.

Podcast

Your podcast should be 10-15 minutes long. You can take one of two roles: you can be the interviewer and have a guest to represent Dr. Carver or you can act as Carver creating his own documentary. You must post your documentary to YouTube. Make sure you can record somewhere with limited background noise. You also need to incorporate music somehow (it can be an introduction and conclusion and a transition). You need to post your podcast to YouTube.

Vlog

Your Vlog MUST have a minimum of 10 entries each of 1-2 minutes long. You should create a YouTube channel that has your vlogs posted. You can spread out your answer to the questions below (a good idea would be to do one question per post).

Other

If you have another idea, reach out to your teacher for permission.

Step 4: Topic

Pick one of the following topics (if you have something else in mind ask your teacher):

- Global warming
- Melting ice caps
- Acid rain
- Oceanic Trash Gyres
- Contaminated fresh water
- Depletion of natural resources
- Hyper-consumption and Unsustainable Waste Production

- Waste Disposal
- Deforestation and Desertification Loss of biodiversity
- Oceanic Acidification
- Ozone Layer Depletion
- Urban Sprawl
- Overfishing
- Genetic Engineering (GMO)

Step 5: Content

You need to answer each of the following questions in your project

1. Your background and define the problem
 - a. Come up with a fake educational and/or career history for yourself that would make you an expert in your topic (why should your audience listen to you).
 - b. What is the problem worldwide?
 - c. Get specific. Pick a specific location to focus on for the rest of the presentation.
Example: Trash gyres: there are 5 (list each of the five then pick one to be the focus of the rest of your presentation).
2. Why did you pick this topic?
 - a. What makes it important in general?
 - b. What makes it significant to you specifically?
3. When did scientists become aware of the problem?
 - a. Was this a slow realization over decades or a sudden discovery?
 - b. How was the problem discovered? By whom?
 - c. What is the scientific proof that there is a problem?
4. Provide a history of the problem
 - a. When was the problem at its worst? Its best?
 - b. Look back at the last 10 years of data, what changes do you see?
5. Species impact
 - a. What organism MOST is impacted immediately by the issue? If this has affected the population size of a species be sure to reference that data.
 - b. Are there any organisms that have been impacted positively? If so what organism and what was the impact?
6. Historic impact
 - a. How has your specific area of the world changed due to this issue?
 - b. Try to find pictures or data about the region before the issue developed. (Before and after)

7. The future

- a. What do experts predict will happen if the issue is left unchanged?
- b. Worldwide?
- c. Your specific location?

8. Current solutions (general)

- a. What is currently being done to address the issue? Worldwide? In your area?
- b. Find and list at least three. Be able to give a brief (1 sentence) description of each)

9. Current solutions (specific)

- a. Pick one of the solutions from above. Make sure this solution has been used in your specific area.
- b. Give specific data on how it has improved your area.
- c. What are any obstacles preventing implementation of the solution or alternative solutions?
- d. Many issues cross national boundaries and different countries have different levels of commitment to environmental issues. Also, many countries have traditions that may prevent the implementation of solutions. Example: Some Asian countries believe shark fin soup has medicinal properties which leads to the overfishing of sharks throughout the world with only their fins being harvested.

10. Conclusion

- a. What solutions do you think George Washington Carver would support?
- b. Where do you think we go from here?
- c. How can we improve?
- d. What does the future look like to you?

Step 6 Sources:

Make sure you are tracking your sources.

- **Children's book:** Your sources should be at the bottom of each page.
- **Vlogs and Blogs:** You need to include your sources at the end of each entry.
- **Data driven presentation:** Your sources should be listed at the end of each slide
- **Essay:** You should have works cited page and you should use in text parenthetical citations.
- **Documentary:** Any videos included should be cited by the narrator and all sources should be listed at the in as part of the credits.
- **Podcast:** major sources should be announced as the information is shared. Your full list can be read through as the end credits (you can use general website not the full .html code).

REMEMBER: Data tables, graphs and pictures MUST be cited separately. Google is NOT a valid source. If you find something on google you need to track it to its original page and cite that page.