

What Color Is My World?

A RIF GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COORDINATORS

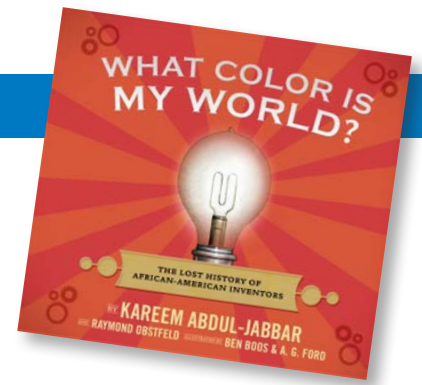
Themes: Inventions, Perseverance, African-American History

Grade Level: 3rd to 5th grade

Book Brief: As they fix up their new house, Herbie and his sister discover how many things that we use every day were designed by African-American inventors.

Authors: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Raymond Obstfeld

Illustrators: Ben Boos and A.G. Ford



TIME TO READ!

Before reading: Can the children name any famous inventors? What did they invent? What about any famous *African-American* inventors? Think about the book's subtitle—what does “lost history” mean? Explain that this book will teach them about some very important inventors they've probably never heard of before.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

RUBE GOLDBERG CONTEST (AGES 8-12)

Materials: whatever you have around the center

A Rube Goldberg machine is a complicated machine that performs a very simple task. Divide the children into teams and have them compete to see who can invent the best machine! Pick an easy task (like knocking a cup over); then have children set up a complex chain reaction of as many steps as possible to complete it. Use only what you find around the center. The first team to complete the task with their machine wins! (Watch www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjOFcDm7U to see a sample machine.)

BOOK IT (AGES 8-12)

Materials: paper, markers or crayons

Dr. Seuss filled his books with whacky inventions. Make a children's book of your own about a day in the life of a student who wakes up one morning in 2050 and is late for school! Include as many

inventions as you can for your character to use as they rush to get to school on time. The more creative, the better!



PHYSICAL EDUCATION (AGES 8-12)

Herbie comes up with an idea for a new sport in which basketball players shoot each other with water guns. Invent your own new game or sport! How many people can play? Are there teams? How do you win? Make a list of rules. If you have enough people, play a game or two!

TECHNOLOGY LINK

Visit www.inventivekids.com for fun games and resources for young inventors!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS ABOUT INVENTORS

Neo Leo, Gene Barretta (2009), *The Day-Glo Brothers*, Chris Barton (2009), *Balloons over Broadway*, Melissa Sweet (2011).

TECHNOLOGY LINK FOR KIDS www.rif.org/kids



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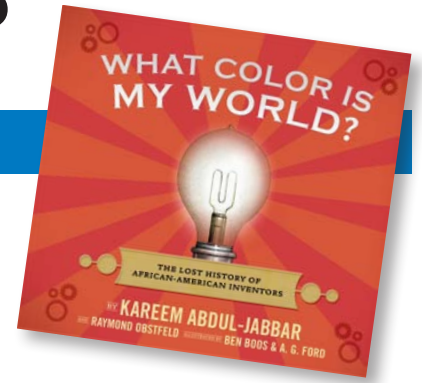
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Content Connections: Science, Math, Engineering, Social Studies



TIME TO READ!

BEFORE WE READ, LET'S LOOK AT...

The Cover: Have students make predictions about the book based on the title and

cover illustration. What does the light bulb represent? What about the gears? Look at the book's subtitle—what does “lost history” mean?

The Pictures: Flip through the pictures and explain the book's unusual format. The main story is broken up by both excerpts from Herbie's journal and profiles of famous African-American inventors. What *genre* is this book?

Prior Knowledge: Revisit the book's subtitle. Why would African-American inventors be less famous than their white peers? Briefly explain that not only

did the history of discrimination in the United States make it harder for African-American inventors to work, it also made them less likely to be recognized or celebrated for their inventions.

Vocabulary: The vocabulary will vary from chapter to chapter.

Purpose for Reading: This book will work best if students access it directly. Read the main story aloud; then put the book on the shelf for free reading or use it as part of a learning station. Tell students to focus on integrating the non-fiction and fiction parts of the book.

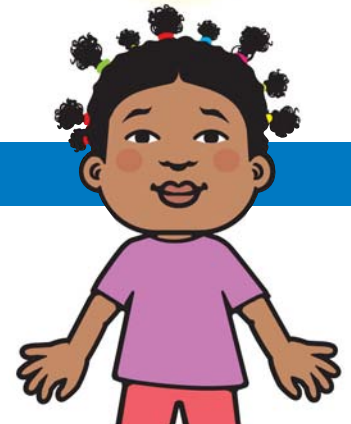


WHILE WE READ

MONITORING COMPREHENSION

- ◆ Why does Herbie keep a journal?
- ◆ Who is Mr. Mital really?

- ◆ What do you think Herbie will be when he grows up?



LET'S THINK ABOUT

Our Purpose: “How did the extra information in the book add to the story? Did the story help you to better understand the non-fiction segments?”

Extending Our Thinking: What does Mr. Mital mean when he says that no one really invents anything? Do you agree? Can you think of any examples from the text or the real world to support your argument? Has anyone in history ever invented anything completely new?

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.



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A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

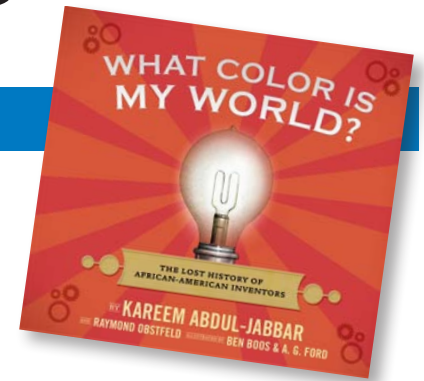
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TIME TO READ!

Before reading, build background: Can your child name any famous inventors? Any famous *African-American* inventors? Think about the book's subtitle—

what does “lost history” mean?

While reading, look under the flaps: The authors give you more information about each inventor. Skim the information while you read the story; then read the story again more closely.

After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ What does Mr. Mital mean when he says no one invents anything? Do you agree?
- ◆ Why does Herbie keep a journal?
- ◆ Who is Mr. Mital really?
- ◆ What do you think Herbie will be when he grows up?



RELATED ACTIVITIES

ICY INVENTIONS

Did you know the popsicle was invented by an 11-year-old boy? Invent your own fun flavors!

Materials: small plastic cups, aluminum foil or plastic wrap, popsicle sticks

Combine your favorite flavors (juice, drink mixes, blended fruit, etc.) to make popsicle mix. Fill cups with mixture. Cover the cups with foil or plastic wrap and stick a popsicle stick into the middle of each. Freeze until solid. Remove popsicles and enjoy!

RUBE GOLDBERG

Materials: whatever you have around the house

A Rube Goldberg machine is a complicated machine that performs a very simple task. Help your child

invent one! Pick an easy task (knocking a cup over, for example); then help your child set up a complex chain reaction of as many steps as possible to complete it. Use only what you find around the house. (Watch www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjOFcC-Dm7U to see a sample machine.)

JOURNAL-ISM

Keep a journal like Herbie! Every day for a week, write down at least 3 new facts you learned that day. At the end of the week, look back at what you've written. You'll be shocked at how much you've learned!

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