

Benjamin Banneker

Critical Thinking & Discussion Questions

In the slide presentation on Benjamin Banneker, most of the images of him seem to look like different people. Why would nearly every image appear so different?

What is a “Quaker”? What do Quakers believe? What is the connection between Quakers and the Abolitionist movement in early America?

What does it mean to be self-taught? Do you know anyone who is a self-taught expert in a particular subject?

Do you think it would be harder or easier to become a self-taught expert today, compared to during Colonial times? What subjects are you passionate enough about that you take time to learn about them on your own, outside of school? What are some ways to learn about subjects outside of school (Library, Internet search, YouTube Videos)? Are they reliable ways to become an expert?

When Benjamin Banneker was relatively young, he studied the inner workings of a clock in order to build one himself. Have you ever taken apart anything in your house to try to figure out what makes it work? (Ask permission from your parents before you try this!)

Have you ever noticed old colonial markers or stone highway markers when you’ve traveled? Pay attention and you may spot some, someday.

Benjamin Banneker became successful writing a series of almanacs. Do you know of any other people during the same time period who also wrote an almanac? Are there any almanac's still being published today?

Benjamin Banneker wrote to Thomas Jefferson to make the case against slavery. Are you surprised that Thomas Jefferson wrote back to him? Have you ever wanted to tell a politician how you felt about an issue? Do you think they would respond to you?

Here is a list of Bob Woodson's 10 Principles:

Competence	Innovation
Integrity	Inspiration
Transparency	Agency
Resilience	Access
Witness	Grace

Which Woodson Principles does Benjamin Banneker's life story exemplify?