



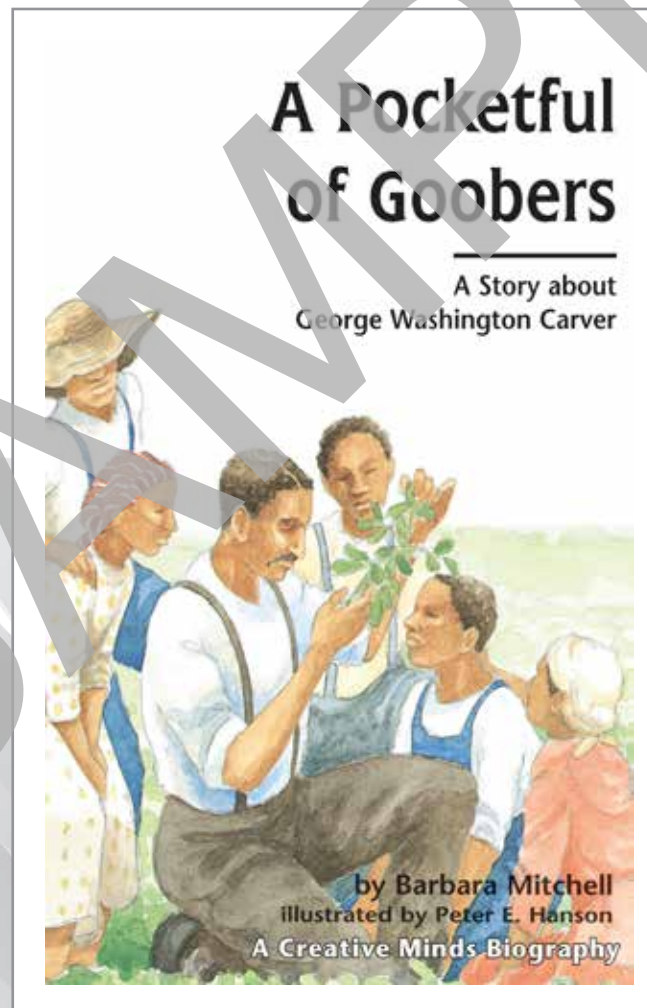
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Pocketful of Goobers: A Story About George Washington Carver

Barbara Mitchell



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Pocketful of Goobers: A Story About George Washington Carver

Barbara Mitchell

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

ISBN 978-1-50204-086-2

Copyright infringement is a violation of Federal Law.

© 2020 by Novel Units, Inc., St. Louis, MO. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from Novel Units, Inc.

Reproduction of any part of this publication for an entire school or for a school system, by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers, or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

Novel Units is a registered trademark of Conn Education.

Printed in the United States of America.

To order, contact your
local school supply store, or:

Toll-Free Fax: 877.716.7272

Phone: 888.650.4224

3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

sales@novelunits.com

novelunits.com

Table of Contents

Summary.....	3
About the Author	3
Introductory Information and Activities.....	3
Five Chapters.....	9
Chapters contain: Vocabulary Words and Activities, Discussion Questions and Activities, Predictions, Postreading Activities	
Conclusion	25
Supplementary Activities	26
Teacher Information	34
Bibliographies.....	40
Assessment.....	44

Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, visualization,
research

Vocabulary

Word mapping, synonyms,
antonyms, analogies

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, storytelling

Comprehension

Predicting

Writing

Instructions, dialogue, letter-
writing

Literary Elements

Characterization, story
elements

Summary

The son of a slave, George Carver believed that he could do anything that he put his mind to, and he wanted to learn about everything! In his quest for an education, George was forced by the segregation policies of the time to leave the Carver farm at about the age of 12. Doing odd jobs to support himself, he traveled from place to place for several years in search of schools, ultimately arriving at the Iowa Agricultural College in Ames, Iowa. His later teaching in the classroom and the countryside would convey a message of ecology, and the belief that everything is a part of a network of relationships. Carver's contributions to the network are related in this story.

About the Author

Barbara Mitchell was born and grew up in Chester, Pennsylvania. She graduated with a degree in music education. She lives in Claymont, Delaware, with her husband Walter, their daughter Wendy, and their miniature schnauzer Frieda. The Mitchell family enjoys taking family trips to "the old city" section of nearby Philadelphia as well as to other historic sites that have given Barbara Mitchell ideas for her books.

It was during the time that Mitchell was a kindergarten teacher that she began to seriously think about writing children's books. It was after the birth of her daughter that Mitchell began to write. Since she had always been interested in history, Mitchell found lots of little-known bits of history that she could write about. From those books she has gone on to the writing of biographies. She has said, "As I immerse myself in the history of the person I'm writing about, I begin to get an idea of what it was like to be that person and what he or she thought and felt. It's a real challenge for me to express this as I write the biography."

"One of the most rewarding moments for me as a writer occurred one day at the end of a classroom visit when a shy child slipped her hand into mine and said softly, 'I loved your story. Make some more.' Words like those give me the encouragement and inspiration to continue to write for young people."

Introductory Information and Activities

Note:

Please be selective and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with this unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that the discretionary choices made are most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range has been provided, so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

Using Predictions in the Novel Unit Approach

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader's thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.

Use the facts and ideas the author gives.

Use new information that may cause you to change your mind.

Use your own knowledge.

Predictions:

4. What impact do you think that George's teaching decision will have on his life and the lives of others? Make a prediction as to what will happen next. (*Professor James Wilson, head of the agriculture department at Ames said, "I would never part with a student with so much regret as George Carver. It will be difficult, in fact impossible, to fill his place."*)

Chapter Three—Pages 26-38

Vocabulary:

pellagra 28	surrey 28	scrounging 28	gigantic 32
compost 32	scoffed 32	cowpeas 34	nutritious 34
crop rotation 35	goobers 35	dubiously 35	expectantly 37
nitrogen 38			

Vocabulary Activity:

Complete each of the following comparisons by using a vocabulary word. (Sample: GOOD is to BAD as HOT is to COLD.)

1. GLAD is to HAPPY as _____ is to FORAGING. (SCROUNGING)
2. HERE is to THERE as _____ is to PRAISED. (SCOFFED)
3. UNHAPPY is to SAD as _____ is to HOPEFULLY. (EXPECTANTLY)
4. THEN is to NOW as _____ is to DECIDEDLY. (DUBIOUSLY)
5. MORE is to LESS as _____ is to MINIATURE. (GIGANTIC)
6. UP is to DOWN as _____ is to UNWHOLESOME. (NUTRITIOUS)

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Professor Carver* takes his 13 students on a "field trip" the first day of class. What do they do? Why? (Page 30, *The only equipment that Professor Carver has is a hoe and a blind ox, Old Betsy. He takes his students around the neighborhood. They knock on doors and collect throw-aways. This is the lab equipment for the class.*) What science equipment do you have available for your use? Make a list. Why do you think that there is such a difference in the equipment that you currently have and that of Professor Carver? (See Postreading Activities #1 and #2.)

*When George Washington Carver accepted the position at Tuskegee, he wrote to Booker T. Washington saying that he hoped to teach new and better agriculture methods to poor southern blacks. "To this end," Carver said, "I have been preparing myself for these many years, feeling as I do that this line of education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom to our people." In contrast to his warm relations with his students, Carver never quite got along with other members of the Tuskegee faculty and staff. To a large degree, this was his own fault. Arriving at the institution

filled with high hopes, he was also brimming with a certain arrogance. Because Washington had practically begged him to come, and because he held an advanced degree from a white college, Carver felt that he was unique and deserved special treatment. His request for two rooms when bachelors usually shared a room, and a salary double that of the others did not help the situation. Even the fact that his skin was darker than that of the other faculty members made him suspect. In early 20th century America, feelings of prejudice against dark-skinned blacks by light-skinned blacks were common. (See Bibliography, Adair and Rogers.)

2. What is the crop rotation plan that Professor Carver has in mind for the farmers of Alabama*? Why? (*Pages 34-38, The Alabama soil is tired and sick. [Carver looks upon it as a "pile of sand and clay," and of Alabama he says it is "a vast territory of barren and furrowed hillsides and wasted valleys."]* Carver's idea is to rotate the crops each year, to rest the soil and to return nutrients to it.) (See Postreading Activity #3.)

*Although the Constitution guaranteed equal rights, the southern system of land ownership at that time guaranteed a life of debt and poverty for African Americans. Although the vast majority of the South's five million blacks were farmers, only a few of them owned the land that they worked. Instead, they rented land from white owners, paying them a share of the crop. They were no longer slaves, but tenant farmers. The sharecropping system left little for the black farmers themselves, forcing them to borrow money to pay their expenses. Each year the black farmer went deeper and deeper into debt. The situation for black farmers was made worse by their own farming techniques. In desperate need of money, they planted cotton year after year, for it was a crop that would sell, although the prices fluctuated greatly. This practice robbed the soil of nutrients, leaving the land less and less productive and trapping the black farmer in a world of poverty.

Postreading Activities:

1. Be inventive! Take the list of science equipment that is available to you. If at all possible to do so, substitute throw-aways for as many items as you can. You may combine the throw-aways to make the equipment.
2. Do some research. Find out about the present Tuskegee University.

Tuskegee University is a privately controlled, coeducational institution in Tuskegee, Alabama. It has a college of arts and sciences and schools of agriculture and home economics, business, education, engineering and medicine. The university offers bachelor's and master's degrees and a doctor's degree in veterinary medicine. It is the home of the George Washington Carver Research Foundation and the Tuskegee Archives. (Source: *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1991.)