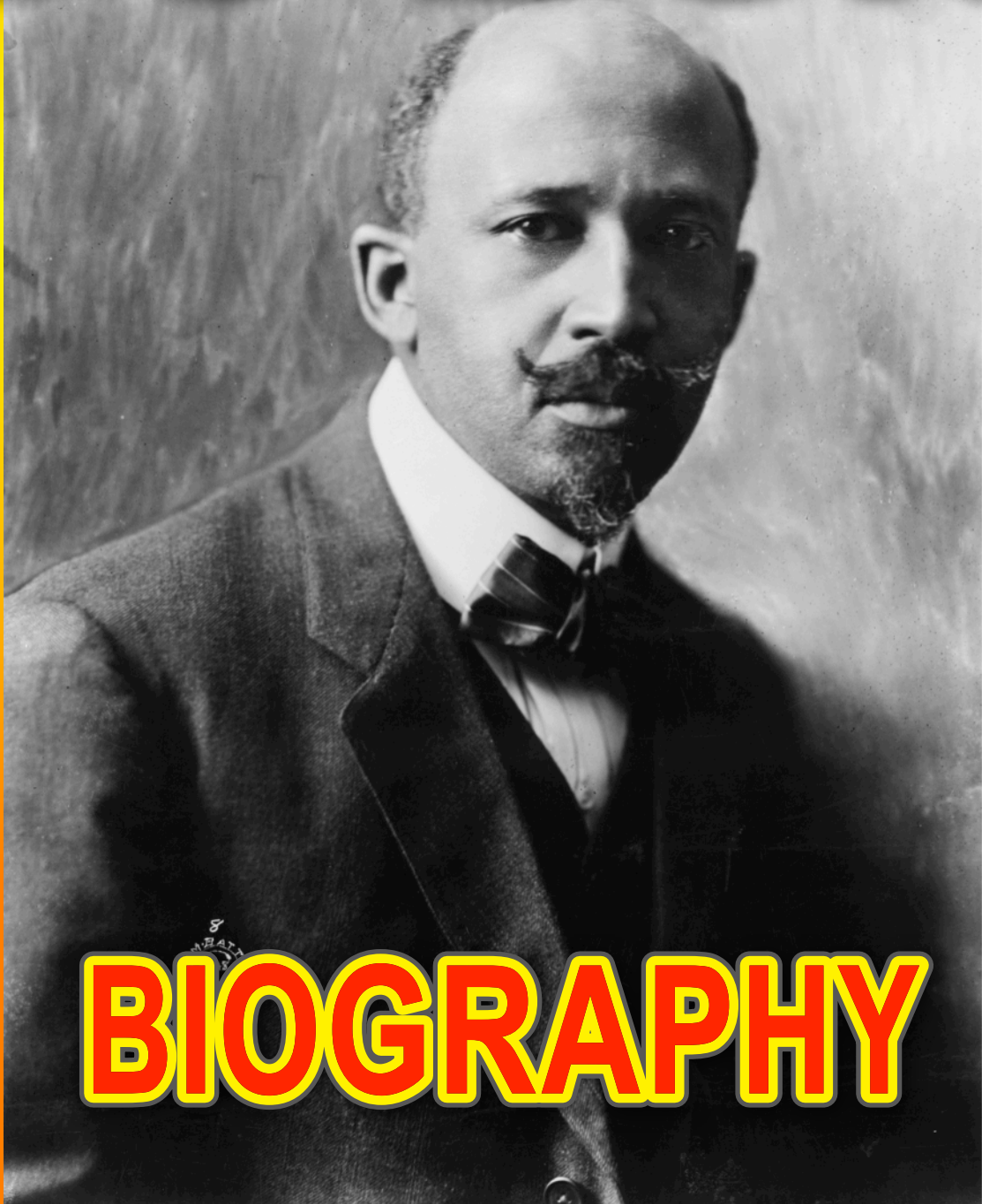


# W. E. B. DU BOIS



## BIOGRAPHY

# W. E. B. DU BOIS

African-American activist W.E.B. Du Bois was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, on February 23, 1868. He studied at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and later earned a Ph.D. from Harvard University – the first African-American to do so.

While he was studying in the South, Du Bois saw at first hand violent racism against African-Americans. It drove Du Bois to push for changes in the law, and equality between races.

Du Bois worked as a professor at Atlanta University. In 1895, prominent African-American leader Booker T. Washington gave a speech in Atlanta. In it, he said that African-Americans should accept the jobs they were offered, even if white people stayed in charge. But Du Bois thought this was not enough to change the situation for African-Americans. He thought that African-Americans should aspire to higher education, so that the most able had the chance to lead.

During this time, Du Bois also wrote. In 1903, he published a series of essays called 'The Souls of Black Folk'. He also edited The Crisis, a magazine published by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which he had co-founded.

By this point, Du Bois was a well-known figure for voicing African-American opinions. But then he fell out with the leader of the NAACP over the issue of segregation in schools. Du Bois spent the last part of his life in the African country of Ghana to work on an encyclopedia of peoples with African ancestors.

Du Bois died aged 95 on August 27, 1963. It was just one day before civil rights activist Martin Luther King gave his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech that sparked change for African-Americans in the United States.

# Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'segregation'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'segregation' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'segregation'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'segregation'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'segregation' means.

# Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: aspire to	aim for

# Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Du Bois thought differently than Booker T. Washington, another African-American leader at the time.

This made Du Bois want to be an activist for civil rights and equality.

Du Bois was the first African-American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

For the last part of his life Du Bois was in Ghana.

Du Bois helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and edited their magazine.

W.E.B. Du Bois was born in Massachusetts in 1868.

While he was studying in Tennessee, Du Bois encountered racism.

# Get to the facts

- 1 Where did W.E.B Du Bois earn a Ph.D. from?
- 2 Which African-American figure did Du Bois disagree with?
- 3 What did Du Bois publish in 1903?
- 4 What did Du Bois co-found?
- 5 What happened the day after Du Bois died?

# Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

## Equality speech

Write a speech about why all people should be treated equally.

**Below is a plain text version for printing:**

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## Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – aspire to                      Synonym – aim for

## Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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This made Du Bois want to be an activist for civil rights and equality.

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## **Make a story...**

### **Equality speech**

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