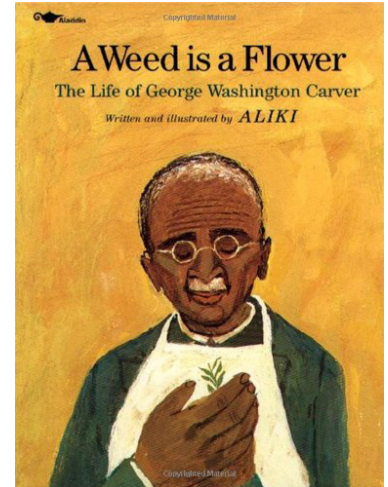


A Weed is a Flower: The Life of George Washington Carver by Aliko

Book Synopsis: *A Weed is a Flower: The Life of George Washington Carver* by Aliko tells the journey and life story of George Washington Carver. Born the child of enslaved people, George learns the importance of education and develops a deep love of plants. The story follows his life from his birth in Missouri, college education in Iowa and his important work at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

A recorded reading of this book is [available here](#).



Connection to Iowa History

George Washington Carver, a Black man, was born in Missouri as the son of enslaved parents. After being denied admission to Highland College in Kansas because of his race, he walked to Iowa for new opportunities. He first attended Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, before transferring to Iowa State Agricultural College, which would soon turn into Iowa State University. He eventually became the first Black man to earn a master's degree at Iowa State College in 1896 and later served as faculty at the college. He left Iowa State Agricultural College to work at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama where he remained until his death in 1943.

Goldie's Kids Club Storytime Activity

George Washington Carver loved to spend time in his garden with the plants and flowers. After reading the story, create a torn paper garden scene.

Instructions ([Video Instructions Available](#))

- 1 **Color.** Using a colored marker, color the bottom half of the paper plate brown. This will serve as the "soil" for the garden.
- 2 **Investigate.** Before starting the flowers, check out different flower designs online or in a book. Try and find flowers that are native to Iowa to include in your garden.
- 3 **Stems.** Using your hands, tear long thin rectangles of green construction paper. These will be the flower stems.
- 4 **Layout.** Begin to lay out the garden design on the paper plate by placing the stems on the paper plate. Don't be afraid to move things around. Glue the stems into place when you are happy with the design and placement.
- 5 **Flower centers.** To create the flower centers, tear small circles of construction paper. Place and glue those on the top edge of the stems.

Materials

- Paper plate
- Color marker
- Construction paper
- Glue or glue stick

Instructions continued on next page

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Instructions continued

- 6 **Petals.** To create the petals of the flowers, tear the construction paper into petal shapes. Glue these shapes around the flower centers. Do not use scissors as tearing creates a natural edge.
- 7 **Be creative.** Try a variety of shapes, sizes and colors for your flowers to create a colorful garden.
- 8 **Share!** After you complete your activity, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email a photo of your project to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with others!
- 9 **Questions to Spark Learning**
 - Young George Washington Carver kept a garden. Do you have a garden? If so, what do you grow?
 - What is your favorite type of flower? Why?
 - George Washington Carver is famous for his work with peanuts. What kinds of things can you think of that contain peanuts?
 - Carver is also remembered for his work to promote alternative crops to cotton and methods to prevent soil depletion. Why do you think this kind of work was and still is important today?