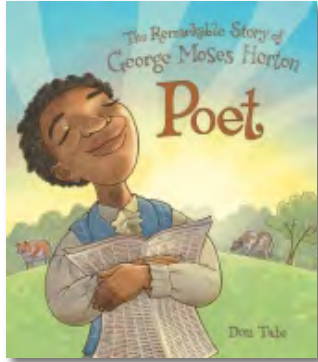


TEACHER'S GUIDE



Poet

The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton

Written and illustrated by Don Tate

HC: 978-1-56145-825-7

Ages 6–10 / GRL N; Gr 3

ABOUT THE BOOK

Forced to work long hours, George was unable to attend school or learn how to read. But he was determined—he listened to the white children's lessons and learned the alphabet. Then he taught himself to read. Soon he began composing poetry in his head and reciting it as he sold fruits and vegetables on a nearby college campus. News of the slave poet traveled quickly among the students, and before long, George had customers for his poems. But George was still enslaved. Would he ever be free?

In this powerful biography of George Moses Horton, the first southern African-American man to be published, Don Tate tells an inspiring and moving story of talent and determination.

THEMES

- Poetry
- African-American history
- Slavery
- Freedom

BEFORE YOU READ

As a group, use the following pre-reading discussion questions to spark interest in the book.

- Describe the illustration of the front cover.
- Notice the boy's expression. Describe how he is feeling. Explain why he feels this way.
- Identify the setting. Describe the scene featured in this illustration.
- Read the title. Tell what you know about a poet. Define the word 'remarkable.'
- Consider the illustration on the back cover. Describe the action.
- Identify the boy pushing the fruit cart. Compare and contrast this boy with the one featured on the front cover. Tell of ways that they are the same. List their differences.
- Predict what *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton* is going to be about. Explain your answer.

AFTER YOU READ

Use the following quotes from the book as post reading discussion questions.

MEETING THE STANDARDS

The activities in this guide directly address a variety of standards across the curriculum. For a complete list of the Common Core English Language Arts Standards addressed, please see pages 16–17.

- **“George loved words.”**
 - Describe the types of words George loved.
 - What does George want?
 - Explain what is keeping him from his desire.
 - Tell what his determination to teach himself to read says about his character.
- **“His verses swayed with emotion, like the music of Sunday services. They kept him strong as he grew up to be a young man.”**
 - Explain how words can keep someone strong. Tell why George Moses Horton had to remain strong.
 - The word *remarkable* means extraordinary and unusual. Discuss why George Moses Horton’s ability to compose poetry was an extraordinary skill. Explain why committing his poems to memory was an unusual thing to do.
 - List ways that George Moses Horton’s childhood was a remarkable one.
- **“Every eye grew wide and every mouth fell open at the sound of George’s voice, uttering beautiful verses. The students were awestruck when they found out that he had composed them himself.”**
 - Tell why the college students were awestruck by George Moses Horton’s poetry.
 - Consider how being separated from his family served as inspiration for his poetry.
 - Examine how being enslaved would give George Moses Horton ideas for his poetry.
- **“His poems protested his enslavement. No other American slave had done that before.”**
 - Explain why George Moses Horton protested his enslavement.
 - Explain why no other American slave had protested enslavement with published poetry.
 - George Moses Horton’s published poetry made him feel very proud. Did everyone feel the same way about his works? Explain your answer.
- **“George was devastated.”**
 - Explain why George Moses Horton’s master refused to sell him.
 - The word *devastated* means hopeless or destroyed. Explain why George Moses Horton felt hopeless. Tell what has caused him to feel this way.
 - Observe the illustration in which George Moses Horton is laying his head on his hands. Though he is devastated, identify what his mind continues to focus on. Tell why this is important.
- **“New laws were passed in North Carolina. People who printed and distributed anti-slavery materials were penalized. Worse yet, it became illegal to teach a slave how to read or write.”**
 - Discuss the affect the abolitionist’s books, posters, and pamphlets had on the slaves.
 - Tell why people were not allowed to print and distribute anti-slavery materials.
 - Explain why teaching a slave how to read or write became unlawful.
- **“George’s love of words had taken him on a great journey. Words made him strong. Words allowed him to dream. Words loosened the chains of bondage long before his last day as a slave.”**
 - Review George Moses Horton’s biography. List ways that words made his story remarkable.
 - Discuss how dreams helped George Moses Horton to endure devastation and heartaches.
 - Tell how words helped to keep George Moses Horton’s mind free, even though his body was enslaved.

ACTIVITY WORKSHEETS

The following activity worksheets are included in this guide:

- Biography Pyramid
- Biography Pyramid Template
- Alphabetizing
- Alphabetizing Matrix
- Alphabetizing Word Labels
- Alphabetizing Matrix Answer Key
- Timeline of George Moses Horton’s Life

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

Q: You came into the publishing world as an illustrator. Do you feel that you have grown to love words in the same way that George Moses Horton did?

A: I love words, too. But for me, words were an acquired taste. As a child, I didn't enjoy reading much. I preferred drawing. I finally became an avid reader in my early twenties upon discovering authors like Richard Wright and Gordon Parks. Before writing my first book, I often felt embarrassed about my own imperfect use of words. I didn't (and still don't) speak The King's English. I often used words like "ain't" and "got." Writing that first book, getting it published, and winning awards gave me the confidence to write *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton*. I am a lover of words today.

Q: Did the process of writing and illustrating this book affect your life in any way? How so?

A: I grew as a storyteller. Typically I illustrate stories written by other authors. With *Poet*, I wrote and illustrated Horton's story. I began by writing and revising the manuscript many times. Then I began to sketch, which affected the words. Revised the words, which affected the sketches—it was like a moving target.

Q: What do you hope young readers will learn from George Moses Horton's story?

A: It was not my intention for the story to emphasize any particular message. But the more I studied George's life, the more I realized there is a message in there that can't be ignored. The last page reads: "Words made [George] strong. Words allowed him to dream. Words loosened the chains of bondage long before his last day as a slave." What's to be

DON TATE



learned? Read! Education, I believe, is the answer to many of our society's ailments. And education begins with reading.

Q: What did you learn from George Moses Horton's story?

A: Horton's story reinforced some things that I already knew, that I learned from studying many stories of enslaved people: In the face of our greatest adversities, people can still do great things using their innate God-given gifts. Regardless of the circumstances, work hard, be persistent, believe in yourself, and never give up.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Don Tate said that, as a child, he didn't enjoy reading. And, yet, as an adult, he became an author. Do you find this fact surprising in any way? Can you relate to his words?
- Explain what Don Tate meant by stating that illustrations affect words and that words affect illustrations.
- Describe the experience of reading and studying George Moses Horton's biography. Did his story leave an impression on you? Did you become inspired in any way? How so?

AUTHOR'S NOTE

For more information about Don Tate and George Moses Horton, see the Author's Note at the back of *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton*.

BIOGRAPHY PYRAMID

OBJECTIVE: To summarize facts about a biography of George Moses Horton's life.

MATERIALS:

- *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton*
- Biography Pyramid Template (Guide, pg. 5)
- Pencil
- Markers or crayons

PROCEDURE:

- Read and discuss *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton*.
- Explore the definition of the word biography – being the story of a person's life. Explain how *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton* serves as a biographical study of a man's trials, accomplishments, and positive effect on mankind.
- Using the Biography Pyramid Template, brainstorm the following topics with students:
 - Identify what George Moses Horton loved the best.
 - List words that describe George Moses Horton's character.
 - Find words to describe George Moses Horton's childhood.
 - Discuss trials that George Moses Horton had to overcome.
 - Identify George Moses Horton's greatest accomplishment.
 - Tell how George Moses Horton's accomplishments helped mankind.
- Instruct students to fill out their own Biography Pyramid. Allow students to use *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton* as a reference.
- Once the Biography Pyramid Template is complete, instruct students to illustrate their work.

BIOGRAPHY PYRAMID TEMPLATE

One word describing what
George Moses Horton loved best

Two words describing George Moses Horton

Three words describing George Moses Horton's childhood

Four words describing a problem George Moses Horton had to overcome

Five words describing George Moses Horton's greatest accomplishment

Six words describing how George Moses Horton's accomplishments helped mankind

ALPHABETIZING

“George was determined to learn how to read. When white children studied their books, he lingered nearby. He listened as they repeated the letters of the alphabet. Soon, George could recite the alphabet himself.”

OBJECTIVE: To practice the skills of letter recognition, beginning word analysis, and letter matching in a concrete, manipulative manner.

MATERIALS:

- *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton*
- Computer paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- Glue sticks or tape
- Alphabetizing Matrix and Word Labels (Guide, pages 7–8)
- Alphabetizing Matrix Answer Key (Guide, page 9)
- Dictionary

PROCEDURE A:

- Print Alphabetizing Matrix and Word Labels on either computer paper or cardstock.
- Cut out the labels.
- Using the Alphabetizing Matrix, match the first letter of the word printed on the labels with the correct letter of the alphabet.
- Continue until all word labels have been matched on the Alphabetizing Matrix.
- Tape or glue the words in correct space on the Alphabetizing Matrix.
- Check your work using the Alphabetizing Matrix Answer Key (Guide, page 9)

PROCEDURE B:

- Prepare Alphabetizing Matrix and Word Labels as directed in Procedure A.
- Choose a word label. Use a dictionary to help define the word.
- Search through *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton* as a reference to locate the word in the text.
- Once the word has been located in the text, place the word label in the correct alphabetical space on the Alphabetizing Matrix.
- Continue until all word labels have been located in the text and matched on the Alphabetizing Matrix.

NOTE: Words for the letters X and Z are unavailable in the text. A “FREE SPACE” serves as a marker on the Alphabetizing Matrix for these omitted letters.

ALPHABETIZING MATRIX

A		N	
B		O	
C		P	
D		Q	
E		R	
F		S	
G		T	
H		U	
I		V	
J		W	
K		X	FREE SPACE
L		Y	
M		Z	FREE SPACE

ALPHABETIZING WORD LABELS

abolitionists	journal	slaves
brothers	kept	tattered
cattle	liberty	understand
devastated	money	verse
enslaved	newspaper	Wesley
free	oratory	young
George	poet	read
hymnal	quotations	influential

ALPHABETIZING MATRIX ANSWER KEY

A	abolitionists	N	newspaper
B	brothers	O	oratory
C	cattle	P	poet
D	devastated	Q	quotations
E	enslaved	R	read
F	free	S	slaves
G	George	T	tattered
H	hymnal	U	understand
I	influential	V	verse
J	Journal	W	Wesley
K	kept	X	FREE SPACE
L	liberty	Y	young
M	money	Z	FREE SPACE

TIMELINE OF GEORGE MOSES HORTON'S LIFE

OBJECTIVE: To present and interpret key details of text in a visual manner.

MATERIALS:

- *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton*
- Timeline Strips #1 and #2 (Guide, pages 11–12)
- Timeline Tabs #1 and #2 (Guide, pages 13–14)
- Blank Timeline Tabs (Guide, page 14)
- Tape
- Scissors
- Fine-tipped markers or colored pencils
- Writing paper

PROCEDURE:

- Using scissors, trim around the borders of the Timeline Strips and Timeline Tabs.
- Using tape, construct the Timeline by securing strips together. Take care to secure the lower tab of strip #1 (1775–1795) behind the number 1800 on strip #2 (1800–1820) and the lower tab of strip #2 behind the 1825 on strip #3. Repeat process with the strips found on page 14.
- Lay Timeline on flat surface.
- Match the dates printed on the Timeline Tabs close to the associated date along the Timeline and secure with tape.

INTRPRETATION PROJECT IDEAS:

- Using *Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton* as a reference, search through the book to find illustrations and text correlating with the information printed on the Timeline Tabs.
- Print blank Timeline Tabs. Use fine-tipped markers or colored pencils to illustrate the information printed on correlating printed Timeline Tabs. Arrange both sets of Tabs opposite one another along the Timeline.
- Review the information printed on the Timeline Tabs. Choose one that you consider to be the most remarkable one of all. Write a short informative essay stating the reasons why you feel this way. Illustrate your work.

TIMELINE STRIPS #1

1775

1780

1785

1790

1795

tab

1800

1805

1810

1815

1820

tab

1825

1830

1835

1840

1845

tab

TIMELINE STRIPS #2

1850

1855

1860

1865

1870

tab

1875

1880

1885

1890

1895

TIMELINE TABS #1

George Moses Horton is born in North Hampton County, North Carolina.

1797

George Moses Horton publishes *Hope of Liberty*.

1829

George Moses Horton moves with owner William Horton to Chatham County with his mother and 5 sisters. At about 10 years old, he is put to work tending cows. During this time, he tries to learn to read, using pieces of spelling books, his mother's hymnal, and the New Testament.

1800

North Carolina passes the act that prohibits teaching slaves to read and/or write.

1830-31

George Moses Horton is 17 when his slave family is broken up by estate distribution. Ownership passes to William's son, James. George Moses Horton becomes a ploughman with a horse.

1814

George Moses Horton is writing and selling about 12 poems a week for 25 cents each. He begins "hiring out" his time from James for 25 cents per week. He begins living in Chapel Hill, working for UNC President Joseph Calwell.

1832

George Moses Horton begins to travel to Chapel Hill, Saturday evening through Sunday. There he sells fruit and poems and performs poems from memory; makes up acrostic love poems for UNC students sweethearts, which they transcribe.

1817

George Moses Horton marries a slave from Franklin Snipe's farm.

1833

George Moses Horton is befriended by Caroline Lee Hentz, a novelist and faculty wife at UNC. She teaches him to write, and arranges publication of his poems in *Lancaster Gazette*, *Raleigh Register*, and *The New York Freedom Journal*.

1828

James Horton dies. George Moses Horton's ownership passes to his son Hall Horton, who raises "hire out" fee to 50 cents.

1843

Three NC benefactors, including Governor John Owen, attempt to purchase Horton from James, for \$100 over the purchase price. James refuses.

George Moses Horton publishes in *Southern Literary Messenger*.

TIMELINE TABS #2 AND BLANK TIMELINE TABS

George Moses Horton writes to northern abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison to ask for help in purchasing his life.

1844

He receives no response.

UNC students leave university for war. George Moses Horton loses market for poems.

1860-61

George Moses Horton publishes *The Poetical Works of George M. Horton, the Colored Bard of North Carolina*. He sells copies for 50 cents to raise funds for liberty.

1845

Union troops enter Chapel Hill. Horton comes under protection of Capt. William H. S. Banks, 9th Michigan Calvary volunteers. He travels with the troops. Banks helps Horton publish *Naked Genius*, promoting book as a way for disabled Union veterans to make their fortunes.

1865

George Moses Horton delivers speech to UNC students about his life, his slavery, his views, and his philosophy titled "An Address: The Stream of Liberty and Science."

1859

George Moses Horton moves to Philadelphia and attempts to gain entry to literary society.

1866

The approximate date of George Moses Horton's death.

1883

He left no account of his final years.

REVIEWS

★ “[Tate’s] decision to illuminate this remarkable man’s life offers a new perspective with remarkable clarity.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, STARRED REVIEW

★ “Tate’s mixed-media illustrations glow with bright greens and yellows, radiating a warmth, hope, and promise that echo this stirring biography’s closing message...”

—*Publishers Weekly*, STARRED REVIEW

★ “A lovely introduction to an inspirational American poet.”

—*School Library Journal*,
STARRED REVIEW



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Don Tate is the illustrator of numerous critically acclaimed books for children, including *The Amazing Age of John Roy Lynch*, *The Cart That Carried Martin* and *Hope’s Gift*. In 2013, he earned an Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Honor Award for his first picture book text, *It Jes’ Happened: When Bill Taylor Started to Draw*. He lives in Texas.

www.dontate.com

Peachtree Teacher’s Guide for
**POET: THE REMARKABLE STORY OF
GEORGE MOSES HORTON**

prepared by Debbie Gonzales

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updated 7/14/15

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS GUIDE DIRECTLY ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:

English Language Arts Standards: Reading Informational Text		Discussion Questions	Author Spotlight	Biography Pyramid	Alphabetizing Matrix	Timeline
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.2	With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.3	With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.4	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.	√		√	√	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.5	Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.	√				
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.6	Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.	√	√			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).	√				√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.10	Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	√	√	√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.2	Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.4	Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.				√	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.7	Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.10	With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1.	√	√	√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.1	Ask and answer such questions as <i>who</i> , <i>what</i> , <i>where</i> , <i>when</i> , <i>why</i> , and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.	√		√		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.3	Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area.				√	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.6	Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.10	By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	√		√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.2	Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.3	Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.	√		√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	√		√	√	√

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ALIGNMENT (CONTINUED)

English Language Arts Standards: Writing

		Discussion Questions	Author Spotlight	Biography Pyramid	Alphabetizing Matrix	Timeline
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.1	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., <i>My favorite book is...</i>).					√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.			√		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.1	Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.					√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.			√		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.1	Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.					√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.2	Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.			√		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.					√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.			√		

English Language Arts Standards: Speaking and Listening

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.2	Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.3	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.	√	√	√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.4	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.			√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.6	Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.	√	√	√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	√	√	√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.2	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.4	Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.			√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	√	√	√	√	√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	√	√	√		√
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.2	Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	√	√	√		√