Opening School Doors

How laws and people widened learning in Alabama

SS24.5.3a "Explain how legislation, individuals, and groups extended educational opportunities in Alabama."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the attendance law, underline one action Booker T. Washington took, and number the Rosenwald Fund, local people, and public school officials to track who helped expand learning.

More Ways to Learn

1. In 1915, Alabama lawmakers passed a compulsory school attendance law. It required many children to attend school rather than miss classes to work or stay home. A law can open a school door, but it cannot make every classroom fair. Alabama's schools were segregated, and Black schools often received less public money than white schools. The new rule did not fix that unequal funding.

2. At Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, Booker T. Washington showed another way to expand learning. As the school's leader, he helped it grow and trained students in subjects such as farming and teaching. Teachers who studied at Tuskegee could carry lessons to other communities. Washington did not write a school law. His work helped more people gain skills and helped prepare educators for Alabama's classrooms.

3. Black families and neighbors also worked together to build schools. In the early 1900s, Alabama communities joined the Rosenwald Fund, a group that helped pay for school buildings for Black children. Local people raised money or gave labor, and public school officials also had to contribute. These partnerships created more places to learn where schools were scarce. The buildings helped, but separate schools and unfair funding remained.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the 1915 law try to give more Alabama children a chance to learn?

2. How did Washington's work at Tuskegee spread learning beyond its students?

3. How did the Rosenwald Fund and local people work together to expand education?

4. Why did these efforts not make school opportunities equal for all Alabama children?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you live in an Alabama community in the early 1900s. Write four sentences proposing a different way neighbors could help children learn, explaining what they would do, how it would help, and one unfair condition it would not fix.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 5 · SS24.5.3a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the attendance law, underline one action Booker T. Washington took, and number the Rosenwald Fund, local people, and public school officials to track who helped expand learning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the 1915 law try to give more Alabama children a chance to learn?	**It required many children to attend school instead of missing classes.**
2	How did Washington's work at Tuskegee spread learning beyond its students?	**He helped prepare teachers who could teach in other communities.**
3	How did the Rosenwald Fund and local people work together to expand education?	**The fund helped pay for school buildings, while local people raised money or gave labor. Public school officials also contributed, helping create more places to learn.**
4	Why did these efforts not make school opportunities equal for all Alabama children?	**Schools remained segregated, and Black schools often received less public money than white schools.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our neighbors could start a group to collect books for the school used by Black children. We would ask families to donate books and organize a shared shelf at the school. More children could practice reading even if their families could not buy books. This plan would not end segregation or unequal public funding.

Accept historically plausible proposals that name a group action, explain how it would help children learn, and identify a limit. The proposal should differ from the law, Tuskegee's teacher training, and the school-building partnerships in the passage.