Building New Opportunities

How Black reformers created paths to education and work

SS24.US1.19d "Describe the efforts of reformers to create greater educational and economic opportunities for Black Americans through the establishment of new institutions and organizations."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the three institutions as you find them, underline what each did, and circle the educational or economic opportunity each sought to expand.

Schools, Networks, and Rights

1 In 1881, Booker T. Washington became the first leader of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama. The school opened with few supplies, but its students helped build the campus. Tuskegee taught academic subjects alongside farming, construction, and other trades. It also prepared graduates to become teachers, so one school could reach far beyond its own classrooms. Washington believed that practical training could help Black Americans earn a living in a society that denied them many jobs and schools. Tuskegee did not end discrimination, but it created a place where students could gain skills and use them to serve their communities.

2 Washington also founded the National Negro Business League in 1900. At its meetings, Black business owners and professionals shared ideas about starting enterprises, finding customers, and handling obstacles such as unequal access to credit. Local branches connected people who might otherwise have worked alone. A shopkeeper, for example, could learn from another owner's experience and make contacts beyond one town. The league could not force banks to lend fairly, but its network helped members strengthen Black-owned businesses. Those businesses offered owners a way to earn income and, in some cases, created jobs for other Black Americans.

3 Other reformers used a different strategy. Founded in 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP, challenged discrimination through court cases, public campaigns, and investigations. Its leaders argued that equal rights required access to good schools and fair chances to work, not only individual effort. The NAACP opposed unequal schooling and barriers to employment, seeking changes that would benefit people who could not attend a particular school or own a business. These efforts did not remove those barriers overnight. Together, Tuskegee, the business league, and the NAACP show how new institutions could train individuals, build economic networks, and press for wider opportunity.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could Tuskegee's teacher training extend educational opportunities beyond its campus?

2. How did the National Negro Business League help members pursue economic opportunities despite unequal access to credit?

3. How did the NAACP seek to expand opportunities for people who were not members of a particular school or business?

4. How did the business league's approach to economic opportunity differ from the NAACP's approach?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a Black reformer in 1910 in a town with no public library that welcomes Black residents. In four or five sentences, propose a new institution or organization and explain how it would operate and expand both educational and economic opportunities.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.19d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number the three institutions as you find them, underline what each did, and circle the educational or economic opportunity each sought to expand. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could Tuskegee's teacher training extend educational opportunities beyond its campus?	**Graduates could teach in other communities, sharing what they learned with students who never attended Tuskegee.**
2	How did the National Negro Business League help members pursue economic opportunities despite unequal access to credit?	**Its meetings and local branches let members share business ideas, learn from one another, and make contacts that could help strengthen their businesses.**
3	How did the NAACP seek to expand opportunities for people who were not members of a particular school or business?	**It used court cases, public campaigns, and investigations to challenge unequal schooling and barriers to employment.**
4	How did the business league's approach to economic opportunity differ from the NAACP's approach?	**The league built a network to help Black business owners strengthen their enterprises. The NAACP challenged discrimination, including barriers to employment, to seek broader changes.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would organize a community reading room in a rented storefront, supported by small donations from local businesses. Volunteers would lend books and newspapers and teach evening reading classes for adults. The room would give residents a place to study even if other libraries refused to serve them. Its newspapers could also help people find job openings, while stronger reading skills could help them qualify for more kinds of work.

Accept answers that accurately connect each institution's actions to educational or economic opportunity. For Your Turn, look for a plausible 1910 organization, a clear plan for how it would operate, and distinct explanations of its educational and economic benefits.