



Get **UP CLOSE** with the series applauded as “not your average biographies... meaty fare... honest and engaging” by *The Horn Book Magazine*. Every Up Close title features in-depth information and remarkable photographs, and is perfect for classrooms, libraries, and history buffs!

RACHEL CARSON

by Ellen Levine
 HC 978-0-670-06220-1
 PB 978-0-14-241046-2

JOHNNY CASH

by Anne E. Neimark
 HC 978-0-670-06215-7
 PB 978-0-14-241047-9

W. E. B. DU BOIS

by Tonya Bolden
 HC 978-0-670-06302-4

ELLA FITZGERALD

by Tonya Lee Stone
 HC 978-0-670-06149-5
 PB 978-0-14-241261-0
 PB available February 2009

BILL GATES

by Marc Aronson
 HC 978-0-670-06348-2

JANE GOODALL

by Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen
 HC 978-0-670-06263-8

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

by Marc Aronson
 HC 978-0-670-06066-5
 PB 978-0-14-241044-8

HARPER LEE

by Kerry Madden
 HC 978-0-670-01095-0
 Available March 2009

THURGOOD MARSHALL

by Chris Crowe
 HC 978-0-670-06228-7

ELVIS PRESLEY

by Wilborn Hampton
 HC 978-0-670-06166-2
 PB 978-0-14-241148-3

RONALD REAGAN

by James Sutherland
 HC 978-0-670-06345-1

BABE RUTH

by Wilborn Hampton
 HC 978-0-670-06305-5
 Available March 2009

JOHN STEINBECK

by Milton Meltzer
 HC 978-0-670-06139-6
 PB 978-0-14-241294-7
 PB available February 2009

OPRAH WINFREY

by Ilene Cooper
 HC 978-0-670-06162-4
 PB 978-0-14-241045-5

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

by Jan Adkins
 HC 978-0-670-06138-9
 PB 978-0-14-241244-2

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TONYA BOLDEN has written a number of highly acclaimed books for children and adults, including the National Council of Teachers of English Orbis Pictus Outstanding Nonfiction Award winner *M.L.K.: Journey of a King* and the Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book *Maritcha: A Nineteenth-Century American Girl*. She has also edited the popular *33 Things Every Girl Should Know*. She lives in New York City. For more information about Tonya Bolden, please visit her at www.tonyabolden.com.



Viking Children's Books • Puffin Books
 Divisions of Penguin Young Readers Group
www.penguin.com/teachersandlibrarians

This discussion guide has been provided by Penguin Young Readers Group for classroom, library, and book club use. It may be reproduced in its entirety or excerpted for these purposes.

DISCUSSION GUIDE



UP*close:* **W. E. B. Du BOIS**
ACTIVIST

a twentieth-century life by **TONYA BOLDEN**

While reading **Up Close: W. E. B. Du Bois**, ask your students to think about the following questions. Answers can either be written individually or discussed in groups to make for an interesting and thought-provoking classroom conversation.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss the book's introduction. What purpose does it serve? What does it suggest about W. E. B. Du Bois's character? How does the rest of the book either confirm or reject your hypothesis?
- Who were the Democrats in the nineteenth century? Who were the Republicans? How did each group feel about the Fourteenth Amendment? How are the constituencies of the Democratic and Republican parties different today?
- In chapter three, the author talks about Du Bois's "Age of Miracles." What does this refer to? Why did the "Age of Miracles" end?
- What did Du Bois research in his Philadelphia sociology study? What conclusions did he draw?
- In the Pan-African Association's manifesto, what did Du Bois assert as *the* problem of the twentieth century? Why did he believe this to be the case?
- Why did Du Bois oppose Booker T. Washington?
- How did Du Bois aim to create a "united front" of African Americans? What was the group's primary goal and what actions did they need to take to achieve it?
- Who was Mary White Ovington?
- Why does Du Bois call himself a "Socialist-of-the-Path"? Compare and contrast capitalism and socialism.
- Strong-minded Monroe Trotter did not necessarily want the Niagara Movement to combine with the NAACP. Why not? What role did Du Bois take on in the NAACP?
- What was *Birth of a Nation*? How did its anti-black propaganda work both for and against the NAACP?
- How did Du Bois's strong opinions and work ethic affect his family life? How did his home life affect his work?
- How did World War I change Du Bois's opinions? What did he urge for during the war, and what did he fight for after it was over? What led to the "Red Summer"?
- Who was Marcus Garvey? How were his ideas different from Du Bois's? What were the similarities between the two men?

- At the end of chapter twelve, Du Bois shocks fellow NAACP members and many others with his call for “voluntary segregation.” Why do you think Du Bois changed his tune so radically? How did this affect the NAACP?
- Why did the NAACP claim Du Bois “ceased to be of value?” How did he react?
- Who was Paul Robeson? What did Du Bois and Robeson have in common?
- How did anti-Communism and the “Red Scare” impact the later years of Du Bois’s life?
- In chapter fifteen, Du Bois revises an earlier declaration about the great problem of the century. What does he say is a cause of that problem? Do you agree with his new assertion? Do you think this statement still holds true today?
- When and where was the announcement of Du Bois’s death made? Do you think this was a fitting place for the news?

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

- Du Bois and Booker T. Washington were well known for countering each other’s arguments about the advancement of black people. Pick a partner and take opposite sides of an issue of your choosing (for example: the pros and cons of homework or two candidates in an upcoming election) and present your points of view to the rest of your class in a debate. How did it feel to debate? Were your partner’s arguments convincing? Did there appear to be a clear winner? Was it easy to choose which side you wanted to defend?
- Though many civil rights were denied to African Americans, Du Bois made great use of the first amendment rights to freedom of speech and of the press. Why are these freedoms important to both individuals and America as a whole? How are they important to you and how do you see them represented in your daily life? Just as Du Bois did in *The Horizon* and *The Crisis*, use your rights to freedom of speech and of the press to write a newspaper editorial about your side of the debate from Activity #1.
- Du Bois tried for many years to get his project *Encyclopedia Africana* underway, but never got a chance to follow through. As a class, create a volume of the encyclopedia for him, with each student researching and writing a separate topic. You may wish to include the history of the continent; demographic information such as population changes over time, cultural information about religions, foods, and holidays; geographical information such as maps or the make-up of the land; and anything else that interests you. Be sure to organize your entries in alphabetical order and create an index for easy access to all of the great information you collect.