

Black History Match (Life Skills, College and Career)

Grade Range: 5-8 **Time:** 30 Minutes

Synopsis: Students are given descriptions of famous African Americans in modern history and asked to match them with the person to whom that description belongs. After matches have been made, students will share their matches with the class.

Materials:

- Set of 5 Descriptions (see attached)
- Set of 5 Names (see attached)
(Just print, cut, and place in baggies to keep together until time to begin the activity! One set per table, assuming 5 tables/groups of students.)

Instructions:

1. Students will be broken into 5 groups of 5-6 students each
2. Mentors will pass out descriptions and names. One set per table group
3. Students and mentors will work to match the names to the descriptions (be careful to work quietly so the other table groups don't benefit from your hard work!)
4. When all matches have been made, mentors will call on students to share 1-2 of their matches with the class as a whole.

**** Talking Points:** What do/did all of these famous African Americans have in common? What did the students find most interesting about each of their lives? What is one theme that they noticed in each life description?

Althea Gibson

Maya Angelou

Malcolm X

Will Smith

Charles Henry Turner

Colin Powell

Michael Jackson

Aretha Franklin

(August 25, 1927 – September 28, 2003) an American tennis player and professional golfer, and the first Black athlete to cross the color line of international tennis. In 1956, she became the first African American to win a Grand Slam title (the French Championships). The following year she won both Wimbledon and the US Nationals (precursor of the US Open), then won both again in 1958, and was voted Female Athlete of the Year by the Associated Press in both years. In all, she won 11 Grand Slam tournaments, including five singles titles, five doubles titles, and one mixed doubles title. She was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame and the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame. "She is one of the greatest players who ever lived," said Bob Ryland, a tennis contemporary and former coach of Venus and Serena Williams. "Martina [Navratilova] couldn't touch her. I think she'd beat the Williams sisters."^[3] In the early 1960s she also became the first Black player to compete on the women's professional golf tour.

(Born Marguerite Annie Johnson; April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014) an American poet, singer, memoirist, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and is credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years. She received dozens of awards and more than 50 honorary degrees.^[3] She is best known for her series of seven autobiographies, which focus on her childhood and early adult experiences. The first, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), tells of her life up to the age of 17 and brought her international recognition and acclaim.

An American Muslim minister and human rights activist. Some saw him as a courageous advocate for the rights of blacks, a man who indicted white America in the harshest terms for its crimes against black Americans; others accused him of preaching racism and violence. He has been called one of the greatest and most influential African Americans in history.

(Born September 25, 1968) an American actor and rapper.^[3] In April 2007, Newsweek called him "the most powerful actor in Hollywood".^[4] He has been nominated for five Golden Globe Awards and two Academy Awards, and has won four Grammy Awards. In the late 1980s, he achieved modest fame as a rapper under the name The Fresh Prince. In 1990, his popularity increased dramatically when he starred in the NBC television series The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, which ran for six seasons until 1996. After the series ended, he transitioned from television to film and went on to star in numerous blockbuster films.

an American research biologist, educator, zoologist, and comparative psychologist born in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was the first African American to receive a graduate degree at the University of Cincinnati and the most likely the first African American to earn a PhD from the University of Chicago.^[1] He is known for his studies in comparative psychology and on insect behavior, particularly bees and ants. He spent most of his career as a high school teacher in Sumner High School in St. Louis.^[2]

An American statesman and a retired four-star general in the United States Army.^[2] During his military career, he also served as National Security Advisor (1987–1989), as Commander of the U.S. Army Forces Command (1989) and as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1989–1993), holding the latter position during the Persian Gulf War. He was the first, and so far the only, Jamaican American to serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was the 65th United States Secretary of State, serving under U.S. President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2005, the first black person to serve in that position.^{[3][4][5][6]}

An American singer, songwriter and dancer. Dubbed the "King of Pop", he is regarded as one of the most significant cultural icons of the 20th century^[1] and is also regarded as one of the greatest entertainers of all time.^[2] His contributions to music, dance, and fashion, along with his publicized personal life, made him a global figure in popular culture for over four decades.^{[3][4][5]}

An American singer, songwriter, civil rights activist, actress, and pianist.^[2] She began her career as a child singing gospel at New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan, where her father C. L. Franklin was minister. At the age of 18, she embarked on a secular career recording for Columbia Records. However, she achieved only modest success. She found acclaim and commercial success after signing with Atlantic Records in 1966. Hit songs such as "Respect", "Chain of Fools", "Think", "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman", "I Never Loved a Man (The Way I Love You)", and "I Say a Little Prayer", propelled her past her musical peers. By the end of the 1960s, she had come to be known as "The Queen of Soul".