

Biographical reading:

MARCUS GARVEY

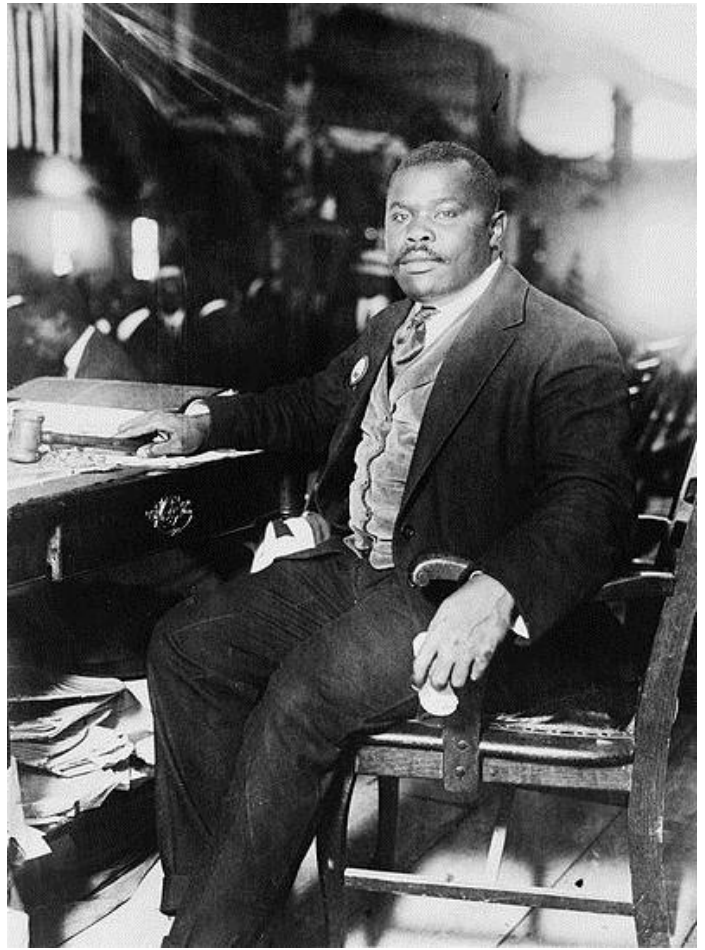
Marcus Garvey was an important African American leader during World War I and the 1920s. His message of black unity and cooperation earned him hundreds of thousands of followers in the United States and around the world. It also inspired later black nationalist leaders like Malcolm X.

Marcus Mozhiah Garvey was born in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, in 1887. The fifth of 11 children, he went to work as a printer's apprentice at the age of 14 and moved to the capital city of Kingston when he was 17. After taking part in an unsuccessful printer's strike in 1907, Garvey traveled around Central America and the Caribbean. In 1912 he went to London, where he learned about African history and decided that it was his destiny to become a leader of black people around the world.

Garvey returned to Jamaica during the summer of 1914. On August 1, he and a group of friends established the Universal Negro Improvement Association, or UNIA. The UNIA urged blacks in all parts of the world to take pride in their heritage. It also called for black businesses to cooperate with each other and for the institution of an independent black nation in Africa. These actions, Garvey believed, would help "establish a Universal Confraternity [union] among the race" and "improve the general conditions of Negroes everywhere."

In 1916 Garvey moved from Jamaica to New York City. There he established a new headquarters for the UNIA and started a campaign to gain the support of blacks in the United States. Many African Americans found Garvey's message of racial pride and economic independence appealing. His organization grew quickly, especially in the urban North, and by 1919 he claimed to have 2 million supporters. One year later the UNIA celebrated its success with a huge parade through the streets of Harlem, led by Garvey in an elaborate costume.

As the UNIA's membership grew, so did the range of Garvey's activities. In 1918 he began publishing the *Negro World*, a weekly newspaper devoted only to the interests of the "Negro Race." One year later he started the Negro Factories Corporation, an organization that helped black people develop small businesses. Garvey also launched his most ambitious project, a blackowned steamship company, in 1919. Called the Black Star Line, this company was meant to provide passenger and commercial service between Africa, North and South America, and the Caribbean.



Garvey's ideas brought him enemies as well as supporters. A number of black leaders, including W. E. B. Du Bois, condemned him as a racial separatist [one who separates the races]. Many white Americans also objected to his call for blacks to ban together politically and economically. Criticism of Garvey grew particularly quickly after 1920, when it became clear that the Black Star Line was in financial trouble.

In 1922 Garvey was arrested by federal authorities and accused of cheating investors in the Black Star Line. While the evidence against him was not solid, he was convicted in 1923 and began to serve a five-year prison term in 1925. In 1927 he was pardoned by President Calvin Coolidge and immediately deported to Jamaica.

Garvey spent the next several years trying to revive the UNIA, which had begun to falter while he was in prison. It never regained its former popularity, however, and during the 1930s Garvey's movement continued to shrink. In 1935 Garvey moved to London, where he began to publish a magazine called *Black Man*. Five years later he suffered a stroke and died at the age of 52.

Name: _____

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Marcus Garvey

Read the biographical article on the reverse, then answer the questions below.

1. How did the Universal Negro Improvement Association hope to improve the basic conditions of blacks everywhere?
2. What did Marcus Garvey do after moving to New York City in 1916?
3. How did the UNIA celebrate its success in 1920?
4. What activities did Garvey engage in as the UNIA's membership grew?
5. Why was Garvey arrested by federal authorities in 1922?
6. For 20 points, choose one of the following topics for a short essay, pamphlet, or digital flowchart or diagram:
 - a. Imagine that you are a friend of Marcus Garvey and a founding member of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. On a separate sheet of paper, create a rough draft of a constitution to govern the organization.
 - b. Research and compare the UNIA and the NAACP. Compare and contrast their goals, tactics, affiliations, and long-term effects on African-American society. Which do you think has been more successful? Why?