

The Secret Garden of George Washington Carver

Author Gene Barretta, Illustrator Frank Morrison

Harper Collins-2020

Lesson

Scarcity/Limited Resources

INTRODUCTION: Focusing on the early life of George Washington Carver, rather than his accomplishments as an adult, this biography features the struggles and prejudices he faced on his journey to become a prominent scientist and respected educator.

TIME ALLOCATION: 25-30 minutes (basic lesson time)

MATERIALS:

- Book- *The Secret Garden of George Washington Carver* by Gene Barretta
- Visual 1 – Limited Resources in the Carver Household
- Activity Sheet- Limited Resources in the Carver Household
- Assessment Sheet -George Washington Carver
- Writing tools
- Research resources such as encyclopedias and biographies (optional)
- Optional: Document camera

OBJECTIVES:

- The student will listen to a story and determine the human capital of the main character.
- The student will understand that the main character experienced scarcity and because of limited resources he and his family had to make choices.
- The student will be introduced to historical events during the Reconstruction Era, 1865-1877.

ECONOMIC CONCEPTS:

- **Choice** – selecting something over another thing.
- **Human Resources** – the quality and quantity of human effort directed toward producing goods and services.
- **Human Capital** – labor resources that can be improved through investments in education, training, and health care.
- **Scarcity** – the condition of limited resources-- because resources are limited, people must make choices.

PROCEDURE:

Using Children's Literature to Teach Economics

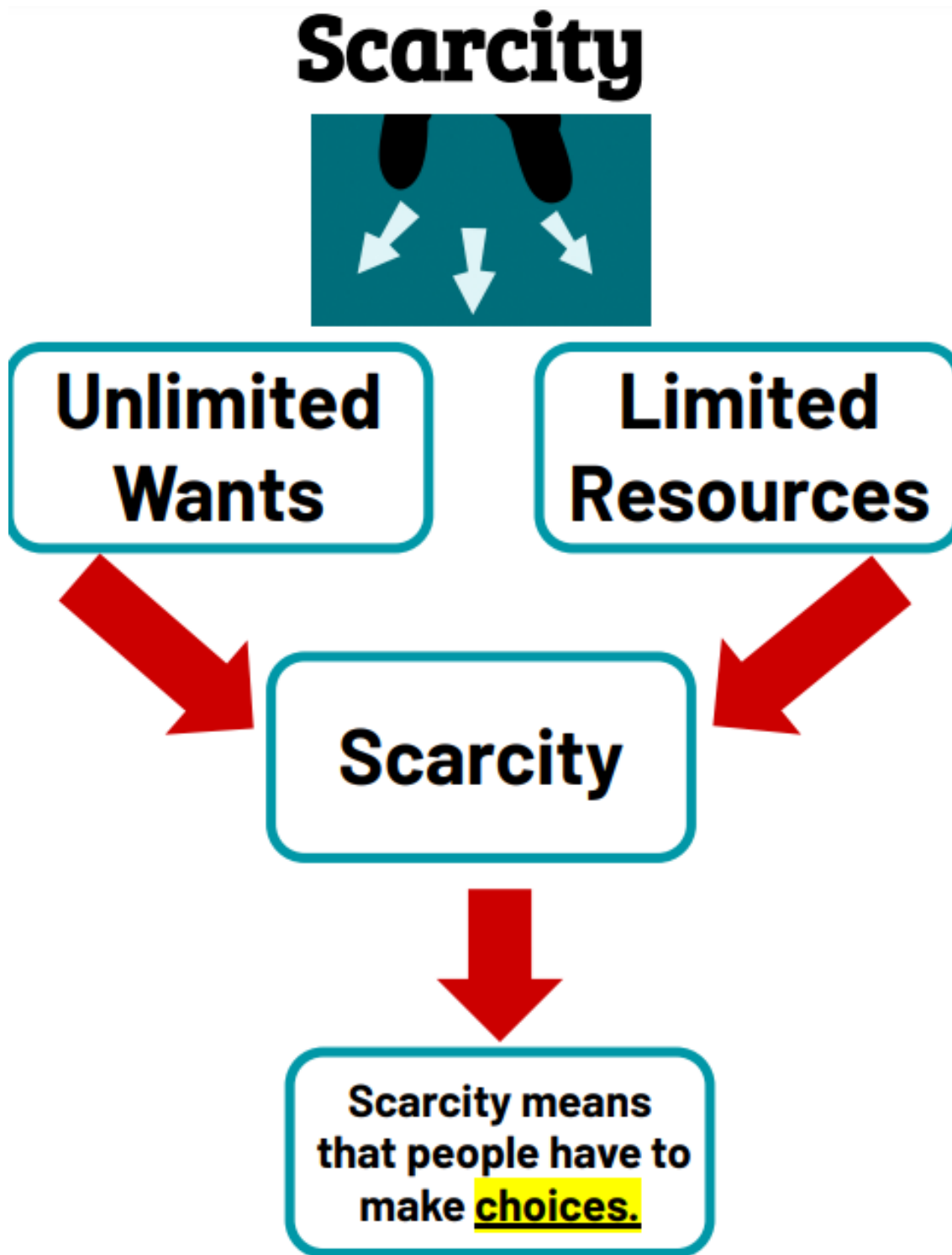
1. Introduce the lesson by showing the students the cover of *The Secret Garden of George Washington Carver* by Gene Barretta.
2. Explain that this is the story of a famous scientist who is primarily known for his experimentation with peanuts and the many ways they can be used. Tell them that much of this story will be about the challenges and hardships he encountered when he was young.
3. Tell the students to listen for a new and interesting thing they learned from the story that they would be willing to share with the class upon its completion. Read the book to the students. You may also show them a YouTube reading. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28vSGkGNtkA>
4. Conduct a quick classroom discussion following the story. Responses will depend on the students' age, interest, and life experiences.
5. Explain to the students that George Washington Carver's family was very poor when he was young and they had to make many choices as how to allocate the few resources they had. State that they experienced scarcity.
6. Display Visual 1 and review its content with the students. Explain that scarcity is the condition of limited resources. Tell them that because resources are limited, people must make choices. Share with the students that money and time are often the two resources that are considered the most limited.
7. Distribute the Activity Sheet and writing tools. Read the directions to the students. Ask if there are any questions. Students may work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. This may also be presented as a teacher-conducted activity by displaying the worksheet, soliciting student responses, and filling in the answers.
Check for understanding: 1. MONEY, 2. TIME, 3. GARDEN SPACE, 4. BOOKS, 5. MONEY
8. Conclude the activity by asking the students if they have recently experienced a scarcity situation where they had to make a choice.

ASSESSMENT: Distribute assessment sheet and writing tools. Read the directions to the students. Check for understanding. Answers: PART I 1. Artist, 2. Teacher, 3. Inventor, 4. Writer, 5. Pianist, 6. Botanist, 7. Chemist, 8. Gardener, 9. Environmentalist, 10. Adviser. PART II 1. Time. 2. Answers will vary. The assessment may also be used as an introductory activity.

ENRICHMENT & EXTENSION:

- **Science** – Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom provides the lesson “Nuts About Peanuts” for grades 3-5. In this lesson students label the parts of a peanut plant on a diagram, follow step-by-step instructions to plant a peanut, and use a chart to record the growth of peanut plants. <https://va.agclassroom.org/matrix/lesson/266/>

Visual

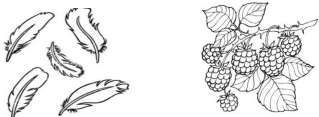
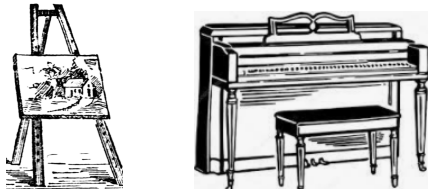




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Activity-

Limited Resources in the Carver Household

Read the information below. In each situation George Washington Carver had to make a decision because a resource was limited. Think about what the limited resource was, and write your answer in the blank.

 <p>The Carver family could not afford sewing supplies and George used turkey feathers to mend clothing, and wild berries to dye cloth.</p>	<p>What is the limited resource?</p> <p>SCARCITY</p> <p>1. Answer: _____</p>
 <p>When George is twelve-years-old he goes to a new school. He wants to take both art and music but they are taught during the same time.</p>	<p>What is the limited resource?</p> <p>2. Answer: _____</p>
 <p>George must decide to grow either flowers or vegetables in his small secret garden.</p>	<p>What is the limited resource?</p> <p>3. Answer: _____</p>
 <p>The Carver family only has one book. George would like to read other books.</p>	<p>What is the limited resource?</p> <p>4. Answer: _____</p>



When he was young George was often sick. His family was not able to pay for expensive medicine so they used plants and leaves to help cure illnesses.

What is the limited resource?

5. Answer: _____

Assessment-

George Washington Carver

Part I

George Washington Carver was known for his many talents and professions. Unscramble the words and discover a list of his accomplishments.

- 1. irtats _____
- 2. ectaerh _____
- 3. rnoinvte _____
- 4. iteerw _____
- 5. tasinip _____
- 6. itbostna _____
- 7. mehtcsi _____
- 8. greedna _____
- 9. ltinearivotenmn _____
- 10. avdiesr _____

Word Box

Adviser	Environmentalist	Teacher
Artist	Gardener	Writer
Botanist	Inventor	
Chemist	Pianist	

PART II

1. Next Saturday you can either go camping or attend a birthday party. What is your limited resource? _____
2. What would be your choice? _____