

Whoosh!

LONNIE JOHNSON'S SUPER-SOAKING STREAM OF INVENTIONS

A RIF GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Themes: Black Inventors, Biography, Inventions, Perseverance

Book Brief: As a young boy, Lonnie was always building things, from bamboo shooters to rockets—he even built a robot in high school! As an adult, Lonnie continued with his creative inventions until one day he discovered, quite by accident, the Super Soaker:

the ultimate water gun.

Author: Chris Barton

Illustrator: Don Tate

Content Connections:
Science, Math, Social Studies



TIME TO READ!



BEFORE WE READ LET'S LOOK AT...

The Cover: What can you infer, or guess, about Lonnie Johnson based on the cover illustration? What items do you see in the picture?

The Pictures: Show students the diagrams on the endpapers. These are just a few of the patents that Lonnie Johnson has on his inventions. Discuss what a patent is. Why do inventors need patents? What do

all the numbers on the diagrams mean?

Prior Knowledge: Ask if students have ever used a water gun when playing outside. Discuss their experiences and what actions are needed to make the toy work.

Vocabulary: engineer, prototype

Purpose for Reading: Lonnie is a problem solver, which means he is always asking questions. As we read, think about questions you have about Lonnie and how he came to be such a prolific, or productive, inventor.

WHILE WE READ

MONITORING COMPREHENSION:

- ◆ How would you describe Lonnie's home life?
- ◆ Where do you think Lonnie got most of the materials he needed for his early inventions?
- ◆ Would you let one test determine what you could do with your life?

- ◆ What questions do you have about Linex?
- ◆ How do you think other students at Tuskegee viewed Lonnie?
- ◆ Why do you think his idea was not an instant success?
- ◆ What if Lonnie had given up his dream?

LET'S THINK ABOUT

Our Purpose: Lonnie is constantly asking himself questions about how to make things better. What questions do you have about the information in the book? What do you wonder about Lonnie Johnson? What questions do you have about how he was able to invent so many different items?

Extending Our Thinking: How important would a supportive family be to someone like Lonnie? Explain. What if manufactured toys were no longer available in stores? What type of impact do you think that would have on the economy, daily living, and learning? Can you think of something you discovered or a problem you solved by accident? Share your experience with a partner.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.
- ◆ Vocabulary Scaffolding Sheet also available.



Reading Is
Fundamental