

BLACK
INVENTORS
HELP TO
CHANGE THE
WORLD

Included

**Ink pen, golf tee, Folding Bed, Traffic Signal, Gas
Mask, Refrigerator truck, and more**

INVENTION

PATENT NUMBER

DATE OF INVENTION

BLACK INVENTORS HELP TO CHANGE THE WORLD

By: Doris J. Sims, Ph.D.

Everywhere you look you can see the inventions of African-Americans. Even in the midst of hardship, struggle and oppression, the African American has continued to contribute to the fabric of America and the world by inventing many things that can be identified at home, school, and in the community. As you relate with your child(ren) or students, identify the wonderful inventions that they can see daily.

These inventions represent only a few of the great contributions that black people have made to the world.

Please keep in mind that an invention can be something that is completely new that did not exist before or it can be an improvement of something that was already in existence. Below find new inventions and items that were improved. For easy reference the inventions were broken into categories. Here are a few of blacks' marvelous inventions:

HEALTH & SAFETY

STOP LIGHT

November 20, 1923 Patent # 1475024
The invention of the first traffic signal.

Garrett Morgan

GAS MASK

October 13, 1914 Patent # 1113675
The invention of the breathing device or gas mask; used by fire departments, police departments, the military, and miners around the world.

Garrett Morgan

FIRE ESCAPE LADDER

November 11, 1890 Patent # 440332
The invention of a ladder on the fire truck with a cage at the end to rescue people in a fire.

Daniel McCree

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

March 26, 1872 Patent # 125063
An invention that had pipes and valves (sprinklers) in the ceiling to carry water to be used to extinguish fires in buildings.

Thomas J. Martin

BLOOD PLASMA AND BLOOD BANK

A pioneer in the field of blood preservation, he revolutionized the use of blood plasma and started the first blood banks with the Red Cross.

Dr. Charles Richard Drew

CATARACT REMOVAL

January 1988 Patent # 4744360
The removal of cataract lenses that transformed eye surgery by using a laser device to make the procedure more accurate.

Dr. Patricia Bath

HOME

ELECTRIC LAMP

September 13, 1881 Patent # 247097

Louis Latimer & Joseph Nichols

The invention of carbon filaments for electric lamps. The filament is the material in a light bulb that glows when an electric current travels through it.

LAWN MOWER (Improvements)

May 9, 1899 Patent # 624749

John Albert Burr

Improvements to the lawn mower were invented: traction wheels, rotary cutter, and shear operation with a casing that encloses the operating gear to prevent choking and clogging with grass.

DUST PAN (Improved)

August 3, 1897

Lloyd P. Ray

An invention to improve the dustpan by attaching a short, wooden handle to a metal collection plate. The person cleaning will not have to stoop to pick up the trash.

LAWN SPRINKLER

May 4, 1897 Patent # 581785

Joseph H. Smith

An invention that attached a T-joint hose to a head disk which rotates water through the holes of the disk to direct water to any part of the lawn.

FOLDING BED (Baby Crib)

July 18, 1899 Patent # 629286

Leonard C. Bailey

A baby crib formerly called the portable folding bed which has a head, posts and sides that can be collapsed.

REFRIGERATOR (Improvements)

July 14, 1891 Patent # 455891

John Standard

An invention of useful improvements to the refrigerator: the ice chamber, cold-air ducts and especially designed compartments for food.

SUGAR REFINING PROCESS (improved)

December 10, 1846

Norbert Rillieux

Invented the triple pan evaporation system to refine sugar which revolutionized the sugar refining industry.

SCHOOL

PENCIL SHARPENER

November 23, 1897 Patent # 594114

John Lee Love

An invention which used a gear wheel to sharpen a pencil.

FOUNTAIN PEN (Improved)

January 7, 1890 Patent # 419065

William Purvis

The fountain pen was a turkey feather (quill pen) that was dipped into ink. This invention improved the quill pen by adding an ink feeding tube. The pressure on the pen point causes the ink feeding tube to let the ink flow evenly into the pen onto the paper.

TRANSPORTATION

AUTOMATIC LUBRICATION FOR TRAINS

July 23, 1872 Patent # 129843

Elijah McCoy

Invented 57 devices especially a useful device that automatically lubricated steam locomotives while they were running. His prolific inventions were the basis for the expression "the real McCoy," meaning the real, authentic, or high-quality thing.

SHOE LASTING MACHINE

March 20, 1883 Patent # 274207

Jan Ernest Matzeliger

A machine invented to (last) sew the top of the shoe to the sole which had to be done by hand. A "hand laster", could produce 50 pairs of shoes in a ten-hour day. The lasting machine could produce between 150 to 700 pairs of shoes a day, cutting shoe prices across the nation in half. His invention revolutionized the shoe industry.

REFRIGERATED TRUCK

July 12, 1940 Patent # 2303857

Fredrick Jones

He has more than sixty inventions, however, he is best known for inventing an automatic refrigeration system for long-haul trucks (a roof-mounted cooling device). Jones was the first person to invent a practical, mechanical refrigeration system for trucks and railroad cars, which eliminated the risk of food spoilage during long-distance shipping trips. His invention revolutionized the food industry.

ELECTRIC RAILWAY OR TROLLEY

March 25, 1902 Patent # 695988

Granville T. Woods

An invention for overhead electric conducting lines for railroads, which aided in the development of the overhead railroad system (called trolleys or street cars) found in large cities. He was a prolific inventor of over 60 devices.

AUTOMATIC GEAR SHIFT AND TRANSMISSION

Automatic Gear Shift (December 6, 1932 Patent # 1889814) Richard B. Spikes

Transmission and Shifting Means (November 28, 1933 Patent # 1936996)

Automatic Safety Brake System Used on buses (January 2, 1962 Patent # 3015522)

The creator of 14 inventions the most notable are the ones listed above.

COMMUNITY/RECREATION

STREET SWEEPER

March 17, 1896 Patent # 556711

Charles B. Brooks

Developed a truck with revolving brushes which elevate the rubbish into a refuse receptacle to clean debris from city streets.

GOLF TEE (Improved)

December 12, 1899 Patent # 638920

George F. Grant

This invention made the golf tee out of wood with a tapered point at its end so it can be driven into the ground to support the golf ball. A penny was used previously to support the golf ball.

AMUSEMENT APPARATUS (Roller Coaster)

December 19, 1899 Patent # 639692

Granville Woods

He was referred to as "the Black Thomas Edison." This invention has two or more tracks in the shape of an eight to permit the cars to move about the tracks which are controlled by an electric motor.