A Week in Black History

February 25th
- Martin Luther King, Jr. is ordained as a Baptist minister, 1948
- Muhammad Ali defeats Sonny Liston for the heavyweight boxing championship, 1964
- Nat King Cole, singer and pianist, dies, 1964

February 26th
- Theodore "Georgia Deacon" Flowers becomes first Black middle-weight boxing champ., 1926

February 27th
- Dominican Republic Independence Day
- Debi Thomas, figure skater, becomes first Black American to win a medal at the Winter Olympics, 1988

February 28th
- Michael Jackson wins 8 grammy awards, 1984

March 02nd
- Congress declares importation of slaves into US jurisdiction illegal as of the new year, 1807
- Freeman's Bureau for Black Education founded, 1865.

March 03rd
- Thomas Jennings becomes the first Black American to receive a patent, for a dry-cleaning process, 1821
- Garrett T. Morgan, inventor, born, 1877

Poetry by Black Americans

Heritage
(an excerpt) By Countee Cullen

What is Africa to me:
Copper sun or scarlet sea,
Jungle star or jungle track,
Strong bronzed men, or regal black
Women from whose loins I sprang
When the birds of Eden sang?

One three centuries removed
From the scenes his fathers loved,
Spicy grove, cinnamon tree,
What is Africa to me?

In the Event of my Demise
By Tupac Shakur

In the event of my Demise
when my heart can beat no more
I Hope I Die For A Principle
or A Belief that I had Lived 4
I will die Before My Time
Because I feel the shadow's Depth
so much I wanted 2 accomplish
before I reached my Death
I have come 2 grips with the possibility
and wiped the last tear from My eyes
I Loved All who were Positive

In the event of my Demise

Some contributions to our daily lives include...

- Golf Tee invented by George Grant (1899)
- Ice Cream Scoop invented by Alfred Crallie
- Horse Shoes invented by Oscar Brown (1882)
- Pencil Sharpener invented by J.L. Love
- Cartridge for fountain pens by W.B. Purvis (1890)
- Biscuit cutter invented by A.P. Ashbourne
- Traffic light invented by Garrett Morgan (1923)
- Lawn mower invented by J.A. Burr (1899)
- Ironing Board invented by J.A. Burr (1892)
- Mailbox invented by P.B. Dowing (1891)
- Bicycle invented by Isaac Johnson (1889)
- Bicycle Basket invented by J.M. Certain (1899)

For more information

View the History Channel’s interactive timeline of Black History Milestones available online at http://www.history.com/minisites/blackhistory.
Malcolm X
(born Malcolm Little 1925–65). Civil rights leader. Born Malcolm Little as the son of a Baptist preacher. By 1952, adopted the new last name "X"—Malcolm considered "Little" a slave name and chose the "X" to signify his lost tribal name. In the face of threats, he continued to urge blacks to take control of their lives.

At the age of 21, Malcolm encountered the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Lost-Found Nation of Islam (popularly known as the Black Muslims). Muhammad said that the white man is the devil with whom blacks cannot live...a statement that had a strong impact on Malcolm. Intelligent and articulate, Malcolm became a minister and national spokesman for the Nation of Islam, where his indictments of racism and advocacy of self-defense elicited admiration (as well as fear) from many. Malcolm's influence even reached the respected Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

In 1963 he traveled to Mecca, and discovered that orthodox Muslims preach **equality of the races**, which led him to abandon the argument that whites are devils and returned to America shortly thereafter, convinced that racism had corroded the spirit of America and that only blacks could free themselves. He was assassinated by a Black Muslim at a rally of his organization in New York on February 21, 1965. Malcolm X had predicted that, though he had but little time to live, he would be more important in death than in life. His life's story serves as a strong reminder of human possibility and achievement.

Barack Obama
On January 20, 2009, Barack Obama was inaugurated as the 44th president of the United States; he is the first African American to hold that office. The product of an interracial marriage—his father grew up in a small village in Kenya, his mother in Kansas—Obama grew up in Hawaii but discovered his civic calling in Chicago, where he worked for several years as a community organizer on the city’s largely black South Side. After studying at Harvard Law School and practicing constitutional law in Chicago, he began his political career in the Illinois State Senate and in 2004 announced his candidacy for a newly vacant seat in the U.S. Senate. He delivered a rousing keynote speech at that year’s Democratic National Convention, attracting national attention with his eloquent call for national unity and cooperation across party lines. In February 2007, just months after he became only the third African American elected to the U.S. Senate since Reconstruction, Obama announced his candidacy for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination. After withstanding a tight Democratic primary battle with Hillary Clinton, Obama defeated Senator John McCain of Arizona in the general election that November. Obama’s appearances in both the primaries and the general election drew impressive crowds, and his message of hope and change—embodied by the slogan “Yes We Can”—inspired thousands of new voters, many young and black, to cast their vote for the first time in the historic election.

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Dr. King wrote with moral force, addressing a national audience that did not recognize his full rights of **equality** as a citizen and human being. Unlike those before him, or after him, King wrote from a jail cell, where he was actively engaged in the nonviolent struggle for the civil rights of all Americans...a struggle that he later gave his life for in 1968.

Dr. Charles Drew
Dr. Drew was named director of the American Red Cross Blood Bank and was in charge of blood collection for the U.S. Army and Navy. He spoke out against the armed forces' directive that blood was to be separated according to the race of the donor. When he was badly injured in a car accident, the nearest hospitals refused to admit Dr. Drew because of his race, and precious time was lost in taking him farther down the road to a black hospital. By the time he arrived there, he had lost so much blood that no one could have saved his life. It seemed a cruel hoax that the man who had done more than anyone else in the world to make blood transfusions available to people in emergency situations did not have access to a blood transfusion when he needed it.

Dr. Yolanda Moses
As chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1989 to 1993 the **Associate Vice Chancellor of Diversity, Excellence & Equity and Vice Provost of Conflict Resolution** Dr. Yolanda Moses is a nationally acclaimed cultural anthropologist, and expert on cultural diversity. She is author of numerous articles on issues related to cultural change in public policy and higher education. Moses served as President of the American Anthropological Association, Chair of the Board of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, Past President of City College of New York (CUNY), President of the American Association for Higher Education at George Washington University, and Professor of Anthropology at CUNY Graduate University. Moses earned her bachelor’s degree at CSUSB and her doctorate from UCR.