

# **GREAT AFRICAN AMERICAN AUTHORS**

## **Timeline**

**1607 – Jamestown, Virginia Founded**

**1619 – First Black Slaves are Brought to America**

**1705 – The Colony of Virginia’s General Assembly Passes the Slave Codes**

- 1761 – Jupiter Hammon (1711 – c1806) First Published Black Writer
- 1773 – Phillis Wheatley (1752 – 1784) Poet
- 1855 – Frederick Douglass (1817 – 1895) Abolitionist and Author

**1861 – 1865 – The American Civil War**

**1863 – President Abraham Lincoln Signs the Emancipation Proclamation**

**1865 – The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution Outlawing Slavery is Passed**

**1896 – The U.S. Supreme Court Upholds the Constitutionality of State Laws Requiring Racial Segregation in Public Facilities Under the Doctrine of ‘Separate But Equal’ in Plessy v Ferguson**

- 1899 – Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872 –1906) Poet, Novelist and Playwright
- 1901 – Booker T. Washington (1856 – 1915) U.S. Educator and Founder of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama
- 1903 – W.E.B. Du Bois (1868 – 1963) Writer, Sociologist and Political Activist
- 1912 – James Weldon Johnson (1871 – 1938) Author, Educator, Lawyer, Diplomat, Songwriter, and Early Civil Rights Activist

**1914 – 1918 – WWI Engulfs Europe**

**1918 – The Harlem Renaissance Begins**

- 1919– Alain LeRoy Locke (1885 – 1954) Writer, Philosopher, Educator, and Founder of The Harlem Renaissance
- 1921 – Langston Hughes (1902 – 1967) American Poet, Social Activist, Novelist, Playwright, and Leader of the Harlem Renaissance
- 1924 – Alice Dunbar Nelson (1875 – 1935) Poet, Journalist and Political Activist,
- 1925 – Countee Cullen (1903 – 1946) Poet and Leader of the Harlem Renaissance
- 1928 – Jessie Redmon Fauset (1882 – 1961) Editor, Poet, Essayist and Leading Woman Novelist of the Harlem Renaissance

**1929 – 1939 – The Great Depression**

- 1932 – Sterling Brown (1901 – 1989) Professor, Author, Poet and Literary Critic
- 1936 – Arna Bontemps (1902 – 1973) Poet, Novelist, Librarian, and Noted Member of the Harlem Renaissance
- 1937 – Zora Neale Hurston (1891 – 1960) Folklorist, Anthropologist and Author

**1939 – 1945 – WWII Envelops the Planet**

- 1940 – Richard Wright, (1908 – 1960) Novelist, Poet and Short Story Writer
- 1950 – Gwendolyn Brooks (1917 – 2000) Poet, First Black Pulitzer Prize Winner, Poet Laureate of Illinois and Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress
- 1953 – Ralph Ellison (1914 – 1994) Novelist, Literary Critic, Scholar, and Winner of the National Book Award
- 1953 – James Baldwin (1924 – 1987) Novelist, Essayist, Playwright, Poet and

Social Critic

**1954 – The U.S. Supreme Court Overturns the Doctrine of ‘Separate but Equal’ in the case of Brown v Board of Education**

**1955 – Rosa Parks Kicks Off the Modern Civil Rights Movement When She Refuses to Give up Her Seat on a Montgomery, Alabama Bus**

- 1957 – Chester Himes (1909 – 1984) Author of the Harlem Detective Novels
- 1959 – Lorraine Hansberry (1930 – 1965) Playwright and Author

**1963 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Delivers His “I Have a Dream” Speech**

**1964 – Civil Rights Act Passed**

**1965 – Civil Rights March in Selma, Alabama**

**1965 – Voting Rights Act Passed**

- 1965 – Malcolm X (1925 – 1965) Author, Minister and Human Rights Activist
- 1965 – Amiri Baraka (1934 – 2014) Author, Poet and Essayist

**1967 – Black Activist Stokely Carmichael Coins the Phrase ‘Black Power’**

- 1967 – Nikki Giovanni (1943 – ) Writer, Commentator, Activist and Educator

**1968 – The Civil Rights Act of 1968 is Passed**

- 1969 – Maya Angelou (1928 – ) Poet, Author and Pulitzer Prize Winner
- 1972 – Toni Cade Bambara (1939 – 1995) Author, Documentary Film-Maker, Social Activist and College Professor
- 1973 – Alice Childress (1916 – 1994) Playwright, Actor and Author
- 1975 – Ed Bullins (1935 – ) Playwright and Winner of The New York Drama Critics' Circle Award
- 1976 – Alex Haley (1921 – 1992) Author and Winner of the NAACP Spingarn Medal
- 1982 – Gloria Naylor (1950 – ) Novelist
- 1982 – Alice Walker (1944 – ) Author, Civil Rights Activist and Pulitzer Prize Winner
- 1987 – Lucille Clifton (1936 – 2010) Poet, Author and Educator
- 1987 – August Wilson (1945 – 2005) Playwright, Pulitzer Prize Winner, and Tony Winner

**1988 – Civil Rights Restoration Act Passed**

- 1988 – Yusef Komunyakaa (1947 – ) Poet and Pulitzer Prize Winner
- 1990 – Walter Mosley (1952 – ) Writer
- 1993 – Toni Morrison (1931 – ) Author, Pulitzer Prize Winner and Nobel Laureate
- 1993 – Ernest J. Gaines (1933 – ) Author and National Humanities Medal Award winner
- 1993 – Rita Dove (1952 – ) Poet, Author, Pulitzer Prize Winner and first Black U.S. Poet Laureate
- 2001 – Cornelius Eady (1954 – ) Poet
- 2002 – Suzan-Lori Parks (1963 – ) Playwright, Screenwriter and Pulitzer Prize Winner

**2008 – Barack Obama is the First Black Elected President of the United States**

- 2012 – Natasha Trethewey (1966 – ) Poet, Professor and Pulitzer Prize Winner