

RED TAILS: THE MOVIE



Double Victory is a documentary companion to ***Red Tails*** (in theaters January 20), a feature film produced by George Lucas and distributed by Twentieth Century Fox.

Anthony Hemingway (*The Wire*) directs this gripping World War II action film, which features an outstanding ensemble cast including Oscar® winner Cuba Gooding, Jr. and Oscar nominee Terrence Howard. Learn more at www.redtails2012.com. Don't miss it!

DOUBLE VICTORY PREMIERES
JAN 13 8PM ON H2™
(Re-airs 1/16 at 4/3c)
JAN 14 4/3c ON HISTORY®

“I believe it was my duty and my responsibility, as my father did and my grandfather did, that if the country is in trouble, you do what you have to do...”

- Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.) Lee Archer, Pilot, 332nd Fighter Group

INTRODUCTION

Double Victory spotlights the historic role of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, revealing the ways these African Americans bravely fought a war on two fronts: they helped the world triumph against fascism abroad and they fought valiantly for racial justice and equality at home. Though the Tuskegee Airmen faced the enormous challenges of discrimination from military officers, inferior equipment and heightened scrutiny, these pilots and their support personnel excelled. Featuring many Tuskegee pilots who tell powerful stories of their experiences during the war, ***Double Victory*** shows how these airmen helped defeat fascism in Europe and helped inspire the Civil Rights Movement upon their return.

“You can’t turn your back on your own country. We’re as patriotic as anybody else. And we wanted our chance to prove that we could do something.”

- Lt. Col. George Hardy, USAF (Ret.) Pilot, 332nd Fighter Group

CURRICULUM LINKS

Double Victory fits well with History, Social Studies, Black Studies and Global Studies courses, and would be a great documentary to show during Black History Month. It is appropriate for middle school, high school and college students as well as general audiences.





Tuskegee pilots watch their fellow airmen in flight

TERMS TO KNOW

Before or after watching this program, define the terms below if you are not familiar with their definitions. You can also keep your own list of terms to define as you watch.

adversity
court martial
fascism
menial
mobilization
segregation
sortie
state-sanctioned



Tuskegee pilots in training

WHO WERE THEY?

- The Tuskegee Airmen, who flew combat missions in World War II, were also known by the nickname “Red Tails” for the distinctive red paint on the tails of their P-51s.
- First all-black aerial units in the Army Air Forces, active during World War II. In total, about 1,000 pilots were trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Approximately 335 pilots deployed to the war in Europe.
- Trained at Tuskegee Institute/Moton Field in Alabama from 1941-1946.
- They served in the 332nd Fighter Group as the 99th, the 100th, the 301st and the 302nd Fighter Squadrons under the 12th and 15th Air Forces in the European Theater of Operations. The 447th Bombardment Group was comprised of the 616th, 617th, 618th and 619th Bombardment Squadrons. They were also assisted by important maintenance and support units.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Tuskegee Airmen fighter units thrived in the skies. Their squadrons flew more than 15,000 sorties on 1,500 missions and shot down 112 German aircrafts.
- Together, they earned one Legion of Merit, one Silver Star, several Distinguished Unit Citations, 96 Distinguished Flying Crosses, many Purple Heart medals, 14 Bronze Stars and 744 Air Medals.
- In 2007, as a group they received a Congressional Gold Medal for their service during World War II. Like many all-black units, their excellence was not officially recognized until years later.

PLACES TO IDENTIFY

The Tuskegee Airmen trained in several locations in the U.S. and participated in key campaigns during World War II. Before or after watching, identify the following locations on a map (these are only some of the places they trained and fought): Tuskegee, Alabama; Selfridge Army Air Field, Michigan; Freeman Air Field (near Seymour, Indiana); Walterboro Army Air Field, South Carolina;





Tuskegee pilots in uniform

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

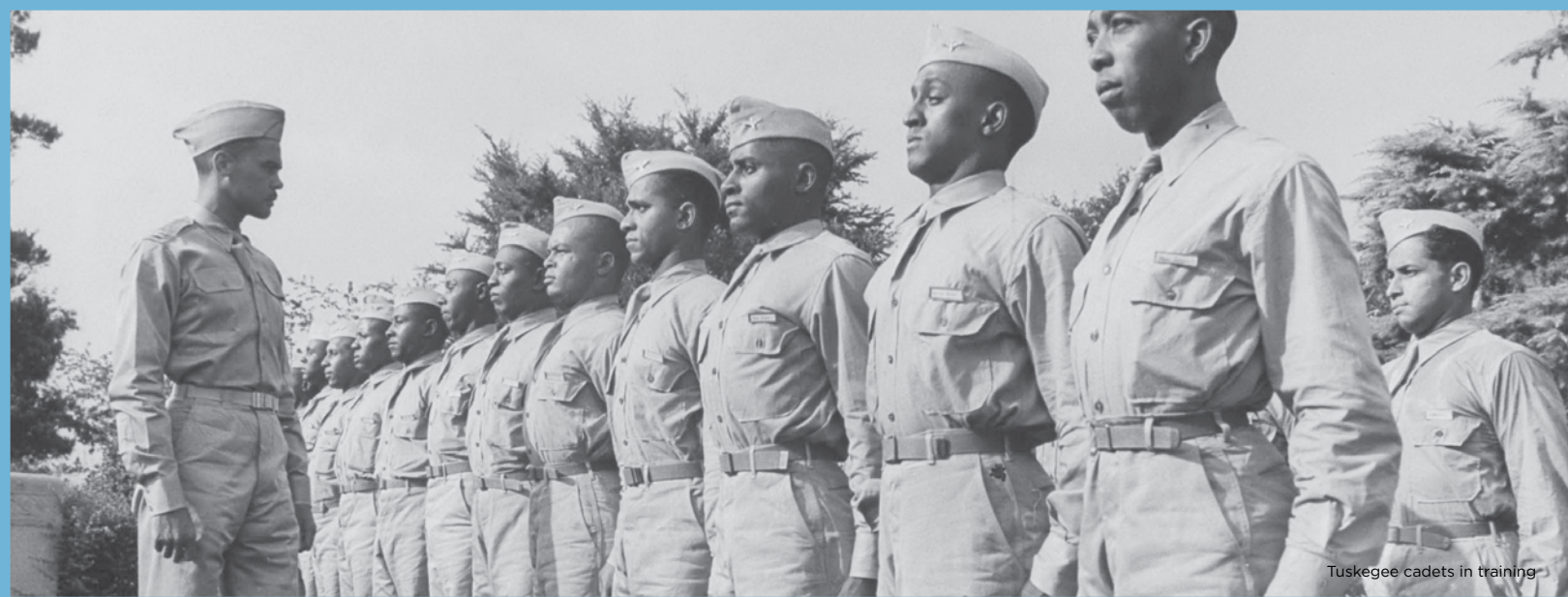
Double Victory tells the gripping story of the Tuskegee Airmen. These discussion questions can help stimulate class or community discussions after viewers have watched the program.

1. This documentary cites a 1942 survey in which 20 percent of African Americans said that life under Hitler would be no worse than the racist conditions they experienced in the U.S. Despite these feelings, why did so many African Americans decide to pursue positions in the Armed Forces?
2. What were some of the ways the African Americans who trained at Tuskegee supported one another in order to achieve success? Why do you think they become such great pilots?
3. How were the black recruits treated in Tuskegee, Alabama during their pilot training? How did they respond to this treatment?
4. How were the Tuskegee Airmen treated by their commanding officers in Europe?
5. In 1943, then-Colonel Benjamin Davis, Jr. addressed the War Department over claims that the Tuskegee Airmen were not up to par. Why do you think these pilots were under scrutiny? What was revealed about their actual performance?



6. German Prisoners of War (POWs) who were being held in the U.S. South were often given more freedom than African American servicemen. Why? How do the former pilots in this documentary describe their feelings about their treatment in comparison to that of the POWs?
7. In a series of protests known as the Freeman Field Mutiny, the Tuskegee bomber crew members took a stand against the segregation of officers' clubs, and demanded that they be allowed equal access to these clubs. What risk did they take by challenging this system of segregation? What was the outcome?
8. What are some adjectives you would use to describe the Tuskegee Airmen? How did they help inspire the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s?





ACTIVITIES

- 1. The Tuskegee Legacy: Tune in!** Many Tuskegee pilots and crew members have been honored for their service in recent years. But many Americans are still unaware of their important achievements and their role in sparking the Civil Rights Movement. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or an op-ed piece about the historical significance of the Tuskegee Experiment. Encourage communities to watch *Double Victory* and the *Red Tails* movie!
- 2. In Their Own Words.** The first-person testimonies of the Tuskegee pilots in this program help bring home the intensity of their experiences and the bravery of their service in the face of discrimination. The National Park Service organized a Tuskegee Airmen Oral History Project to record many of their stories. Read more of their stories online at the websites listed at the end of this guide, create a mini-biography, or write an article about one of the Airmen.
- 3. Laying the Groundwork for Change.** The Tuskegee Airmen's struggle for racial equality within the military, later inspired movements for change throughout American society. One immediate effect of their efforts was the desegregation of the Armed Forces. Research this change online. When were the Armed Forces officially desegregated? Write a short essay about this transformation and the role of the Tuskegee Airmen in bringing about this change.
- 4. Double V: Calling All Recruits.** The NAACP and other organizations joined the campaign for "Double Victory" at home and abroad, creating posters to help encourage African Americans to get involved in the effort to win victory in WWII and equality on the homefront. Search online to find some of these posters, and then design your own historic Double V poster or public service announcement.

STEM ACTIVITY

Double Victory discusses several types of World War II aircraft including the introduction of the P-51 Mustang. Research the P-51. How fast could it fly? What capabilities did it have in comparison with previous fighter planes? Create a short fact sheet about the P-51 Mustang and illustrate it with images or photos.





Airmen prepare for graduation at Tuskegee

DID YOU KNOW...?

- First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt visited Tuskegee Institute in 1941. She flew with Charles A. “Chief” Anderson, the Chief Flight Instructor at Tuskegee’s Kennedy Field. Mrs. Roosevelt was a Rosenwald Fund trustee who helped secure funding for the construction of Moton Field, where civilian flight training took place. Military flight training and all other military training took place at Tuskegee Army Air Field.
- Moton Field at the Tuskegee Institute was the first flight facility for African American pilot candidates in the U.S. Army Air Corps (Army Air Forces) during World War II. Pilot cadets transferred to Tuskegee Army Air Field (TAAF) to complete their military training with the Army Air Corps.
- Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., a graduate of West Point and commander of the Tuskegee Airmen, was the first African American general in the Air Force. His father, Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., was the first African American general in the U.S. Army.
- Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. is a nonprofit national organization dedicated to keeping alive the history and achievements of the original Tuskegee Airmen. They offer many programs for young people interested in science and aviation. See their website.
- Many women played important roles in the Tuskegee Experiment, serving as nurses and medical staff, office workers and support personnel. Several women also trained as pilots at Moton Field.

WEBSITES

Official RED TAILS website
www.redtails2012.com

Tuskegee Airmen Inc
www.tuskegeeairmen.org

Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service)
www.nps.gov/tuai/index.htm

Additional Background from the National Park Service
www.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/tuskegee/airoverview.htm

Black Wings: A Smithsonian Institution Exhibition
www.nasm.si.edu/blackwings

SOCIAL MEDIA

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BOOKS

- Francis, Charles. *The Tuskegee Airmen*. (Branden Publishing Co., 2003).
- Holway, John B. *Red Tails, Black Wings: The Men of America’s Black Air Force*. (Yucca Tre Press, 2000).
- Moye, J. Todd. *Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II*. (Oxford University Press, 2010).
- Warren, Lt. Col. James C. *The Tuskegee Airmen Mutiny at Freeman Field*. (Conyers Publishing, 2001).

