



# Geography subject knowledge organiser— Explorers

Date	Event
August 8, 1866	<b>Matthew Henson is born</b> Matthew Henson was born in Maryland on a sharecropper's farm. He was born to free people of colour who were free even before the Civil War.
1878	When Matthew Henson was twelve years old, he left home and travelled to Baltimore, Maryland. He began working under a Captain named Childs as a cabin boy on a ship called Katie Hines, and they travelled to China, Japan, France, Africa, and more.
1887	Matthew left his life at sea behind, and he began working at a clothing store in Washington D.C. While serving customers, Henson met Commander Robert E. Peary, an explorer; Peary recruited Henson to work on an expedition in Nicaragua.
1890	After several years of gathering funding, Commander Peary invited Matthew along on his expedition to the Arctic. Matthew agreed to come along, even though he wouldn't be paid for his work.
1891	Henson spent several months with Peary in Greenland. They explored unmapped regions of the country, in spite of medical interferences.
1902	After years of exploring Greenland and figuring out a way to reach the North Pole, Henson and Peary set about building a special ship. The ship was named Roosevelt, and it would be able to smash through the ice in Greenland's frozen waters.
1906	During an attempt to reach the pole, Matthew Henson and Peary's team was forced back because of bad weather. But they reached the farthest northern point ever recorded in history up to that point.
February 22, 1909	Again, Henson and Peary began their journey toward the North Pole. They set out with around twenty-four men and over one hundred dogs.
April 6, 1909	After sickness and injury, Matthew Henson was forced to leave his partner Commander Peary behind. He trekked forward and became the first person to reach the North Pole.
1909	Henson and Peary returned home with their claim to the North Pole, and an investigation followed.
1912	The Matthew Henson autobiography was published by the Frederick A. Stokes Co. of New York.
1924	Matthew Henson's experiences with Peary continued to earn him honours and recognition over many years. He was presented an honorary Master of Science degree by Morgan State College in 1924.
1937	Other awards continued pouring in for Henson. In 1937 he was elected to membership with the Explorers Club in New York. In 1938 he had a glacier named after him in Greenland, the Henson Gletscher/Glacier.
1948	Henson was presented with a gold medal to commemorate his achievements with Peary. They said Henson was the "first black man in [America] to be honoured for a scientific achievement in geography."
1955	At the age of 88, Matthew Henson died in New York. His work and achievements continue to be recognized even decades after his death, including the bestowment of medals, plaques, and other honours.



## Key Vocabulary

Word	Meaning
Chronological	Placing a record of events following the order in which they happen
Century	A period of 100 years
Decade	A period of ten years
Achievement	An Achievement is something challenging that someone does well
Equipment	Objects that are needed for an activity, such as exploring
Expedition	A journey taken for a reason such as exploring somewhere or something
Explorer	Someone who goes on a journey to find out about somewhere or something new.
Polar	Polar describes anything about (or near) the North Pole or South Pole
Significant	Important and worth knowing about
North Pole	Northern end of the Earth's axis, lying on the Arctic Ocean, about 450 miles north of Greenland
Crevasse	A deep hole or crack in a glacier or the Earth
Inuit	A member of a native people of Northern Canada and parts of Greenland and Alaska

## Remembering Significant People

**Significant** people are people who have made important **achievements**. They are often remembered in different ways.

