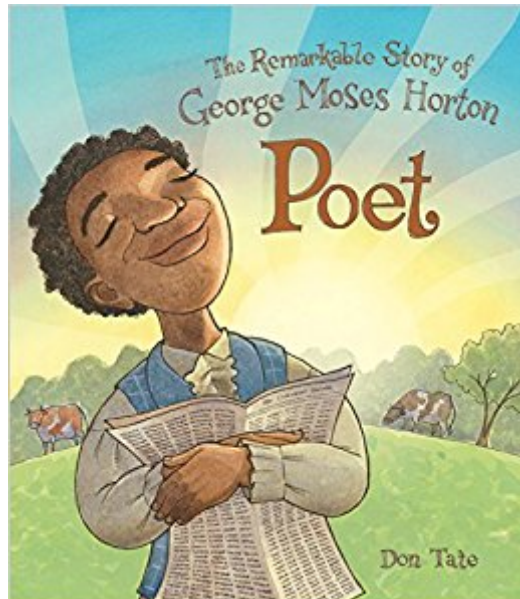




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# Poet: The Remarkable Story Of George Moses Horton



## Synopsis

In the nineteenth century, North Carolina slave George Moses Horton taught himself to read and earned money to purchase his time though not his freedom. Horton became the first African American to be published in the South, protesting slavery in the form of verse.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 730 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 36 pages

Publisher: Peachtree Publishers; Revised ed. edition (September 1, 2015)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 11 x 9.6 x 0.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #179,720 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #62 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Literary](#) #306 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

"[Tate's] decision to illuminate this remarkable man's life offers a new perspective with remarkable clarity." [Kirkus, STARRED REVIEW](#) "A lovely introduction to an inspirational American poet." [School Library Journal, STARRED REVIEW](#) "Tate's mixed-media illustrations glow with bright greens and yellows, radiating a warmth, hope, and promise that echo this stirring biography's closing message..." [Publishers Weekly, STARRED REVIEW](#)

Don Tate is the illustrator of numerous critically acclaimed books for children. In 2013, he earned an Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Honor Award for his first picture book text, *It Jes' Happened: When Bill Traylor Started to Draw*.

The story is engaging. The writing is lyrical. And the illustrations absolutely sing. I wish this book had been around when my son was younger because it was hard for me, as a parent, to know how

to introduce the topic of slavery in a way that was truthful, age appropriate, and honored the enslaved people as real, relatable human beings instead of one generic group of "Slaves." This book handles all those things beautifully. I highly recommend it for all ages, actually. It's that good.

Beautiful story of against the odds- George Moses Horton defied the times, law, and color barriers to learn how to read. An unsung hero that every one should know.

brought it for my children and it is based on my family.

Perfect for my grandchildren and me to appreciate poetry and our history.

It is always a joy and pleasure for me to learn a bit of the history of my home state - North Carolina. As with most states in the United States, we have a history of slavery of people - Africans, Irish, and others. Some were enslaved unwillingly as purchased and some willingly as indentured. Some of this history is heart-rending and terrifyingly sad. Some of it held hope, albeit in small measure, to those enslaved. This story is about one such enslaved individual in North Carolina - an African who was a "bought slave." It took place in Chatham County which is next to Orange County where I lived for many years. George Moses Horton hungered for knowledge and the ability to read and write. He had a head full of words roaming around forming stories and poems but no way to write them. Finally, he had an opportunity. Even though not freed and not able to purchase his freedom, he was allowed to go Chapel Hill - the home of the University of North Carolina, where he spoke poems to the young students for their sweethearts. Eventually he was taught to write his poems by one of the citizens of Chapel Hill. Though a Southern state, North Carolina was in many respects progressive in the concept that the slave, the African, could and should receive an education. Still flawed in action and concept, there were areas of North Carolina where free men of color lived, worked, and progressed. George Moses Horton was the first African-American to be published in America. It is a joy to read of George Moses Horton's journey into the world of literacy and the happiness that reading brought to him. The author, Don Tate, has written a super picture book biography for young children and young readers. This gives the opportunity to garner a bit of this period of history in our country and the resiliency of the enslaved peoples. I believe the author has written this story with pride of race for himself and pride of accomplishment for George Moses Horton. The illustrations are done in an exaggerated style with softened yellows, greens, and

browns. Horton's poems are displayed as background to the pictures on the two page spreads. Illustrations depict conditions and life as a slave prior to and during the Civil War. The text is advanced somewhat and may invoke further discussion and study on the part of young readers. This picture-book biography will fit well into history lessons of the period or for simply pleasure reading. I received a complimentary copy to facilitate this review.

Young George was determined to learn how to read, but because he was a slave, this was difficult, in fact it was against the law. He listened to the white children when they practiced their lessons, and then he found an old spelling book and taught himself how to read. As a teenager he sold fruit and vegetables grown on his farm to the students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to make money to live off the plantation. He recited poetry he had composed and soon students were paying him to compose love poems to their girlfriends. Then the wife of a professor, a poet herself, arranged for his poems to be published. George was soon making enough money to pay his master to let him live and write in Chapel Hill, but his master refused to let him purchase his freedom. It wasn't until 1863 when President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation that George was finally free. He was then 66 years old. This story is told in a lovely fashion with beautiful illustrations. So many books on slavery deal with the brutality of slavery which was a huge part, but for children this book will get a message across in a gentler way. Tate also includes a short list of references for further reading, as well as a moving author's note that provides some additional historical and personal context for Poet. Thanks to the author, publishers and NetGalley, too for letting me read an ARC of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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