

Whoosh!

LONNIE JOHNSON'S SUPER-SOAKING STREAM OF INVENTIONS

A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Themes: Black Inventors, Biography, Inventions, Perseverance

Book Brief: As a young boy, Lonnie was always building things, from bamboo shooters to rockets—he even built a robot in high school! As an adult, Lonnie continued with his creative inventions until one day

he discovered, quite by accident, the Super Soaker: the ultimate water gun.

Author: Chris Barton

Illustrator: Don Tate



TIME TO READ!



Before reading, make predictions: The cover illustrations and title give a lot of information about what's inside this book. Make your own predictions, or guesses, about the storyline and how you think

Lonnie Johnson became the inventor of the Super Soaker. How do you invent something?

While reading, make connections: Has there ever been a time when you did not succeed at something?

How did you feel? How did you overcome those feelings? Did you get discouraged and give up, or did you keep trying?

After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ Lonnie has five siblings; what do you think they thought of all his inventions?
- ◆ Why do you think Lonnie had trouble getting companies to buy into the Super Soaker?
- ◆ What makes Lonnie Johnson so successful?
- ◆ Have you ever thought of a new, fun idea for an invention?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

NUTS AND BOLTS

Ingredients: pretzel sticks, mini marshmallows

Assemble a bag of “nuts” (mini marshmallows) and “bolts” (pretzel sticks) for a quick and fun snack. Before chomping down on the tasty treat, see how creative you can be and build a one-of-a-kind object by connecting the nuts and bolts together.

WATER ART

Materials: paper, paint, water, straw, small bowls

Mix paint with water in small bowls. Sprinkle drops of the paint mixture onto paper. Blow through the straw (think about air pressure and the Super Soaker!) to

create abstract images with the paint. After your creation dries, see what your imagination can find in the shapes and images you created.

WATER BLAST

Gather some friends or family and head outside to have a wet and wild water war. Don't have a Super Soaker to blast streams of water? Try using clean, empty dish detergent containers, water balloons, or just running through the sprinkler. Any way you choose, it's a great time to cool off and have a blast with friends and family! To avoid wasting water, head to a local pool or swimming area instead.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR

88 Instruments (2016), *The Amazing Age of John Roy Lynch* (2015), *The Day-Glo Brothers: The True Story of Bob and Joe Switzer's Bright Ideas and Brand-New Colors* (2009).



Reading Is Fundamental