The Last Black King of the Kentucky Derby

A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

**Themes:** Black History, Sports, Determination  
**Grade Level:** 3rd to 5th grade  
**Book Brief:** This book tells the true story of Jimmy Winkfield, the last Black jockey to win the Kentucky Derby.  
**Author:** Crystal Hubbard  
**Illustrator:** Robert McGuire

TIME TO READ!

**Before reading, build background:** Find out what your child knows about the Kentucky Derby. What does a jockey do?

**While reading, pay attention to the pictures:** Notice how small Jimmy looks next to his horse. An average race horse is 16 hands (64 inches) high. How tall do you think Jimmy was?

**After reading, ask questions:**
- Why did Jimmy want to be a jockey?
- What do you want to be?
- How did Jimmy’s hero inspire him? Who inspires you?
- How did Jimmy overcome his challenges? What would you have done?
- Why do you think there are so few Black jockeys?
- Have your child retell the story in their own words.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

**KENTUCKY DERBY PIE**
Ingredients: 1 pie crust, ½ c. melted butter, 2 eggs, 1 c. sugar, ½ c. flour, 1 tsp. vanilla, ¼ c. chocolate chips, ¼ c. chopped pecans or walnuts

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Pour mixture into unbaked pie crust. Bake at 350° for about 45 minutes. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream. Enjoy!

**OUT AND ABOUT**
Hold your own Kentucky Derby! Set up races in your neighborhood or with your family. Make the races fun—try running backwards or carrying an egg in a spoon. You could also gallop like a horse, waddle like a duck, hop like a bunny, etc. Be creative! Form teams and have relay races. Give your teams funny names like race horses have.

**HANDS-ON ART**
Materials: non-toxic paint, brush, paper, markers
1. Have your child paint their palm and then make a handprint (or handprints) on the paper.
2. Turn the paper in different directions. What does the handprint look like?
3. Let your child use markers to turn the handprint into a picture. How many different pictures can you make out of a single handprint?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**OTHER BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR**
*Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl’s Baseball Dream* (2010),  
*Game, Set, Match, Champion Arthur Ashe* (2010).
Jimmy "Wink" Winkfield was born and raised in rural Kentucky and loved to ride horses. He was a natural. By the age of 19 he was racing horses professionally, and won his first official race in 1899 at the Harlem Racetrack near Chicago, Illinois. The following year he raced at the Kentucky Derby History at the Kentucky Derby. The 2020 Kentucky Derby is the 146th renewal of The Greatest Two Minutes in Sports. Live odds, betting, horse bios, travel info, tickets, news, and updates from Churchill Downs Race Track. As with any major event, the Kentucky Derby has undergone various changes over the course of three centuries. From shortening the distance of the race, the introduction of traditions like draping the winning horse in a garland of roses, to the growing size of Derby crowds, the Kentucky Derby has embraced the change of time, while honoring the integrity of the spectacle race set forth by Meriwether Lewis Clark. Follow the timeline below to see just how far the Kentucky Derby has come since 1875. Born into an African American sharecropping family in 1880s Kentucky, Jimmy Winkfield grew up loving horses. The large, powerful animals inspired little Jimmy to think big. Looking beyond his family's farm, he longed for a life riding on action-packed racetracks around the world. Along the way he carved out a lasting legacy as one of history's finest horsemen and the last African American ever to win the Kentucky Derby. The Last Black King of the Kentucky Derby brings to life a vivacious hero from a little-known chapter of American sports history. Readers are transported trackside to witness the heart-pounding story of a vibrant young man chasing down his dream. ...more. Get A Copy. Amazon.