

READING A MAP

A HISTORIC JOURNEY

Can you imagine **sledging** hundreds of miles to reach the northernmost point on Earth? What about braving minus-50-degree temperatures while walking on cracking ice sheets? One hundred years ago, that's exactly what Robert E. Peary and Matthew A. Henson did.

On March 1, 1909, Peary led an exploration team that included native Inuit people from Canada to the North Pole. They reached the Pole on April 6. Peary and Henson are generally credited with being the first people to get there. However, Henson's role in the journey was not fully acknowledged for decades because he was African-American.

Years before their trip, Peary had hired Henson to help carry equipment on his adventures. Henson proved to be more than just an assistant, especially on Arctic treks. He became an expert at hunting walruses, building igloos and sleds, leading sled-dog teams, and translating the Inuits' language. Peary said that he could not have survived without Henson.

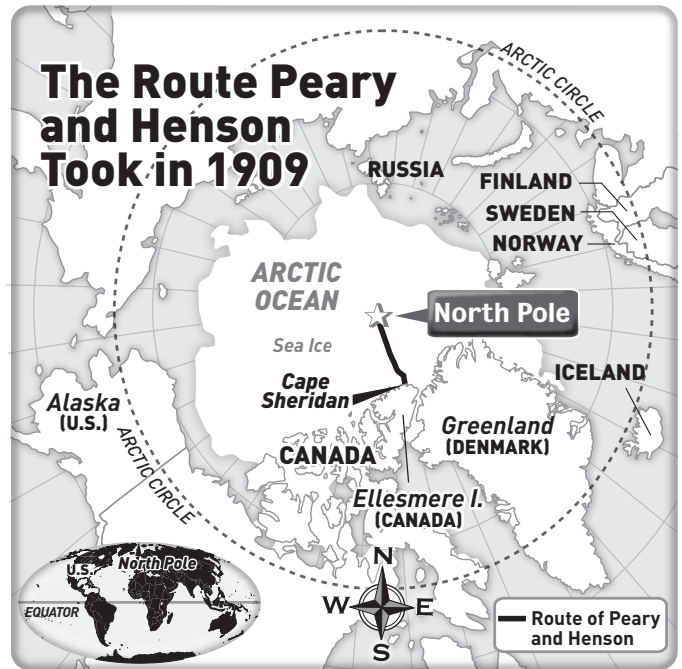
Icy Exploration

Traveling to the North Pole took years of planning. Peary and Henson went on many expeditions to Arctic areas. They were looking for a way to reach the North Pole. Simply sailing there was impossible—the 400 miles of ocean were covered with ice. They had to find ways to carry heavy supplies over dangerous areas.

After 18 years of planning, and several attempted trips, they were successful. "As I stood on top of the world," Henson said, "I felt honored to represent my race in such a historic event."

➔ Word to Know

- **sledge** (*v*): to ride in a sleigh.



QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions using the map.

- Peary and Henson's route to the North Pole began in _____.
 (A) Greenland (B) Canada
- Greenland is part of which country?
 (A) Canada (B) Denmark
- The U.S. has territory inside the Arctic Circle.
 (A) true (B) false
- Which country has territory in nearly half of the Arctic Circle?
 (A) Finland (B) Russia
- The North Pole is located on the Arctic Ocean's sea ice.
 (A) true (B) false