

ROSA PARKS

Reading Passage & Questions

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Rosa Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama on February 4, 1913. Her parents were Leona and James McCauley. She had one younger brother named Sylvester. Her parents divorced when she was young and she moved to her grandparents' farm. Her mother was a teacher and her father was a carpenter.

Rosa went to the local African-American school where her mother taught. She then attended Alabama State Teacher's College to try and get her high school diploma. Rosa's education was cut short because she had to stay home and take care of her sick mother. During this time, her brother worked to keep food on the table.

At 19 years old, Rosa met Raymond Parks, a barber from Montgomery, Alabama. He encouraged Rosa to go back to school and get her diploma. She continued to work part-time jobs and went back to school to earn her high school diploma.

Growing up in the South, Rosa and her husband witnessed a lot of racism. Racism means that people are treated poorly because of the color of their skin or their race. Rosa and Raymond became activists for civil rights and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Rosa served as the secretary for the NAACP. She was the first woman to join the NAACP in Montgomery, Alabama. Rosa and Raymond joined as an effort to stop racism, put an end to segregation and fight for equality.

Life for African Americans was difficult and trying. At the time, the southern states issued 'Jim Crow laws' and segregation laws. Segregation was the practice of creating separate facilities for blacks and whites. This meant that Black Americans could not go to the same schools or live in the same places as white Americans. The Supreme Court case of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 decided that segregated facilities was constitutional as long as the facilities were 'separate but equal.' In reality, the facilities were not even close to equal. Black schools lacked text books, air conditioning and even typical school supplies. Discrimination based on race was obvious due to different water fountains, different restaurant entrances, different movie theatres, different schools and even different burial grounds. Rosa used the bus to get to work everyday but was forced to sit in the back. The front

How old was Rosa Parks when she met Raymond? *

- ☐ 24
- ☐ 27
- ☐ 22
- ☐ 19

In what city was Rosa Parks born? *

- ☐ Montgomery
- ☐ Tuskegee
- ☐ Atlanta
- ☐ Savannah

Rosa Parks was born on February 4th, 1913. *

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

The bus boycott was organized by Martin Luther King Jr. *

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

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Life for African Americans was difficult and tough. At the time, the southern states issued 'Jim Crow laws' and segregation laws. Segregation was the practice of creating separate facilities for blacks and whites. This meant that Black Americans could not go to the same schools or live in the same places as white Americans. The Supreme Court case of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 decided that segregated facilities were constitutional as long as the facilities were 'separate but equal.' In reality, the facilities were not even close to equal. Black schools lacked text books, air conditioning and even typical school supplies. Discrimination based on race was obvious in different water fountains, different restaurant entrances, different movie theatres, different schools and even different burial grounds. Rosa used the bus to get to work everyday but was forced to sit in the back. The front

of the bus was reserved for white people only. Even if there was a seat open in the front, Rosa had to ride in the back. To make matters worse, there were laws that actually supported the unjust treatment of black people.

Rosa Parks found a seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama after a long day of work. At that time, segregation laws stated that any black person must sit in the back of the bus. A white man entered Rosa's bus and couldn't find a seat. The bus driver told Rosa to give up her seat but she bravely refused and was arrested.

She was arrested and charged with violating the Montgomery City code of segregation laws. In court, Parks was found guilty and fined \$10 plus \$4 in court costs. She immediately filed an appeal. To protest Rosa's arrest and segregation, many African Americans refused to use the city bus system for 381 days. This was called the Montgomery Bus Boycott and was organized by Martin Luther King Jr. King believed change would come with nonviolent protests. Due to the boycott, the bus system lost a lot of money and the city was not happy.

The bus boycott paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement. Rosa Parks had no idea that she was going to change the course of history.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott brought national and international attention to the civil rights struggles in the United States. More than 100 media and newspaper reporters visited Montgomery during the boycott.

Thousands of courageous people joined the "sit-ins" to end segregation and demand civil rights for people of all races. In June of 1956, the United States Supreme Court stated that Alabama's racial segregation of buses was unconstitutional.

Rosa spent most of her life fighting for desegregation, voting rights, and was an activist leader in the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Movement was one of the greatest, heroic social movements in U.S. history which allowed all citizens to live out the American dream. Civil rights are the basic rights that every citizen has under the laws of the government. The civil rights of each individual citizen are protected by the United States Constitution. Although she had many triumphs, Parks suffered hardship in the months following her arrest. Other forms of protests began in the South following the boycott such as sit-ins, peaceful marches and sometimes violence.

President Lyndon Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This act outlawed discrimination, ended racial segregation, and protected the voting rights of minorities and women.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

- 1 In what state was Rosa Parks born?
A. Alabama
B. Louisiana
C. Florida
- 2 How many dollars was Rosa Parks fined?
A. \$10
B. \$1
C. \$20
D. \$50
- 3 How many days long was the bus boycott?
A. 24
B. 365
C. 381
D. 244
- 4 What was the name of Rosa Parks' brother?
A. Clarence
B. Jeremy
C. Sylvester
D. David
- 5 How old was Rosa Parks when she met Raymond?
A. 24
B. 27
C. 22
D. 19
- 6 In what city was Rosa Parks born?
A. Montgomery
B. Tuskegee
C. Atlanta
D. Savannah

TRUE OR FALSE

- 7 Rosa Parks was born on February 4th, 1913.
TRUE FALSE
- 8 The boycott was organized by Martin Luther King Jr.
TRUE FALSE
- 9 Rosa served as the president for the NAACP.
TRUE FALSE
- 10 Rosa Parks' mother was named Fiona.
TRUE FALSE
- 11 Rosa Parks was married to Robert Parks.
TRUE FALSE
- 12 President Lyndon Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act into law.
TRUE FALSE
- 13 NAACP stands for National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
TRUE FALSE
- 14 The boycott paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement.
TRUE FALSE
- 15 The Supreme Court states that 'separate but equal' is unconstitutional.
TRUE FALSE