



Ruby Bridges Activity Bundle Integrated Reading, Literacy and CRITICAL THOUGHT Activities

For Grades 5 – 8

Reading Comprehension Passage with seven multiple choice questions

Virtual History Teacher: Elaborating on the life of Benjamin Banneker

Fact or Fiction: Which statements are fact and which are fiction?

Text Elements: Match the paragraph headings to their correct paragraphs

Text Elements: Topic Sentences – Which sentences belong in the paragraph?

Text Structure: Topic Sentences – Which are causes and which are effects

SIX INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES

Perfect for Interactive Notebooks

Perfect for Morning Work or Assessments

ANSWERS

Name	Answers
Ruby Bridges Reading Comprehension	B, D, A, B, C, A, B

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Fact or Fiction?

Name: _____

Below is a biography on Ruby Bridges. On the following page is a chart with eleven statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

Early Life

Ruby Bridges was born on September 8, 1954, as the oldest of five children. At two years old, her family moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, in search of better work opportunities.

Reality for Black Students in the 1950s

Bridges was born during the same year as *Brown v. Board of Education*, a famous Supreme Court case that made racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. However, despite this court ruling, many schools continued to separate students based on race, forcing Black students to attend inferior institutions and giving them fewer opportunities for success.

Ruby is the Only One

Bridges attended segregated kindergarten in New Orleans. A year later, federal courts ordered New Orleans' schools to desegregate. To circumvent these laws, schools wrote challenging entrance exams that Black students had to pass to prove they were at the same academic level as white students. Ruby Bridges passed the exam along with five other students, gaining admission to the all-white William Franz Elementary School. Bridges, however, was the only one who ended up going to William Franz; two students decided to stay at their old school, and the other three were sent to another all-white school.

The Shocking First Day

Bridges' first day of school was like no other. Ruby and her mother were escorted to school by four federal marshals every day, fighting through crowds of people screaming racial slurs and protesting her admission. Bridges later commented that the only moment that scared her throughout the protests was the sight of a woman holding a Black baby doll in a coffin. Her first day at school was spent solely in the principal's office due to the commotion caused by white parents pulling their children out of the school. She sat in a class of one with Barbara Henry, the only teacher who accepted her into the classroom; she ate lunch alone and played with her teacher at recess.

Perseverance

Bridges' family suffered, too; her father lost his job and grocery stores refused to sell to her mother. Despite the oppression the Bridges family faced for nothing more than getting their daughter an education, Ruby Bridges never missed a day of school.

The Effect and Legacy of Ruby's Bravery

Over time, other Black students enrolled at the school, including Bridges' four nieces. Ruby Bridges helped pave the way for racial integration in schools, dealing with severe racism and continuing to push for her right to learn. She wrote about her experiences in two books and won the Carter G. Woodson Award; she also established the Ruby Bridges Foundation in 1999 to promote tolerance and push for change via education.

	FACT	FICTION
Many schools were segregated before 1954		
It took a lot of courage for Ruby Bridges to go to an all-white school		
Ruby Bridges helped to ensure America's schools were segregated		
Ruby's family was given lots of support by the community		
Ruby's brothers and sisters also eventually went to William Franz		
School segregation resulted in fewer opportunities for black students		
The Ruby Bridges Foundation was started in 1999 to punish those who support segregation		
Some schools made black students pass difficult exams to enroll in school		
Ruby Bridges was threatened by parents of white students and ignored by teachers at her school		
Ruby Bridges never missed a day of school in her first year at William Franz		
Integrated and Segregated mean the same thing		

Answers:

	FACT	FICTION
Many schools were segregated before 1954	X	
It took a lot of courage for Ruby Bridges to go to an all-white school	X	
Ruby Bridges helped to ensure America' s schools were segregated		X
Ruby's family was given lots of support by the community		X
Ruby's brothers and sisters also eventually went to William Franz		X
School segregation resulted in fewer opportunities for black students	X	
The Ruby Bridges Foundation was started in 1999 to punish those who support segregation		X
Some schools made black students pass difficult exams to enroll in school	X	
Ruby Bridges was threatened by parents of white students and ignored by teachers at her school	X	
Ruby Bridges never missed a day of school in her first year at William Franz	X	
Integrated and Segregated mean the same thing		X

Ruby Bridges Reading Comprehension Name _____

Ruby Bridges became a symbol and pioneer for the American civil rights movement at just six years old. She was born on September 8, 1954, as the oldest of five children. At two years old, her family moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, in search of better work opportunities. Bridges was born during the same year as *Brown v. Board of Education*, a famous Supreme Court case that made racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. However, despite this court ruling, many schools continued to separate students based on race, forcing Black students to attend inferior institutions and giving them fewer opportunities for success.

Bridges attended segregated kindergarten in New Orleans. A year later, federal courts ordered New Orleans' schools to desegregate. To circumvent these laws, schools wrote challenging entrance exams that Black students had to pass to prove they were at the same academic level as white students. Ruby Bridges passed the exam along with five other students, gaining admission to the all-white William Franz Elementary School. Bridges, however, was the only one who ended up going to William Franz; two students decided to stay at their old school, and the other three were sent to another all-white school.

Bridges' first day of school was like no other. Ruby and her mother were escorted to school by four federal marshals every day, fighting through crowds of people screaming racial slurs and protesting her admission. Bridges later commented that the only moment that scared her throughout the protests was the sight of a woman holding a Black baby doll in a coffin. Her first day at school was spent solely in the principal's office due to the commotion caused by white parents pulling their children out of the school. She sat in a class of one with Barbara Henry, the only teacher who accepted her into the classroom; she ate lunch alone and played with her teacher at recess. Bridges' family suffered, too; her father lost his job and grocery stores refused to sell to her mother. Despite the oppression the Bridges family faced for nothing more than getting their daughter an education, Ruby Bridges never missed a day of school.

Over time, other Black students enrolled at the school, including Bridges' four nieces. Ruby Bridges helped pave the way for racial integration in schools, dealing with severe racism and continuing to push for her right to learn. She wrote about her experiences in two books and won the Carter G. Woodson Award; she also established the Ruby Bridges Foundation in 1999 to promote tolerance and push for change via education.

1. Which of the following statements about school segregation is true?

- a. It ended immediately after *Brown v. Board of Education*.
- b. Segregated schools did not have equal conditions for Black and white children.
- c. School segregation was never directly addressed by the federal government.
- d. Segregated schools offered the same learning opportunities for Black and white students.

- 2. Which of the following problems did Ruby Bridges have to deal with when she tried to go to school?**
 - a. Threats
 - b. Exclusion
 - c. Racism
 - d. All of the above

- 3. Which of the following best explains why all-white schools instituted entrance exams to permit Black students to enter?**
 - a. Despite the federal mandate, they wanted to keep schools segregated any way they could.
 - b. To ensure that only the highest-achieving white students were allowed to attend the school.
 - c. To make sure as many Black students could attend the school as possible.
 - d. They were big supporters of school integration.

- 4. Which of the following best describes the impact of Ruby Bridges on school segregation?**
 - a. Bridges' attempts to go to school made segregation more prominent.
 - b. Bridges was a pioneer for the future safe integration of schools.
 - c. Bridges' transition to a white school was easy, and paved the way for future Black students.
 - d. Bridges was the only student fighting for school integration, and she won her fight.

- 5. Which of the following statements is true?**
 - a. Ruby Bridges was the only member of her family impacted by her attending an all-white school.
 - b. The students in Bridges' class eventually began to get to know her and overcome the perceived barrier between them.
 - c. Bridges continued to push for equal and civil rights even after her experiences in elementary school.
 - d. Bridges was the youngest child in her family.

- 6. What can be inferred from the fact that Ruby Bridges never missed a day of school?**
 - a. She did not let racism stop her from seizing her right to learn.
 - b. She was willing to face the racism if it meant she could play with her friends at recess.
 - c. She did not care about her education.
 - d. She was never threatened over her right to go to school, so she was able to attend every day.

- 7. Which of the following initiatives would the Ruby Bridges Foundation be most likely to support?**
 - a. A campaign to immediately expel a student who says a racist remark
 - b. A resolution to teach all elementary school aged students about Brown v. Board of Education and the civil rights movement
 - c. A social media campaign shaming the teachers who refused to teach Ruby Bridges at her elementary school
 - d. An educational pamphlet detailing the stories of white children who attended the same school as Ruby Bridges

Virtual History Teacher
Ruby Bridges Test

Name: _____

Instructions: You are playing the role of a history teacher who is grading the test below. See the questions and your “student’s” answers. Grade the quality of the answers on a scale of 1-4, “1” being a poor answer and “4” being a great answer. For each answer you grade, use your knowledge of Ruby Bridges, or, reference the mrnussbaum.com online biography, to add the missing pieces.

Question 1: What was school like for black students before and after 1954?	Score:
Student Answer: It was unfair before 1954 and still unfair after it.	
Your Response:	

Question 2: What was Ruby Bridges’ first day like?	Score:
Student Answer: It was a bad day.	
Your Response:	

Question 3: Why was Ruby Bridges important to the eventual integration of schools?	Score:
Student Answer: She had an impact on future students.	
Your Response:	

Answers:

Question 1: What was school like for black students before and after 1954?	Score:
Student Answer: It was unfair before 1954 and still unfair after it.	
Your Response: Schools were segregated by race before 1954 which deprived black students of the same educational opportunities enjoyed by white students. After 1954, even though schools were supposed to be desegregated, many schools in the Southern United States found ways to keep segregation in place, such as forcing black students to pass difficult entrance exams.	

Question 2: What was Ruby Bridges' first day like?	Score:
Student Answer: It was a bad day.	
Your Response: Ruby's first day was much different from a typical first day for a white student. First, she was escorted to school by federal marshals and had to endure the taunting and cruelty of protesting parents. During the school day, she was shunned by other students and some teachers refused to have her in their classrooms. Ultimately, much of Ruby's day was spent in the principal's office where she was shielded from the commotion.	

Question 3: Why was Ruby Bridges important to the eventual integration of schools?	Score:
Student Answer: She had an impact on future students.	
Your Response: Ruby's courage paved the way for future generations of black students who participated in the integration of America's public schools. In standing up for her right to learn, Ruby challenged an unfair system and ultimately helped countless students.	

The Life of Ruby Bridges in Causes and Effects

Name _____

Fill in the chart below. All of the causes and effects are listed underneath the chart.

Causes	Effects
Brown vs the Board of Education	
	Schools made African-Americans pass difficult exams
	Ruby spent most of the day in the principal's office to shield her.
	Ruby ate lunch and played at recess alone
Ruby's courage and determination in attending William Franz Elementary School	

1. Ruby was shunned at school by other students and even teachers.
2. The Supreme Court of the United States ruled that segregation in American schools was unconstitutional and ordered them integrated.
3. Ruby Bridges' first day caused an enormous commotion inside and outside of the school.
4. Thousands of black children followed Ruby's lead and enrolled in schools that were formerly white-only.
5. Schools throughout the country were outraged by the Supreme Court decision to integrate schools.

Causes	Effects
Brown vs the Board of Education	The Supreme Court of the United States ruled that segregation in American schools was unconstitutional and ordered them integrated.
Schools throughout the American South were outraged by the Supreme Court decision to integrate schools.	Schools made African-Americans pass difficult exams
Ruby Bridges' first day caused an enormous commotion inside and outside of the school.	Ruby spent most of the day in the principal's office to shield her.
Ruby was shunned at school by other students and even teachers.	Ruby ate lunch and played at recess alone
Ruby's courage and determination in attending William Franz Elementary School	Thousands of black children followed Ruby's lead and enrolled in schools that were formerly white-only.

Ruby Bridges and Text Elements – What Heading Goes at the Beginning of Each Paragraph?

Name _____


Below are the headings. Insert them above the correct paragraphs.

Ruby is the Only One	Reality for Black Students in the 1950s
The Effect and Legacy of Ruby's Courage	Early Life
Perseverance	The Shocking First Day


Ruby Bridges was born on September 8, 1954, as the oldest of five children. At two years old, her family moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, in search of better work opportunities.

Bridges was born during the same year as *Brown v. Board of Education*, a famous Supreme Court case that made racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. However, despite this court ruling, many schools continued to separate students based on race, forcing Black students to attend inferior institutions and giving them fewer opportunities for success.


Bridges attended segregated kindergarten in New Orleans. A year later, federal courts ordered New Orleans' schools to desegregate. To circumvent these laws, schools wrote challenging entrance exams that Black students had to pass to prove they were at the same academic level as white students. Ruby Bridges passed the exam along with five other students, gaining admission to the all-white William Franz Elementary School. Bridges, however, was the only one who ended up going to William Franz; two students decided to stay at their old school, and the other three were sent to another all-white school.



Bridges' first day of school was like no other. Ruby and her mother were escorted to school by four federal marshals and fought through crowds of people screaming racial slurs and protesting her admission. Bridges later commented that the only moment that scared her throughout the protests was the sight of a woman holding a Black baby doll in a coffin. Her first day at school was spent solely in the principal's office due to the commotion caused by white parents pulling their children out of the school. She sat in a class of one with Barbara Henry, the only teacher who accepted her into the classroom; she ate lunch alone and played with her teacher at recess.



Bridges' family suffered, too; her father lost his job and grocery stores refused to sell to her mother. Despite the oppression the Bridges family faced for nothing more than getting their daughter an education, Ruby Bridges never missed a day of school.



Over time, other Black students enrolled at the school, including Bridges' four nieces. Ruby Bridges helped pave the way for racial integration in schools, dealing with severe racism and continuing to push for her right to learn. She wrote about her experiences in two books and won the Carter G. Woodson Award; she also established the Ruby Bridges Foundation in 1999 to promote tolerance and push for change via education.

Answers:

- 1. Early Life**
- 2. Reality for Black Students in the 1950s**
- 3. Ruby is the Only One**
- 4. The Shocking First Day**
- 5. Perseverance**
- 6. The Effect and Legacy of Ruby's Courage**

Topic Sentence – Ruby Bridges

Name: _____

Forming good topic sentences is crucial to writing successful reports. Below is the topic sentence of a body paragraph within a biography on Ruby Bridges. There are four detail sentences that should come after the topic sentence. First, choose the four from the series of sentences below and then, form the paragraph. Start the paragraph with the topic sentence below. There are three additional sentence from those below that should be included.

Topic Sentence: Bridges’ first day of school was like no other.

Sentence	Does it belong in the paragraph with the above topic sentence?
Bridges was born during the same year as <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> , a famous Supreme Court case that made racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional.	
Ruby later commented that the only moment on her way inside the building that scared her was the sight of a woman holding a Black baby doll in a coffin.	
A year later, federal courts ordered New Orleans schools to desegregate.	
The first day, and for days to come, Ruby sat in a class of one with Barbara Henry, the only teacher who accepted her into the classroom; she ate lunch alone and played with her teacher at recess.	
She wrote about her experiences in two books and won the Carter G. Woodson Award; she also established the Ruby Bridges Foundation in 1999 to promote tolerance and push for change via education.	
Ruby and her mother were escorted to school by four federal marshals and fought through crowds of people screaming racial slurs and protesting her admission.	

Answers

Sentence	Does it belong in the paragraph with the above topic sentence?
Bridges was born during the same year as <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> , a famous Supreme Court case that made racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional.	NO
Ruby later commented that the only moment on her way inside the building that scared her was the sight of a woman holding a Black baby doll in a coffin.	YES
A year later, federal courts ordered New Orleans schools to desegregate.	NO
The first day, and for days to come, Ruby sat in a class of one with Barbara Henry, the only teacher who accepted her into the classroom; she ate lunch alone and played with her teacher at recess.	YES
She wrote about her experiences in two books and won the Carter G. Woodson Award; she also established the Ruby Bridges Foundation in 1999 to promote tolerance and push for change via education.	NO
Ruby and her mother were escorted to school by four federal marshals and fought through crowds of people screaming racial slurs and protesting her admission.	YES

Bridges' first day of school was like no other. Ruby and her mother were escorted to school by four federal marshals and fought through crowds of people screaming racial slurs and protesting her admission. Ruby later commented that the only moment on her way inside the building that scared her was the sight of a woman holding a black baby doll in a coffin. The first day, and for days to come, Ruby sat in a class of one with Barbara Henry, the only teacher who accepted her into the classroom; she ate lunch alone and played with her teacher at recess.