

Fact or Fiction?

Name: _____

Below is a biography on Rosa Parks. On the following page is a chart with ten statements. Indicate whether each statement is fact or fiction.

Rosa's Early Years

Rosa Louise McCauley was born February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama. Her father was a carpenter, and her mother was a teacher. When she was two, her parents separated. Her family moved to her grandparents' farm in Pine Level, Alabama. Both her grandparents were former slaves. Pine Level supported the idea of separate but equal. White children rode a bus to their newly built school while African-American children had to walk to a one-room schoolhouse that didn't have enough desks or supplies. Rosa quit high school when she was a junior to help take care of her grandmother. Afterwards, she worked as a seamstress in a shirt factory in Montgomery. In 1932, Rosa married Raymond Parks. He was a barber who was actively involved in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Arrested for Refusing to Give up her Seat

On December 1, 1955, a bus driver asked Rosa to give her seat on a bus to a white male passenger. She refused. She was arrested and fined \$10 plus court costs (\$4) for violating a city ordinance that said the bus driver could assign seats. The Montgomery Women's Political Council printed and circulated a flyer throughout Montgomery's black community which read as follows:

“Another woman has been arrested and thrown in jail because she refused to get up out of her seat on the bus for a white person ... This has to be stopped. Negroes have rights too, for if Negroes did not ride the buses, they could not operate. Three-fourths of the riders are Negro ... We are ... asking every Negro to stay off the buses Monday in protest of the arrest and trial.”

Montgomery Bus Boycott

This non-violent protest was successful. Dr. Martin Luther King led the Montgomery Improvement Association. They advertised at black churches and asked people to continue the boycott. Ninety percent of Montgomery's black citizens, estimated to be around 42,000 protesters, walked, carpooled or took cabs. In the beginning, the boycotters were willing to accept a compromise that was consistent with separate but equal rather than asking for complete integration. They asked for courteous treatment by bus operators, first-come, first-served seating on buses, and employment of African American bus drivers.

Unconstitutional!

The boycott lasted 381 days. The bus company lost a lot of money. The United States Supreme Court ruled that the Montgomery segregation law was unconstitutional, and on December 20, 1956, Montgomery officials were ordered to desegregate buses. The bus boycott demonstrated the power of nonviolent mass protest and brought Dr. Martin Luther King to national attention as one of the leaders of the cause. The civil rights movement led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – which made it illegal to refuse employment to an individual on the basis of race and made segregation at any public facility against the law.

Later Life

Rosa wrote four books, Rosa Parks: My Story, Quiet Strength, Dear Mrs. Parks: A Dialogue with Today's Youth and I Am Rosa Parks. At the ceremony where President Bill Clinton presented Mrs. Parks with the Medal of Freedom, she was called “the first lady of civil rights” and “the mother of the freedom movement”. Time Magazine named her one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. She died October 24, 2005.

	FACT	FICTION
Rosa's husband was a police officer		
Rosa Parks was employed as a seamstress		
She was arrested in Alabama for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus		
In addition to being arrested, Rosa was forced to pay \$100 in court costs		
Rosa was the first woman who had to give up her seat on an Alabama bus		
The Montgomery Bus Boycott involved about 4,000 people, who carpooled, walked, or took cabs to work instead of taking the bus		
As a result of Rosa's arrest, Martin Luther King organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott		
The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted longer than one year		
From the start, the boycotters demanded complete integration		
Rosa Parks is sometimes called the First Lady of Civil Rights		
Bill Clinton gave Rosa Parks the Presidential Medal of Freedom		

Answers:

	FACT	FICTION
Rosa's husband was a police officer		X
Rosa Parks was employed as a seamstress	X	
She was arrested in Alabama for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus	X	
In addition to being arrested, Rosa was forced to pay \$100 in court costs		X
Rosa was the first woman who had to give up her seat on an Alabama bus		X
The Montgomery Bus Boycott involved about 4,000 people, who carpoled, walked, or took cabs to work instead of taking the bus		X
As a result of Rosa's arrest, Martin Luther King organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott	X	
The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted longer than one year	X	
From the start, the boycotters demanded complete integration		X
Rosa Parks is sometimes called the First Lady of Civil Rights	X	
Bill Clinton gave Rosa Parks the Presidential Medal of Freedom	X	