

# Rosa Parks

## Early Life

Rosa Parks was born on February 4, 1913. She grew up in Montgomery, Alabama. She grew up at a time when America was segregated for black and white people.

## Segregation in America

Segregation meant many things for black and white people were separated by law. For example, black and white children went to separate schools. Black and white people were not even allowed to drink from the same water fountain! Some people said things could be "separate but equal." This did not really happen. Black people were treated worse than white people within society.

## The Bus Ride That Changed History

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was coming home from work. She was on a bus. She was sitting in the section of the bus that black people were supposed to sit in, at the back of the bus. If the bus got overcrowded, the driver would make black people stand so that a white passenger could sit. The bus got crowded. Rosa was told to move further back to give her seat to a white person. She did not move. The police came and arrested her. They said by not giving up her seat she was breaking the law.

## What Happened Next?

Many people refused to ride the bus. They were angry about what happened to Rosa. The bus companies lost a lot of money because so many people avoided the bus. Eventually, the buses decided anyone could sit anywhere.

Rosa's actions made history. They sparked a movement to make a change. It wasn't the end of segregation everywhere, but it was a victory.



# Questions

1. Which statement most likely describes Rosa Parks' opinion:
  - Buses should remain segregated.
  - Black people and white people were not equal citizens.
  - Black people and white people deserved fair and equal treatment.
  - The bus was difficult to take to work, and everyone should buy a car.
2. What does "segregation" mean?
  - Black people and white people had to be separated by law.
  - Every person, regardless of skin color, is treated with respect.
  - People refused to ride the bus.
  - The police took Rosa away when she refused to move.
3. Why do you think the bus companies decided to let anyone sit anywhere?
  - They were embarrassed they treated Rosa badly. They wanted her to forgive them.
  - They thought it was friendlier to let people sit where they want. They wanted everyone to have a nice bus ride.
  - They lost money when people stopped riding the bus. They agreed to let people sit anywhere so that they could make money again.
  - Segregation ended everywhere. They were trying to keep up with other places that were desegregating.
4. Where did Rosa grow up?
  - Alabama
  - Georgia
  - North Carolina
  - Texas

5. Name one public facility that was different for black people and white people at that time?

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6. Do you think Rosa was right to refuse giving up her seat? Why or why not?

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