



History – Graduate Award Scheme (Year 6)

This term you will be looking at personal timelines. Using the information below, can you learn everything there is to know about Rosa Parks, so that you could create a timeline of her history?

Part A – Graduate Scheme

Rosa Parks was a woman who played a very important part in a movement of American Civil Rights to make life fair for people who were Black and White.



Early life

On 4th February 1913, Rosa Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama (USA). Her parents were called James and Leona McCauley, but they separated when Rosa was two years old. Leona moved Rosa and her brother to live on her family's farm in Pine Level, Alabama. The family were Black and treated as though they were second-class citizens, that did not have the same rights as people who were White.

Growing up in America

When Rosa was growing up, there were laws that separated Black and White people, which was called 'segregation'. These laws meant that the rules were different for people depending on the colour of their skin in public places, such as schools, toilets, transport and restaurants. It was also well known that the facilities for Black people were of a poor standard in comparison to the facilities for White people. Due to these laws, it also created barriers for Black people to vote, which meant that often they couldn't vote on issues that directly impacted them.



Personal life

At the age of 19, Rosa met and married a man called Raymond Parks, who was a barber. He was an active member of the NAACP, (which was formed to remove racial barriers). The couple never had children of their own.

Montgomery Bus Boycott

On 1st December 1955, Parks was travelling home from her place of work and was sitting on the 'Black side' of the bus. Rules required Black people to stand and give their seat up if the White section of the bus was full. That night, Rosa was told that she needed to move further back and give up her seat to someone who was White, however, Rosa refused. Parks was threatened with police action, but she was adamant that she would not move and give up her seat. Rosa was arrested and fined as she broke the law.

Due to what happened to Rosa, word spread and it created a protest that caused approximately 40,000 Black people to boycott buses. The bus companies could not ignore the loss to profits as news spread across America and Black people boycotted the buses for 381 days.

Making a change

In December 1956, the USA government removed Black and White segregation on buses. Although only a small change, it was a victory for Black people and it was only the beginning of change for the Civil Rights movement.

Later life

Rosa Parks died on the 24th October 2005 in her home, which was an apartment in Detroit, Michigan. Parks was 92 when she died and had been diagnosed with dementia the previous year as she had struggled with it since 2002.

Example questions

- Can you put these dates in order?
- What was the date that Rosa refused to give up her seat on the bus?
- What year did Rosa Parks die?

Part B – Graduate Scheme

Can you create a timeline of your own history?

