


## Silver reading:



# Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks was a Black woman who played a significant part in the **American Civil Rights movement**. She helped bring about changes to make life fairer for Black Americans.

### Early Life

Rosa Parks was born on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1913, and was raised on a farm with her mother, brother and grandparents in a city called Montgomery in the USA. Rosa Parks grew up during an age when Black people and other People of Colour were treated as second-class citizens. They did not have the same rights as White people.

### American Civil Rights movement

A push for Black Americans to have equal rights in the United States that took place mainly during the 1950s and 1960s.

### Segregation in America

When Rosa Parks was growing up, the laws in many American states meant that Black people were not permitted to use some of the same public places as White people, such as schools, transport, toilets and restaurants. This was called 'segregation'. They also made it difficult for Black people to vote. Many White people did not respect Black people and treated them unjustly.

### The Bus Ride

On 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1955, Rosa Parks was sitting on the bus on the way home from work. She was sitting in the section segregated for Black people. However, if the White section was full, Black people had to move so White people could have a seat. On this day, the White section was full, and Rosa was instructed to move so a White person could have her seat, but she refused. The driver threatened to call the police, but she remained sitting down. Eventually, the police came and Rosa was arrested for breaking the law and had to pay a fine.

### What Happened Next?

What Rosa did on that day was the beginning of a historic movement in America. 40,000 Black people in the area (and some White people) refused to use the buses until they were treated fairly – this was called The Montgomery bus boycott. This many people could not be ignored. The boycott went on for 381 days until the government acted and the segregation on buses was lifted. Rosa's actions triggered a movement for change and even though it wasn't the end of all segregation, it was a victory.

**"People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in."** Parks, Rosa; James Haskins (1992). *Rosa Parks: My Story*. Dial Books. p. 116

### Boycott

Refusing to use, buy or deal with a person, organisation, or country as a way of protest.

### Did You Know...?

The 4<sup>th</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> December (Rosa's birthday and the date she was arrested) are now known as 'Rosa Parks' memorial days' and are celebrated in some states of the USA.

**Rosa's actions made history as it started a movement for change.**

1. Where was Rosa Parks raised? Tick one.

- In the mountains in Montgomery
- On the coast in Miami
- On a farm in Montana
- On a farm in Montgomery

2. Tick whether the statements are true or false.

	True	False
Rosa was born on 4 <sup>th</sup> February 1914.		
Rosa grew up during an age when Black people and other People of Colour were treated as second-class citizens.		
Rosa Parks was on the bus on her way to work when she refused to give up her seat.		
The bus boycott went on for 381 days.		

3. The author uses the words 'second-class citizens' to describe how Black people and other People of Colour were treated. What do you think this means?

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4. List **two** public places where Black and White people had to stay apart from each other when Rosa was growing up.

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5. What was the name of the movement when people stopped using the buses?

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6. **Rosa's actions triggered a movement for change...**

Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word 'triggered'. Tick one.

- upset
- started
- stopped
- created