



## Source 1: Who was Rosa Parks?

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1 Rosa Parks was an African American woman who was born on February 4, 1913. Ms. Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama, to Leona and James McCauley. While growing up, she had a younger brother by the name of Sylvester. Rosa’s parents went their separate ways, and Rosa, Sylvester, and Leona moved to a small farm area in Pine Level.

2 While living in Pine Level, Rosa attended the local elementary school where her mom was a teacher. The local school consisted of only African American children; there was no mix of races in the schools.

3 Leona McCauley was a successful African American teacher and wanted her children to complete their education to obtain a diploma and later a degree. Rosa was able to complete elementary school and Montgomery Industrial School for Girls. She went on to attend Alabama Teacher State College in order to obtain her high school diploma. Unfortunately, Rosa was never able to complete school to get her diploma because of a family illness with her mother.

4 In 1932 Rosa met her soul mate, Raymond Parks, in Montgomery and married him later that year. Raymond and Rosa lived life together with no children. In 1977, Raymond Parks passed away. During their marriage, Rosa was able to return to school and obtain her high school diploma.

5 While living in the city of Montgomery as an adult, the city was very segregated. The segregation was very similar to the Pine Level School in Alabama that Rosa had attended in elementary. The white people and black people were not together but did everything separately. The places and events they attended were all segregated based on race.

6 Rosa would see signs for only one race and not the other race. Everything from water fountains to riding the bus was segregated. Often when Rosa would ride the bus, she would have to sit in the back of the bus or even stand if she needed to. She experienced racism of people of color sitting in the back of the bus while white people were able to sit at the front of the bus.

*“Who was Rosa Parks?” written for educational purposes.*

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## Source 2: Montgomery Bus Boycott

7 On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks decided to fight back against segregation. Ms. Parks, along with all the other African American people, had to sit in the back of the buses while the white people were able to sit in the front. If there were no seats on the bus a black person, that had already been on the bus, had to get up and give their seat to the white person entering the bus.

8 Rosa Parks finally got tired of being treated like a second-class citizen. She and other African Americans were fed up with the segregation. One day after work, Rosa sat on the bus and did not give up her seat when a white person entering the bus came on. Rosa was immediately arrested and taken to jail. Rosa was instructed to pay a penalty fine of \$10 for not obeying the law. Of course, Ms. Parks did not pay the fine because of her beliefs of the segregation law not being fair to all.

9 The arrest of Rosa led to an uproar from the African American community. The African American leaders got together to discuss what happened and decided to do a boycott. NAACP began formed plans to organize the boycott of the city buses. The NAACP even got together to create flyers and newspaper ads to reach as many African Americans they could about not riding the city bus. The boycott would be to no longer ride the city bus as long as it took to change the segregation law. The boycott of the Montgomery buses lasted for a total of 381 days. The African American communities and leaders worked together to get to places that were needed without using the city bus. After a long boycott of over one year, the U.S. Supreme court ruled the segregation laws in Alabama to be unconstitutional.

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### Source 3: Life After the Montgomery Bus Boycott

10 After the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Rosa Parks' arrest, her family had a difficult time. Rosa was fired from her full-time job working at a department store. Rosa Parks' husband was also fired from his job due to supporting his wife and the ongoing court case from the boycott on the Montgomery city bus. After searching around for work and unable to successfully find a job, the couple moved to Detroit, Michigan.

11 While in Detroit, Rosa and her husband's life began to improve. Both Rosa and Raymond were able to find a job to help support themselves. Rosa started off working as a secretary and receptionist in U.S. Representative John Conyer's congressional office. Later, Rosa became a part of Planned Parenthood. Rosa Parks served on the board of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

12 In 1987, Rosa and her friend Elaine Steele founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development. The institute was designed to run the "Pathways to Freedom" bus tours. The bus tours helped to show the younger African Americans the Underground Railroad sites that were throughout the country. The Underground Railroad were secret routes that had safe houses in the United States. The Underground Railroad was used as a way for African American slaves to escape to freedom to free states. By the year 1850, it is believed that over 100,000 slaves had escaped to freedom using the Underground Railroad.

13 In 1992, Rosa wrote her autobiography. In her book, *My Story*, Rosa talked about her life and the segregation she experienced in Montgomery. Three years later, Rosa went on to publish another book. The book titled *Quiet Strength* was about how Rosa used her religion to help her overcome the struggle and fight she had throughout her life.

14 Rosa received many awards during her lifetime. She received the Spingarn Medal from NAACP, Martin Luther King Jr. Award, and a Presidential Medal of Freedom by former President Bill Clinton (1996). She continued to receive awards for her courage and continued faith in helping to create a change in segregation.

15 In October 2005, Rosa Parks died in her home having suffered from progressive dementia.

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