

Why was Thurgood Marshall called “Mr. Civil Rights”?



Thurgood Marshall was a constitutional superstar! People today enjoy their **constitutional civil rights** because Thurgood Marshall dedicated his life to helping others. He ensured the rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution were given to everyone. He fought for the freedom of African Americans to participate in society and government. This was not easy work!

Thurgood Marshall's Early Life

Thurgood Marshall loved to learn and debate! He learned about history and the U.S. Constitution in school. He was a good student and very talkative. He sometimes got in trouble in class for talking too much. When he was being punished, his principal had him read the U.S. Constitution. By the time he left elementary school, he had memorized the whole Constitution!



Thurgood's father had two jobs. When his father was not working, he often brought Thurgood and his brothers to the courthouse. They would sit in on trials and listen to the lawyers' arguments. At dinner, the Marshalls would discuss the arguments they heard in the

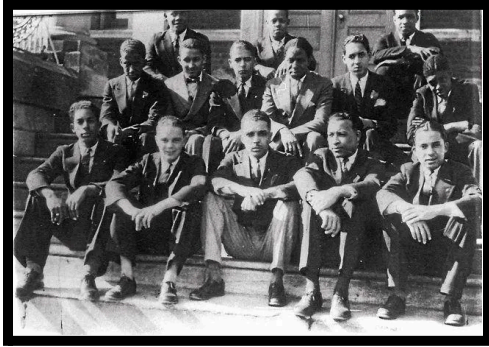
courtroom. The dinner table was often filled with excitement and disagreement! Thurgood had a supportive family, great teachers, and good friends.

The Marshall family lived in Baltimore, Maryland. They faced **segregation** in most parts of their lives. They were a Black family in a Southern state. At that time in history, businesses and government services were allowed to **discriminate** against Black people. They could separate people based on race. **Segregation** laws and practices affected daily activities such as traveling on a bus, shopping in a store, attending school, and swimming in a local pool. Thurgood Marshall knew segregation was wrong.

Think about it!

What is one detail about Mr. Marshall's childhood that might explain why he was interested in civil rights?

Thurgood Marshall Goes to College



Thurgood and his brother attended Lincoln University, a college for Black students in Oxford, Pennsylvania. At Lincoln, he received an **exceptional** education. Lincoln University helped Thurgood develop strong skills. He became an **eloquent** and **persuasive** speaker. After graduation, Thurgood wanted to go to law

school at the University of Maryland. He was not accepted because he was an African American. The University of Maryland did not allow Black students. He knew this was unfair. He chose to attend Howard University Law School instead.

At Howard University, he met Charles Hamilton Houston. Professor Houston was his most important teacher. Professor Houston had high expectations for his students. He expected them to work toward **perfection**. Houston wanted his students to become **lawyers** who were **confident** in their skills and actions. He also wanted them to improve the lives of others.



Professor Houston brought out the best in Thurgood Marshall. In law school, Thurgood Marshall worked to be excellent. He graduated top of his class.

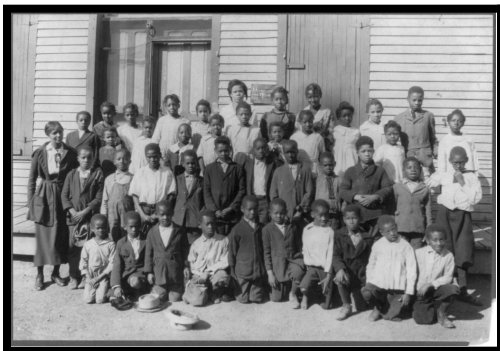
Think about it!

What is one skill that Mr. Marshall developed in college that would help him fight for civil rights?

A Mission to Help Others

When Thurgood Marshall graduated from law school, he wanted to help people as soon as possible. In addition to teaching, Professor Houston also worked for an organization called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Mr. Houston asked Thurgood Marshall to come work for the NAACP. The NAACP still exists today. It is an organization that fights for the constitutional rights of African Americans. They fight against **discrimination** and **racism**.

Charles Hamilton Houston gave Thurgood Marshall two very important experiences. First, he asked Marshall to help defend a man named George Crawford in court. Mr. Houston and Thurgood Marshall helped to save Mr. Crawford's life. Thurgood Marshall understood that a good **lawyer** was important and that it was his job to make sure people were treated fairly.



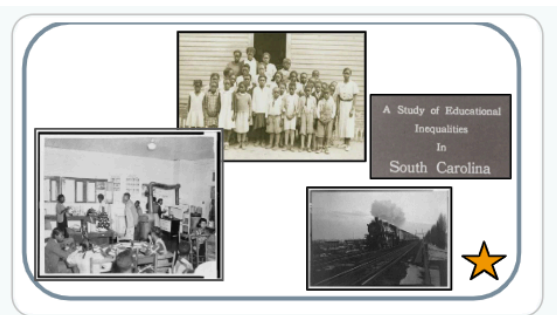
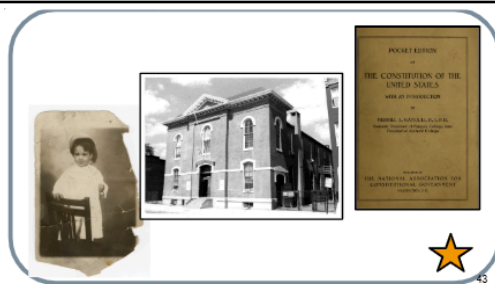
Second, Mr. Houston asked Thurgood Marshall to travel with him all across the South, visiting schools. Together, they collected **evidence** about the poor conditions of schools for Black children. Marshall was shocked to see the condition of the school buildings. There were few resources for students and no transportation for students to get to school. Thurgood Marshall was sad and angry about the conditions in these schools. He never forgot that trip. From that day forward, he had a mission. He would improve education for Black children. The NAACP wanted to end racial **segregation**. Thurgood Marshall would help.

Think about it!

What is one experience that Mr. Marshall had that inspired him to fight for civil rights?

Examining the Primary Source Sets!

Directions: Find the four image sets with stars located in the bottom right corner. Discuss the following questions as a class.



1. How do the images connect to what you have learned about Thurgood Marshall?
2. Find at least two images that connect to people's civil rights.

3. Now that you have learned more about Thurgood Marshall, pick ONE image and in the box below, write down ONE QUESTION you have about the image.

How did Mr. Marshall fight for constitutional rights?

For the next 30 years, Thurgood Marshall would help so many people. He traveled all over the South. He knew that many Black people were being mistreated by the police and the law. He defended many people in court. He helped save many people's lives. He took every **client** he could. He knew his work as a **lawyer** was important. People across the country called him "Mr. Civil Rights." People traveled far to hear him speak. So many people hoped that he would help them!

Why did Thurgood Marshall need the Supreme Court to help?



The U.S. Constitution states that everyone must be treated equally under the law. In the United States, the **Supreme Court** is the highest court in the country. The Supreme Court helps to explain what the Constitution means. Thurgood Marshall had a plan. He would use his skills as a **lawyer** to make sure everyone had their **constitutional rights**.

Mr. Marshall believed many of his **clients** were not being treated fairly in their cases. When people are treated unfairly in a court case, the **client** can

appeal it to a different court. They can ask a new judge to protect that person's rights. Mr. Marshall **appealed** his cases to the Supreme Court. He was **persuasive** and **eloquent**. He would convince the Supreme Court to protect people's rights. Over 30 years, Thurgood Marshall would present 32 cases in front of the **Supreme Court**. He won 29 of those cases.

Mr. Marshall's most famous case was **Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954)**. In this case, the Supreme Court said that **segregated** schools were unconstitutional. **Segregation** violated the rights of Black children. **Segregation** harmed Black children.

Why was Thurgood Marshall called "Mr. Civil Rights"?

Examining the Primary Source Images!

Directions: Find the five image sets with circles in the bottom right corner. Match the cases to the image sets. Discuss the following question.

1. "How do the images and cases connect to the **civil rights** of people?"



Thurgood Marshall's Most Important Supreme Court Cases

1. **Smith v. Allright (1944):** This case helped to make sure Black people could vote in all parts of the election process.
2. **Morgan v. Virginia (1946):** This case helped stop the segregation of buses and bus terminals throughout the South.

3. ***Sweatt v. Painter (1950)***: This case helped to end school **segregation** in colleges and universities.
4. ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954)***: This case helped stop **segregation** in elementary and high schools.
5. ***NAACP v. Alabama (1958)***: This case helped to protect people who wanted to join organizations like the **NAACP**. They have the freedom to associate with others.

Civil rights are the rights of everyone to have freedom and equality in society. Some civil rights include free speech, voting, education, and the right to participate in society freely.

How did Mr. Marshall help others fight for Civil Rights?

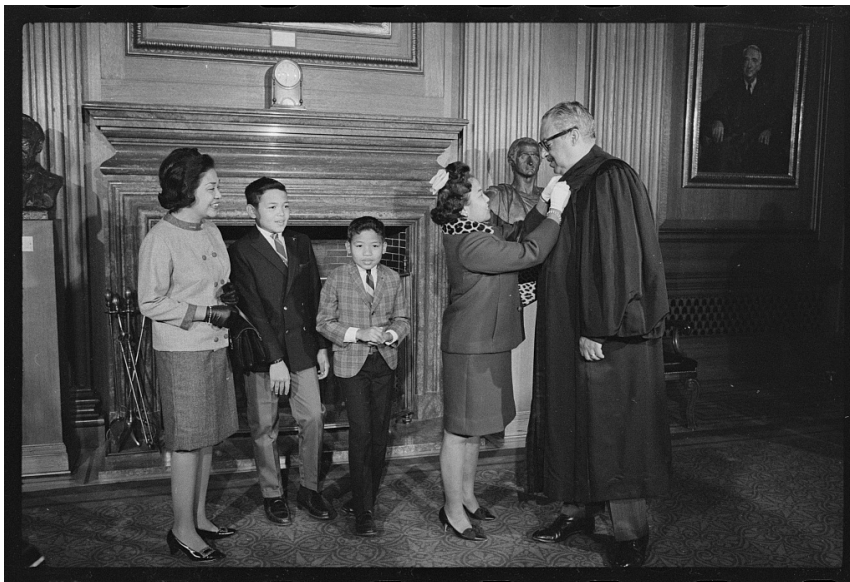
Sometimes, people refused to follow the law even after Mr. Marshall won his cases. Mr. Marshall would go back to court and fight to make sure people followed the law. For example, when schools in Arkansas refused to end segregation, Mr. Marshall went back to court. He sued the governor. He won. President Eisenhower even sent in the military to make sure the law was being followed.



Mr. Marshall's cases helped other people fight for the rights of Black Americans. In the 1960s, many Americans protested to end segregation and discrimination. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders used Thurgood Marshall's victories in court to gain more rights. Thurgood Marshall made sure the law applied to everyone. Leaders, like Dr. King, protested until people followed the

law. Thurgood Marshall made sure the NAACP was ready to help when protesters were arrested. Thurgood Marshall's work made the Civil Rights Movement possible.

In 1964 and 1965, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. These important laws changed the United States. The Civil Rights Act outlawed segregation. The Voting Rights Act helped to protect everyone's right to vote. By 1965, Thurgood Marshall had been fighting for these rights for 35 years.



When Mr. Marshall was 59 years old, President Johnson nominated him to be a **justice** on the Supreme Court. He was the first African American to serve on the court. For many years before, he stood in front of the Supreme Court as a lawyer. He had asked them to uphold the rights of Black

Americans. Now, he would be a judge on the Supreme Court. He helped to protect the constitutional rights of everyone.

The important work of Thurgood Marshall changed America. Today, many Americans do not think about Thurgood Marshall when they hear about the "Civil Rights Movement." However, the hard work of Thurgood Marshall made the Civil Rights Movement possible. Thank you, Mr. Civil Rights!

Why was Thurgood Marshall called “Mr. Civil Rights”?

Directions: Review the key ideas you learned about Justice Thurgood Marshall.

1. Answer the inquiry question with a historical claim.
2. Provide two pieces of evidence to support your historical claim.
3. Pick one image that you think best represents Thurgood Marshall as “Mr. Civil Rights.”

Inquiry Question: Why was Thurgood Marshall called “Mr. Civil Rights”?

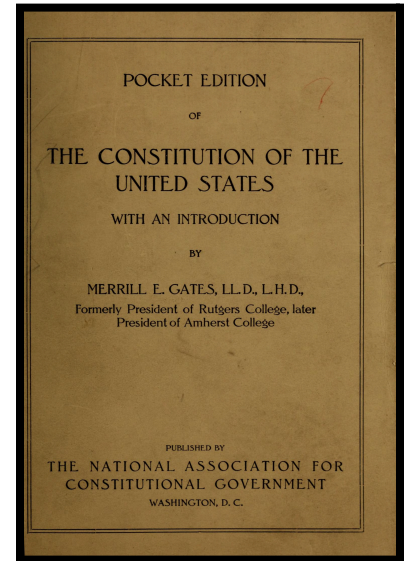
Historical Claim:

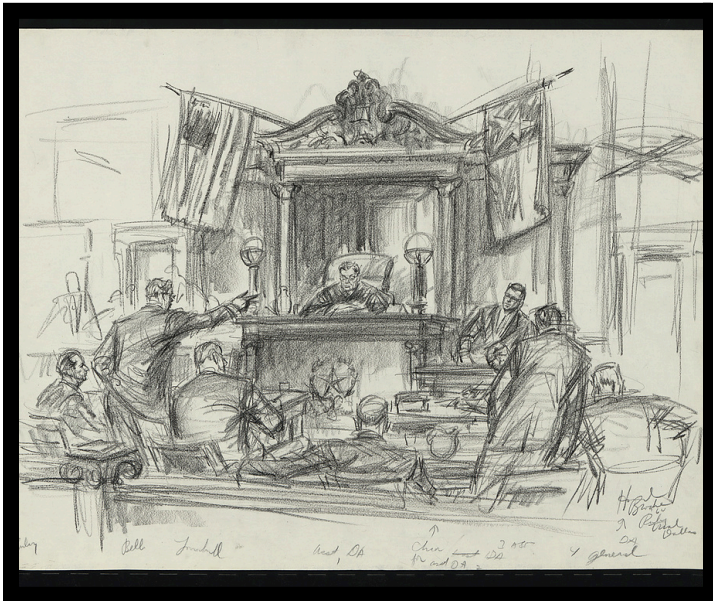
Evidence #1:

Evidence #2:

Which image best shows that Thurgood Marshall was “Mr. Civil Rights”?

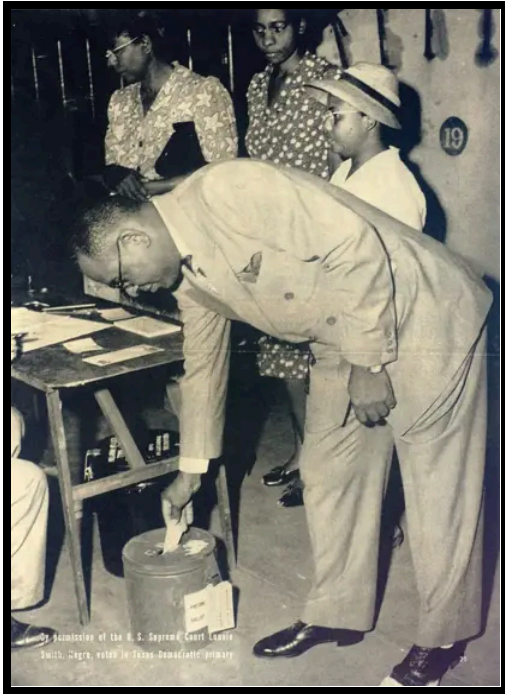
**Printable Student Image
Sets Below (you can also
print the slides)**





A Study of Educational
Inequalities
In
South Carolina





Secretary of the U. S. Supreme Court Lonnie Smith casts vote in Texas Democratic primary

Supreme Court Outlaws Southern Democrat Ban on Negro Primary Voting

Washington, D. C.—In a precedent-smashing decision the Supreme Court of the United States, Monday upheld the right of Negroes to vote in the Texas Democratic primaries.

By an 8 to 1 vote, the Court decided in favor of Lonnie E. Smith of Houston, Texas. Smith sued the Harris County election officials for damages and judgment because he was refused the right to vote in the 1940 Democratic primaries. Justice Stanley Reed read the decision for the majority. He stated:

"The court has ruled out the doctrine that the Democratic party as a private organization has the right to make rules on who should vote in Texas primaries. Texas elections are part of the Federal election and therefore subject to the Federal Constitution."

this day and time only."

Justice Roberts' reference to "intolerance for former justices" is evidently an implication that the more recently appointed justices are more liberal in their attitude toward social legislation and issues affecting the welfare of Negroes.

This decision, with its far reaching implications bearing on the problem of the southern Negro and the vote, is one of the most impor-

Case:



SUPREME COURT REVOKES JIM CROW BUS LAWS

Court Upholds Md. Woman In Bus Ejection

Irene Morgan Wins 11-Month-Old Fight Against Bus Driver

Jackson



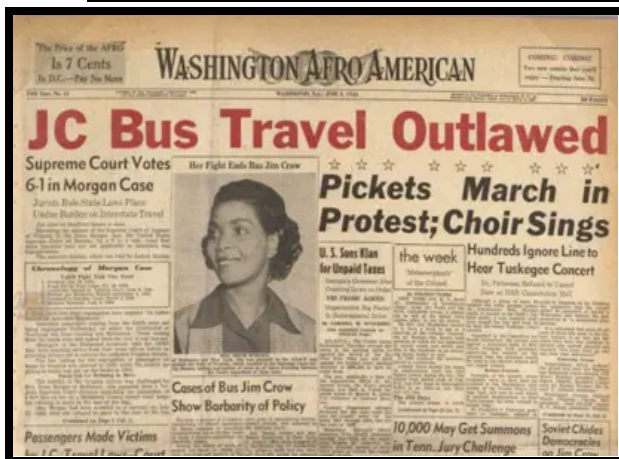
Advocate



VOLUME 7, NUMBER 34

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1946

PRICE SEVEN CENTS



Case:





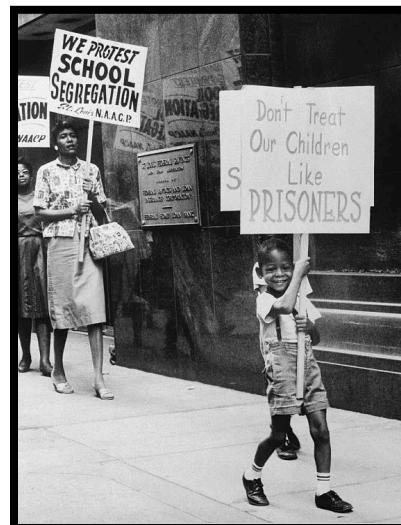
Case:

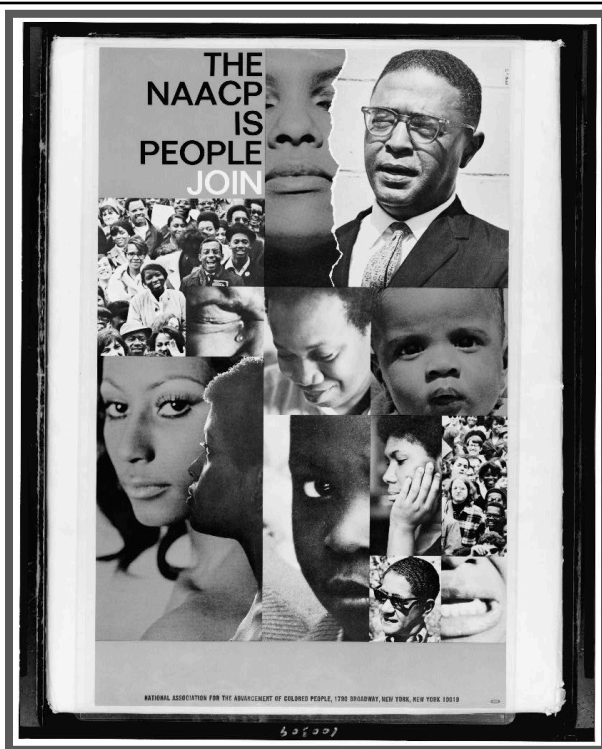


A GREAT NEW DAY FOR AMERICANS
May 17-NAACP Freedom Day!

the day the Supreme Court granted a new birth of freedom to public education
 the day you can do something to win further rights for America's racial minorities

Case:





Freedom of Association
It is beyond debate that freedom to engage in association for the advancement of beliefs and ideas is an inseparable aspect of the "liberty" assured by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which embraces freedom of speech.
 —From U. S. Supreme Court decision in NAACP v. State of Alabama, June 20, 1958

In a unanimous decision, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People need not reveal the names of its rank and file members to any state agency. The same decision lifted the \$100,000 fine levied against the NAACP for refusal to turn its membership lists over to Alabama officials.

The NAACP, the Court held, "has made an uncontested showing that on past occasions revelation of the identity of its rank-and-file members has exposed these members to economic reprisal, loss of employment, threat of physical coercion and other manifestations of public hostility."

The Court said that under these circumstances, the NAACP would be damaged if compelled to reveal the names of its members and would not be able to carry on the program which it has "the right to advocate."

The Court said that if the NAACP were compelled to expose its membership list, people would withdraw from membership and others would not join because of fear of exposure.

The Court then ruled that the NAACP does not have to reveal its membership list to any state agency.

Therefore, no state, including Arkansas, may legally require the NAACP to turn over its membership list. Any state laws requiring the NAACP to do so are unconstitutional. This point has been settled once and for all in the Alabama case and the decision applies to all states.

Anyone can now join and be active in the Association without fear of having his name and activity revealed to hostile state officials or to private persons.

The Court recognized "the vital relation between freedom to associate and privacy in one's associations."

Now is the time to join the Association and add your strength to that of hundreds of thousands of others who have enlisted in the Fight for Freedom for all Americans.

Join your local branch or send your membership fee directly to
NAACP
 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York.

Case:

