

INFORMATIONAL READING COMPREHENSION: BIOGRAPHY OF THURGOOD MARSHALL

Answer the questions about the text. **Sample answers**

1 What is the main idea of the passage?

- a. Thurgood Marshall led a successful career as the head lawyer for the NAACP.
- b. Thurgood Marshall served as the first African American Supreme Court Justice.
- c. Thurgood Marshall achieved many advances for civil rights in the United States.**
- d. Thurgood Marshall argued and won a landmark case against the University of Maryland.

2 According to the text, what types of cases did Marshall take on as a lawyer?

Marshall took on cases involving segregation and civil rights when he was a lawyer.

3 Based on the information in the passage, what were segregation laws?

Segregation laws were laws that required people to be separated based on the color of their skin.

4 Why do you think Marshall fought so tirelessly against segregation? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Marshall grew up in Maryland during a time of legalized segregation, so he experienced discrimination throughout his childhood and again when he wasn't allowed to attend the University of Maryland School of Law. He knew that people were not being treated equally as required by the Constitution. He believed that becoming a lawyer to fight these unfair laws was the best way to correct this injustice.

5 How is the text organized?

- a. problem and solution
- b. compare and contrast
- c. cause and effect
- d. chronological order**

6 Read the sentence from paragraph 2.

Refusing to let this unfair treatment stop him, Marshall went on to attend law school at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and graduated first in his class.

Which character trait is shown by Marshall's actions in this sentence? Circle one and explain your thinking on the lines below.

creativity	determination
respect	independence

When he could not attend the University of Maryland due to his race, Marshall refused to give up on his dream of becoming a lawyer. He applied to Howard University and graduated, not only with his law degree, but at the top of his class.

7 What was the significance of the court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*?

- a. The Supreme Court ruled that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional.**
- b. The Supreme Court developed the rule of "separate but equal" schools for different races.
- c. The Supreme Court changed the curriculum in African American schools to be more fair.
- d. The Supreme Court decided that the protections of the Constitution did not apply to public schools.

8 Based on the text, what are two ways Marshall impacted civil rights in America?

1. He helped end segregation at the University of Maryland.

2. He helped end segregation in public schools by winning *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.