

Ruby Bridges

Facts

Name: Ruby Bridges

Birthday: 8th September

Home: USA (United States of America)



About 60 years ago, Ruby Bridges went to school. She was on the news. Everyone knew her name.

In America at that time, there were different rules for white people and for black people. There were different houses, parks, toilets and even schools. Some schools were only for white children.

Ruby's family were African American. She lived with her mother, father and four brothers and sisters in a city called New Orleans.

In 1954, the rules changed.

Ruby became the first black child to go to an all-white school.

Mrs Henry was her first teacher. She was very kind, but some other people were unhappy about her going to that school. The police helped Ruby and her mother to get to school safely.

Ruby didn't have any friends, but she went to school every day. Soon, other children joined her school. It didn't matter if they were black or white. Everybody played together.

Ruby Bridges was very brave when she was little. Now she is an



Police Officers with Ruby at School

adult, she works hard to make life better and fairer for everyone. In fact, the American President, Bill Clinton, once gave Ruby a special medal for her hard work.

Did You Know...?

An artist called Norman Rockwell painted a famous picture of Ruby's first day at school.

Questions

1. When is Ruby Bridges' birthday? Tick **one**.

- about 60 years ago
 8th October
 8th September

2. What was Ruby the first to do? Tick **one**.

- She was the first person to live in a city called New Orleans.
 She was the first child to be very kind.
 She was the first black child to go to an all-white school.

3. Who helped Ruby and her mother get to school safely? Tick **one**.

- The police
 Her father
 Mrs Henry

4. What did Norman Rockwell do? Tick **one**.

- He played with Ruby at school.
 He was her first teacher.
 He painted a picture to remember her first day.

5. Read these statements about Ruby. Tick **True** or **False**. The first one has been done for you.

	True	False
The rules for black people and white were always the same.		✓
Ruby was a white American.		
Ruby's first teacher was very kind.		
Ruby got a medal from the President.		

Answers

1. When is Ruby Bridges' birthday? Tick **one**.

- about 60 years ago
 8th October
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	True	False
The rules for black people and white were always the same.		✓
Ruby was a white American.		✓
Ruby's first teacher was very kind.	✓	
Ruby got a medal from the President.	✓	

Ruby Bridges

Facts

Name: Ruby Nell Bridges

Born: 8th September 1954

Home: USA (United States of America)

School: William Frantz School



About 60 years ago, a little girl in America called Ruby Bridges went to school. She was on the news and everyone knew her name because she did something very brave.

In America, for a very long time, there were different schools for children. Some schools were only for white children, and some schools were only for black African American children.

There weren't just different schools. There were different toilets, different parks, different cinemas, different swimming pools and even different areas to live.

Ruby's family were African American. Her father worked at a petrol station, and her mother worked at night. Ruby had four younger brothers and sisters. She went to a kindergarten (nursery) that was for black children.

In 1954, the rule of keeping black people and white people apart was stopped. The new rule was to let all children choose where to go to school.

In 1960, at six years old, Ruby became the first black child to go to an all-white school. Mrs Henry was her teacher, and she was very kind to Ruby. She was white, but there were also many



Police Officers with Ruby at School

white people in America who were unhappy. They didn't like the new rule, so some police officers helped Ruby and her mother get to school and back.

At first, Ruby didn't have any friends. She was on her own in the classroom, but she was very brave and went to school every day. Soon, other children joined her school. It didn't matter if they were black or white. Everybody played together and life changed.

We all remember Ruby Bridges because of what she did when she was little. She still works hard to make sure that life is fair for all people. In fact, in 2001, the President of the USA (Bill Clinton) gave Ruby a special medal to say, 'Well done'.

Did You Know...?

An artist called Norman Rockwell painted a famous picture of Ruby's first day at school.

Questions

1. When is Ruby Bridges' birthday? Tick **one**.

- 8th October 2011
 8th October 1954
 8th September 1954

2. Draw lines to match these sentences:

In 1954,

When she was six,

In 2001,

the rule about keeping black and white people apart ended.

Ruby was given a special medal.

Ruby went to school

3. What was Mrs Henry like? Tick **one**.

- She was very unhappy about teaching Ruby.
 She was nice to Ruby.
 She was unkind to Ruby.

4. Look at the **Did You Know...?** section. **Find** and **copy** a word which means 'everybody knows about it'.

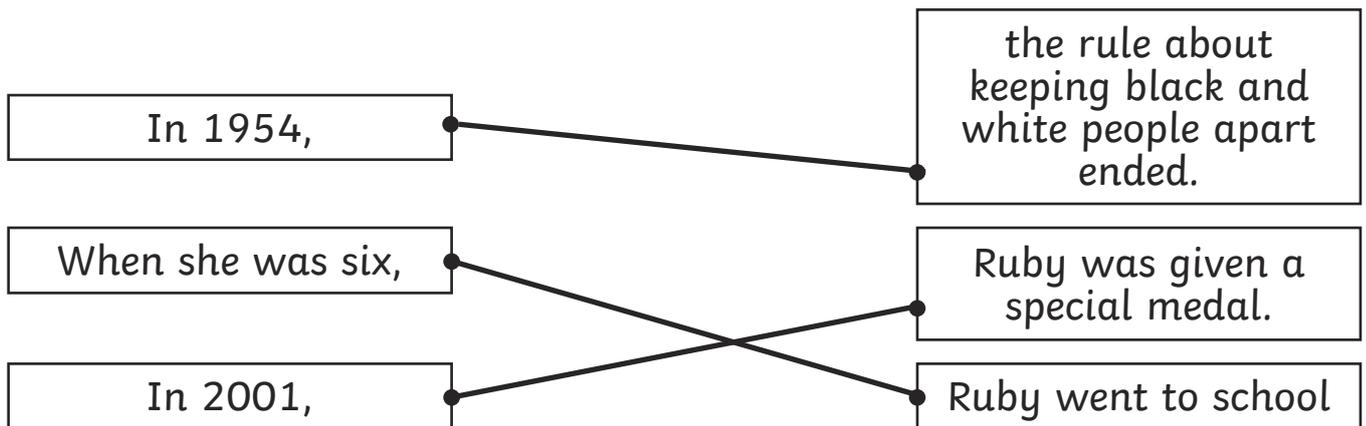
5. What was Ruby given in 2001?

Answers

1. When is Ruby Bridges' birthday? Tick **one**.

- 8th October 2011
 8th October 1954
 8th September 1954

2. Draw lines to match these sentences:



3. What was Mrs Henry like? Tick **one**.

- She was very unhappy about teaching Ruby.
 She was nice to Ruby.
 She was unkind to Ruby.

4. Look at the **Did You Know...?** section. **Find** and **copy** a word which means 'everybody knows about it'.

famous

5. What was Ruby given in 2001?

In 2001 Ruby was given a special Medal.

Ruby Bridges

Facts

Date of Birth: 8th September 1954

Place of Birth: Mississippi, USA

School: William Frantz Elementary School

Home: New Orleans, Louisiana



About 60 years ago, a little girl in America called Ruby Bridges went to school. She was on the news and became very famous.

At that time, there were different schools. Some schools were only for white children, and some were for black children.

There weren't only different schools, there were also different toilets, different parks, different cinemas, different swimming pools and even different areas to live as well, particularly in the southern states of America.

Ruby's family lived in New Orleans, Louisiana, in the south. They were African American. Her parents used to work in the countryside, but when she was little, they all moved to the city. Her father worked at a petrol station, and her mother worked at night to earn money. Ruby was the oldest of five children. As a toddler, she went to a kindergarten (nursery) that was for black children.

In 1954, the year that Ruby was born, the rule was changed. The rule of keeping black people and white people apart was stopped.

Ruby's parents wanted her to go to a good school, but all of the



Police Officers with Ruby at School

black children had to take a test first. Luckily, Ruby passed. Then, when she was six years old, she became the first black child to go to an all-white school.

Ruby had a kind, friendly teacher, called Mrs Henry, who was white. But there were lots of angry white people, too. They didn't like the change, so some police officers looked after Ruby and her mother on the way to school.

At first, Ruby didn't have any friends. She was on her own in the classroom. She had lunch on her own and she even played on her own.

Ruby was courageous and went to school every day. Soon, other children joined her school. It didn't matter if they were black or white because everybody played together. Life changed for African Americans in the 1950s and 1960s.

Ruby Bridges will always be remembered for what she did when she was little. Now she is an adult, she still works hard to make sure that life is fair for all people. In fact, in 2001, the American President Bill Clinton gave Ruby a special medal to say, 'Well done,' for her determination.



Did You Know...?

In 1964, an artist called Norman Rockwell painted a famous picture to celebrate Ruby's first day at school. In 2011, this painting was hung in the White House when Barack Obama was President. He invited Ruby to visit his home and they both admired it together.

Questions

1. When did Ruby start school in America? Tick **one**.

- about 60 years ago
- in 2001
- 8th September 1954

2. What is the name of the all-white school that Ruby joined?

3. Write numbers from 1 to 5 to put the statements in the correct order.

Statement	Number
Ruby took a test to join the all-white school.	
Ruby went to kindergarten for only black children.	
Ruby's first teacher was Mrs Henry.	
Ruby was born in the countryside	
Ruby was given a medal from the president	

4. **Find** and **copy** a word which means that Ruby was very brave.

5. Fill in the missing words.

Ruby Bridges will _____ be remembered for _____ she did
_____ she was little.

6. Do you think Barack Obama was proud of what Ruby Bridges did when she was a child? Explain your answer.

Answers

1. When did Ruby start school in America? Tick **one**.

- about 60 years ago**
 in 2001
 8th September 1954

2. What is the name of the all-white school that Ruby joined?

William Frantz Elementary School

3. Write numbers from 1 to 5 to put the statements in the correct order.

Statement	Number
Ruby took a test to join the all-white school.	3
Ruby went to kindergarten for only black children.	2
Ruby's first teacher was Mrs Henry.	4
Ruby was born in the countryside	1
Ruby was given a medal from the president	5

4. **Find** and **copy** a word which means that Ruby was very brave.
courageous

5. Fill in the missing words.

Ruby Bridges will **always** be remembered for **what** she did **when** she was little.

6. Do you think Barack Obama was proud of what Ruby Bridges did when she was a child? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, showing an understanding that Barack Obama was happy about Ruby's accomplishment, such as: I think he was proud because he hung a painting of her in his home and invited her to see it. I think he was proud of her because it says he 'admired' the painting of Ruby which means he likes it a lot.