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Date _____



Ruby Bridges

Today we're going to talk about Ruby Bridges...in just a minute.

In 1960, parts of the United States were segregated by race. This meant that Black people weren't allowed to use "Whites-only" water fountains and bathrooms. There were "Whites-only" restaurants and sections of buses. The Supreme Court had ruled that schools could no longer be segregated, but many still were.

In New Orleans, William Frantz Elementary School made Black students pass a difficult test to get in. The test was hard on purpose to try to keep the school all-White. But Ruby Bridges, a six-year-old Black girl, passed the test, and the school was forced to let her in. She was one of the first Black children to attend an all-white public school in the South.

On her first day, the president sent guards to keep her safe. Outside the school, an angry mob yelled horrible things at her, but she held her head high and walked bravely into the building. When Ruby arrived at her classroom, there were no other students. All the white parents had pulled their children out of school because they didn't want them to learn alongside Black children. But her teacher was there, and she taught Ruby by herself for months. Slowly, white students started to come back. By the next year, Ruby had both Black and white students in her class. Ruby Bridges showed courage and determination as she fought segregation and racism—a six-year-old hero in the fight for civil rights.

How do you think Ruby Bridges felt walking into school on her first day?