

Shirley Chisholm



Who Was Shirley Chisholm?

Shirley Chisholm was an American politician and educator. A politician is a person whose job it is to help to govern a country.

Shirley was the first Black female member of Congress. Congress is part of the government of the USA. It is where laws are passed.

What Was Shirley's Childhood Like?

Shirley was born on 30th November 1924 in New York City. Her father was called Christopher and he was a factory worker. Her mother's name was Ruby and she was a seamstress.

When Shirley was five years old, she went to live in Barbados with her grandmother.

Where Did Shirley Study?

Shirley attended Girls' High School in Brooklyn until 1942. After that, she went on to study at Brooklyn College. She graduated from there in 1946 with very high scores.



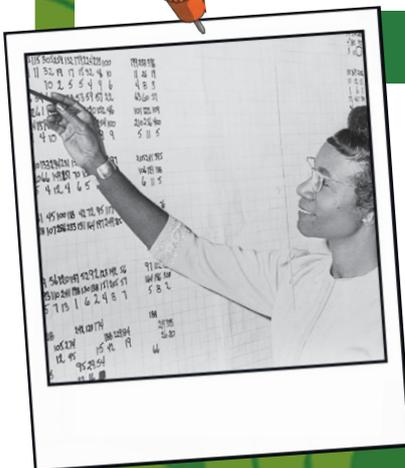
Did You Know...?

Shirley was part of a debate team during her time at Brooklyn College. A debate team discusses a topic and they put forward one point of view.

The team tries to persuade other people to agree with their point of view. Shirley was so good at debating that she won lots of awards.

What Did Shirley Do before Becoming a Politician?

Shirley worked as a nursery school teacher. She was an expert in early childhood education. She used what she knew to help schools across New York City.



Did You Know...?

Shirley teachers thought that she would be a good politician but Shirley thought that being both female and Black would

stop her from doing this. She thought this because Black people and women were not treated fairly at the time.



What Did Shirley Believe In?

Shirley knew that people in her community were experiencing racial and gender inequality. This means that they were not treated equally because of their race and their gender. Shirley joined lots of groups who tried to make sure that everyone was treated equally.

When Was Shirley Elected to Congress?

Shirley wanted to be a member of Congress. She called herself 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' and she told everyone about the things that she believed in.

Shirley was popular among voters. She used the slogan 'Unbought and Unbossed'. Shirley spoke English and Spanish when talking to voters, which is something that other people did not do. Voters supported Shirley and she was chosen for the job in 1968.



Questions

1. In which year was Shirley Chisholm born? Tick one.

- 1924
 1942
 1946
 1968

2. **Shirley knew that people in her community were experiencing racial and gender inequality.** What does this mean? Tick one.

- that there were lots of people in the community
 that lots of people worked together in the community
 that people in the community were not being treated equally
 that everybody was treated fairly in the community

3. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in during Shirley's life.

- She worked as a nursery school teacher.
 She moved to Barbados.
 She attended Brooklyn College.
 She was chosen for a job in Congress.

4. Draw **three** lines and match each term to what it means.

politician

Congress

debate team

a part of the government of the USA

something which discusses a topic and puts forward one point of view

a person whose job it is to help to govern a country

5. Fill in the missing words.

She used the slogan '_____ and _____'.

6. Look at the section called **What Did Shirley Do before Becoming a Politician?**
Find and copy one word which means 'someone who knows a lot about something'.

7. Use evidence from the text to explain why Shirley's teachers might have thought that she would be a good politician.

Answers

1. In which year was Shirley Chisholm born? Tick one.

- 1924
 1942
 1946
 1968

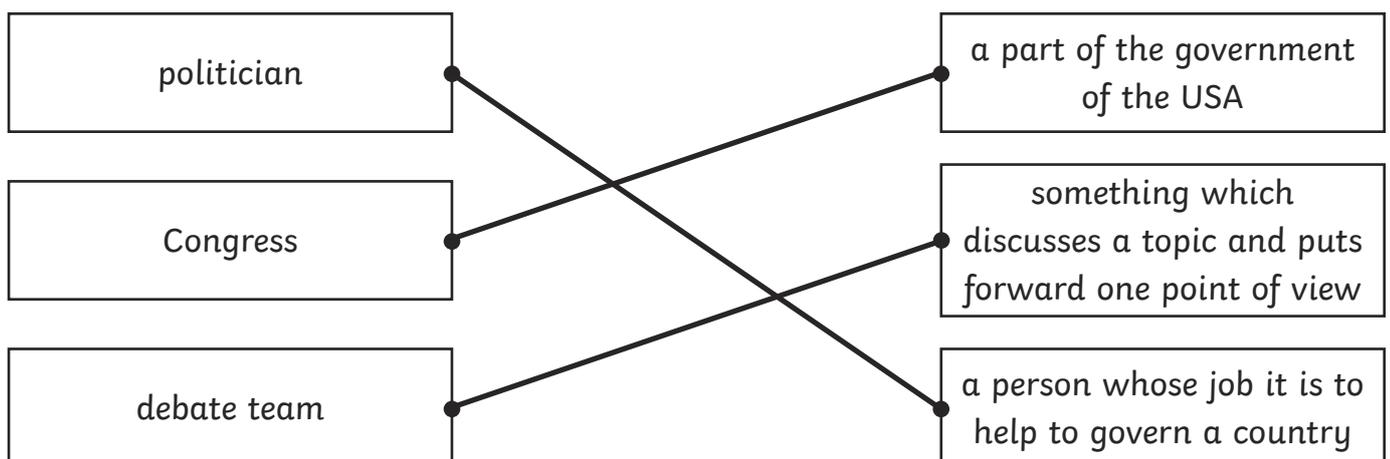
2. Shirley knew that people in her community were experiencing racial and gender inequality. What does this mean? Tick one.

- that there were lots of people in the community
 that lots of people worked together in the community
 that people in the community were not being treated equally
 that everybody was treated fairly in the community

3. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in during Shirley's life.

- 3** She worked as a nursery school teacher.
1 She moved to Barbados.
2 She attended Brooklyn College.
4 She was chosen for a job in Congress.

4. Draw **three** lines and match each term to what it means.



5. Fill in the missing words.

She used the slogan '**Unbought** and **Unbossed**'.

6. Look at the section called **What Did Shirley Do before Becoming a Politician?**
Find and copy one word which means 'someone who knows a lot about something'.

expert

7. Use evidence from the text to explain why Shirley's teachers might have thought that she would be a good politician.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Shirley's teachers might have thought that she would be a good politician because Shirley was so good at debating that she won lots of awards. People who debate put forward an argument and politicians do the same.

Shirley Chisholm

Shirley Chisholm was an American politician and educator. In 1968, she became the first Black female member of Congress in the USA.



What Is Congress?

Congress is part of the government of the USA. They pass laws.

What Is a Politician?

A politician is a person whose job it is to govern a country or area.

Childhood

Shirley Anita St. Hill was born on 30th November 1924 in New York City. Her father was called Christopher and he was a factory worker. Her mother's name was Ruby and she was a seamstress.

When Shirley was five years old, she went to live in Barbados with her grandmother.

Education

Shirley returned to the USA when she was a teenager. She attended Girls' High School in Brooklyn and graduated in 1942. After that, she went on to study at Brooklyn College. She graduated from there in 1946 with very high scores.

Shirley was part of a debate team during her time at Brooklyn College. A debate team discusses a topic and they put forward one point of view. The team tries to persuade other people to agree with their point of view. Shirley was so good at debating that she won lots of awards.



Shirley's teachers thought that she would make a good politician. However, Shirley thought that being both female and Black would stop her from doing this because of prejudice at the time.



Career

Shirley worked as a nursery school teacher. She earned a master's degree while she was working and this made her an expert in early childhood education. She used this knowledge to help schools across New York City.

Shirley knew that people in her community were experiencing racial and gender inequality. Because of this, she joined many groups which campaigned for equality.



Politics

What Is Politics?

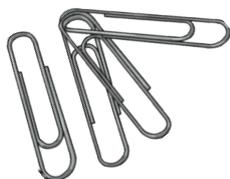
Politics refers to activities that relate to governing a country or area.

In 1964, Shirley began her career in politics. Shirley campaigned for equality in many ways and set up programs to help those in need.

Then, Shirley ran for a position in the United States Congress. She called herself 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' and she showed how passionate she was about the causes she supported.

Shirley was popular among voters. She used the slogan 'Unbought and Unbossed'. Shirley spoke English and Spanish when talking to voters. This was something that the other candidate did not do. People supported Shirley and she was elected with 67% of the votes. She became the first Black woman elected to Congress.

Shirley introduced over 50 new laws while she worked in Congress and she campaigned for racial and gender equality. Because of her actions, Shirley is remembered as someone who fought hard for equal rights for all.



Questions

- Which **two** words appeared in Shirley's campaign slogan? Tick **two**.
 - unbiased
 - unbossed
 - unbelievable
 - unbought

- What was Shirley doing at the same time that she earned her master's degree? Tick one.
 - living in Barbados with her grandmother
 - studying at Brooklyn College
 - working as a nursery school teacher
 - running for a position in the US Congress

- Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that the reader experiences them in.
 - The reader learns what the word 'politics' means.
 - The reader is told the names of Shirley's parents.
 - The text explains to the reader what a 'debate team' is.
 - The reader finds out what Shirley's campaign slogan is.

- Draw **four** lines and match each sub-heading to a summary of what that section of the text discusses.

Childhood	a summary of what Shirley did at school
Education	an introduction to Shirley's first job
Career	a brief look at Shirley's early life
Politics	a summary of how Shirley became a member of Congress

5. Look at the section called **Politics**.

Find and copy one word which shows that Shirley cared a lot about the causes she supported.

6. Why has the author included the first paragraph of this text?

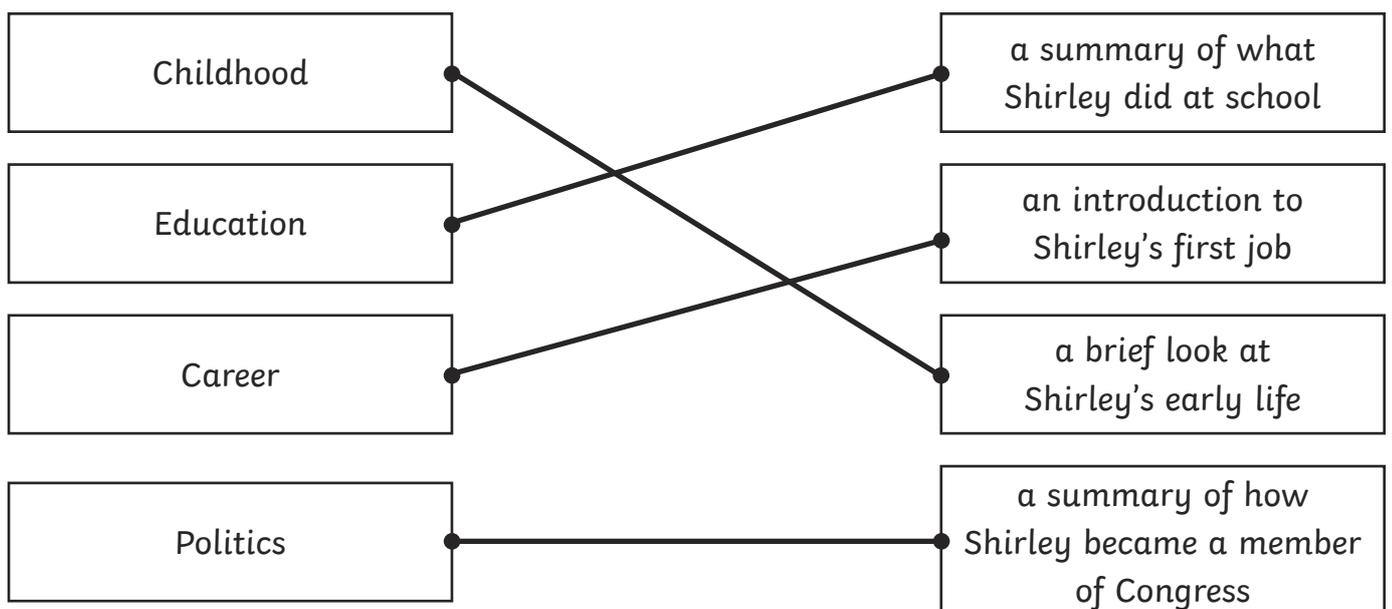
7. How do you think that Shirley might have felt when she was five years old?

Explain your answer using evidence from the text.

8. Summarise how prejudice affected Shirley's life.

Answers

- Which **two** words appeared in Shirley's campaign slogan? Tick **two**.
 - unbiased
 - unbossed**
 - unbelievable
 - unbought**
- What was Shirley doing at the same time that she earned her master's degree? Tick one.
 - living in Barbados with her grandmother
 - studying at Brooklyn College
 - working as a nursery school teacher**
 - running for a position in the US Congress
- Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that the reader experiences them in.
 - 3** The reader learns what the word 'politics' means.
 - 1** The reader is told the names of Shirley's parents.
 - 2** The text explains to the reader what a 'debate team' is.
 - 4** The reader finds out what Shirley's campaign slogan is.
- Draw **four** lines and match each sub-heading to a summary of what that section of the text discusses.



5. Look at the section called **Politics**.

Find and copy one word which shows that Shirley cared a lot about the causes she supported.

passionate

6. Why has the author included the first paragraph of this text?

The author has included the first paragraph to briefly introduce what the text will be about.

7. How do you think that Shirley might have felt when she was five years old?

Explain your answer using evidence from the text.

Pupils' own responses, such as: When Shirley was five years old, she might have felt uncertain because the text says that she went to live in Barbados with her grandmother and this would have been a big change.

8. Summarise how prejudice affected Shirley's life.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Prejudice affected Shirley's life because she thought that she would not be able to be a politician because of it. However, Shirley overcame this and achieved her goals in spite of prejudice.

Shirley Chisholm

Shirley Chisholm was an American **politician, activist** and educator. In 1968, she became the first Black female member of **Congress** in the USA.



Childhood

Shirley Anita St. Hill was born on 30th November 1924 in New York City. Her father was called Christopher and he was a factory worker who was originally from Guyana. Her mother's name was Ruby and she was a seamstress who was originally from Barbados.

When Shirley was five years old, she went to live in Barbados with her grandmother.

Education

Shirley returned to the USA when she was a teenager. She attended Girls' High School in Brooklyn and graduated in 1942. After that, she went on to study at Brooklyn College and she graduated from there in 1946 with very high scores.

During her time at Brooklyn College, Shirley was part of a debate team. Debate teams discuss a subject and they put forward an argument. The team tries to convince people to vote in support of their argument. Shirley was so good at debating that she won lots of awards.

Shirley's teachers thought that she should think about a career in **politics**. However, Shirley thought that being both female and Black would stop her from doing this because of prejudice at the time.



Career



Shirley began her career as a nursery school teacher. While working, she earned a master's degree from Columbia University in 1951. This made her an expert in early childhood education and she used this knowledge to help schools across New York City.

Shirley knew that people in her community were experiencing racial and gender inequality. Because of this, she joined many groups which campaigned for equality.

Political Beginnings

In 1964, Shirley began her career in politics. Shirley campaigned for equality in many ways and set up schemes to help those who needed it.

Then, Shirley ran for a position in the United States Congress. She called herself 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' and she showed how passionate she was about the causes she supported.

Shirley was popular among voters and she became one of the final two candidates. It is reported that the other candidate said that Shirley would be unable to do the job because she was female. Shirley passionately explained how she could represent those, like herself, who had never been fairly represented before. She used the slogan 'Unbought and Unbossed'.

Shirley used her fluency in English and Spanish to talk to voters. This was something that the other candidate did not do. People believed in Shirley and she was elected with 67% of the votes. She became the first Black woman elected to Congress.

As a congresswoman, Shirley introduced over 50 new laws and she actively campaigned for racial and gender equality. Because of her actions, Shirley is remembered as an influential activist who believed in equality for all.



Glossary

activist: A person who campaigns to try to bring about change.

Congress: Part of the government of the USA.

politician: A person whose job it is to govern a country or area.

politics: Activities that relate to governing a country or area.



Questions

1. When did Shirley move to Barbados? Tick one.

- when she was born
- at five years old
- as a teenager
- as an adult

2. These four words are listed in the glossary. Number the words from 1-4 to show the order that they are first mentioned in the text.

- politics
- activist
- Congress
- politician

3. Look at the section called **Education**.

Find and copy one word which means 'successfully completed a course'.

4. As a result of prejudice, which **two** things did Shirley initially think would stop her from entering a career in politics?

- _____
- _____

5. Find and copy the slogan that Shirley used.

6. She called herself 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' and she showed how passionate she was about the causes she supported.

What impression does the phrase 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' give you about Shirley?

7. Summarise what a debate team does in 15 words or fewer.

8. Give **two** words to describe Shirley Chisholm and use evidence from the text to explain why you have given them.

Answers

1. When did Shirley move to Barbados? Tick one.

- when she was born
- at five years old**
- as a teenager
- as an adult

2. These four words are listed in the glossary. Number the words from 1-4 to show the order that they are first mentioned in the text.

- 4** politics
- 3** activist
- 2** Congress
- 1** politician

3. Look at the section called **Education**.

Find and copy one word which means 'successfully completed a course'.

graduated

4. As a result of prejudice, which **two** things did Shirley initially think would stop her from entering a career in politics?

Accept any two of the following: being female; her gender; her sex; being a Black person; her race; the colour of her skin.

5. Find and copy the slogan that Shirley used.

Unbought and Unbossed

6. **She called herself 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' and she showed how passionate she was about the causes she supported.**

What impression does the phrase 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' give you about Shirley?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The phrase 'fighting Shirley Chisholm' gives me the impression that Shirley was fierce and determined when standing up for the causes that she believed in.

7. Summarise what a debate team does in 15 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: A debate team discusses a subject and puts forward a persuasive argument.

8. Give **two** words to describe Shirley Chisholm and use evidence from the text to explain why you have given them.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would use the word 'intelligent' to describe Shirley because the text says that she graduated 'with very high scores'. I would also describe her as 'caring' because she set up schemes to help people who were in need of help.