

Ruby Bridges

Imagine that you are a little girl, just six-years-old, and police marshals had to escort you to school. That is what happened to Ruby Bridges. Ruby was an African American and she lived in New Orleans, Louisiana. When Ruby was born, schools in parts of the south were **segregated**. African Americans and white children went to separate schools. Ruby Bridges was one of the first African American students to attend the all-white William Frantz Public School.



Ruby Bridges being escorted to school, 1960

U.S. leaders worked for many years to end segregation. They believed that all Americans should have the same rights. These are called **civil rights**. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court made a ruling that schools should not be segregated, but many schools in the south ignored the ruling.



Ruby Bridges and her teacher, Barbara Henry, 42 years later

When Ruby arrived at school, people were protesting outside of the building. Ruby never made it to class that day. She spent her time in the principal's office, watching the angry crowd. Ruby made it to class the second day. The parents of Ruby's classmates did not want their children to be in a room with Ruby, so Ruby and her teacher, Mrs. Henry, were the only ones in the classroom. Mrs. Henry taught Ruby that day and for the remainder of the school year.