

A Primary Changes

Connect voting rights, election rules, and the 1946 governor's race.

SS8H10.c "Describe the relationship between the end of the white primary and the 1946 governor's race."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that explains how the white primary ended, circle two details showing how that decision changed the governor's race, and put a star beside one detail showing why the change did not determine the winner.

A New Voice in the Primary

- ① Before 1946, Georgia's Democratic Party used a white primary, which barred Black citizens from voting in its primary elections. Because Georgia was dominated by the Democratic Party, winning its primary usually meant winning the office. Primus E. King, a Black veteran from Columbus, challenged this exclusion after he was denied a ballot. In April 1946, a federal district court in Georgia ruled in *King v. Chapman* that the white primary violated the Constitution. The decision opened Democratic primaries to Black voters.
- ② The ruling arrived before the 1946 Democratic primary for governor. Candidates Eugene Talmadge and James V. Carmichael now had to compete in a primary that included eligible Black voters. Many newly participating Black voters supported Carmichael, while Talmadge made appeals to white voters and defended segregation. The Democratic primary mattered enormously because it was the main contest for governor in Georgia. For the first time, Black Georgians could try to influence that decisive stage of the election.
- ③ Talmadge won the Democratic nomination under Georgia's county-unit system, even though Carmichael received more individual votes statewide. The system gave extra power to votes in rural counties, where Talmadge was strong, and it limited the influence of urban voters, including many Black voters. Therefore, ending the white primary changed who could take part in the governor's race, but it did not guarantee that Black voters' preferred candidate would win. The case exposed both a new voting right and remaining barriers to equal political power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What election practice did the federal district court end in *King v. Chapman*, and what did the ruling allow Black voters to do?

2 Why did being able to vote in the Democratic primary matter so much in Georgia's governor's race?

3 How did many Black voters and Eugene Talmadge respond differently to the newly open primary?

4 How did the county-unit system help explain why Talmadge won even though Carmichael received more individual votes statewide?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences explaining the relationship between the end of the white primary and the 1946 governor's race. State one change the court ruling made, then use two details from the passage to explain why that change did not decide the winner.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that explains how the white primary ended, circle two details showing how that decision changed the governor's race, and put a star beside one detail showing why the change did not determine the winner. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What election practice did the federal district court end in <i>King v. Chapman</i> , and what did the ruling allow Black voters to do?	The court ended the white primary. The ruling allowed Black voters to vote in Democratic primaries.
2	Why did being able to vote in the Democratic primary matter so much in Georgia's governor's race?	Georgia was dominated by the Democratic Party, so winning the Democratic primary usually meant winning the office.
3	How did many Black voters and Eugene Talmadge respond differently to the newly open primary?	Many newly participating Black voters supported James V. Carmichael. Talmadge appealed to white voters and defended segregation.
4	How did the county-unit system help explain why Talmadge won even though Carmichael received more individual votes statewide?	The county-unit system gave extra power to rural counties, where Talmadge was strong. It reduced the influence of urban voters, including many Black voters.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The end of the white primary allowed Black Georgians to vote in the Democratic primary for governor. Many of these voters supported James V. Carmichael, so the ruling changed who could influence the main election contest. However, Eugene Talmadge won because the county-unit system gave added power to rural counties where he had strong support.

Accept responses that connect the court decision to Black participation in the Democratic primary and explain that the county-unit system limited the effect of that new participation. Students may describe Carmichael as the candidate supported by many Black voters and Talmadge as the winner of the nomination.