Barriers Before the Court

Trace how court rulings challenged segregation in daily life.

USH.C.7.1.B "Describe the legal attacks on segregation by the NAACP and its attorney Thurgood Marshall, summarizing major Supreme Court's rulings (e.g., Sipuel v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma, Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the barrier challenged in each case, circle what the Supreme Court decided, and number the cases in order to trace how legal attacks on segregation spread.

From Law School to Daily Life

1 In 1946, Ada Lois Sipuel applied to the University of Oklahoma's law school. The school refused her because she was Black, and Oklahoma offered no law school for Black students. The NAACP, with attorney Thurgood Marshall, challenged that barrier in court. In Sipuel v. Board of Regents (1948), the Supreme Court ruled that Oklahoma had to provide her a legal education on equal terms with white applicants and as soon as it provided one to them. The decision did not explicitly order the school to admit her. It did show how the NAACP used individual lawsuits to attack unequal opportunities.

2 The NAACP then targeted the rule that kept Black and white children in separate public schools. Its lawyers gathered cases from several states, including one from Topeka, Kansas. Marshall argued that separation itself damaged equal education, even where school buildings and supplies appeared similar. In Brown v. Board of Education (1954), the Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation in public schools violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court declared that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal. Brown rejected the legal basis for segregated public schools, but a court ruling did not instantly change every classroom. Communities still resisted integration.

3 The fight against segregation also reached businesses and marriage, though the NAACP and Marshall did not argue every case. After Congress banned racial discrimination in many public accommodations, the owner of a motel that served interstate travelers challenged the law. In Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States (1964), the Supreme Court upheld that part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 under Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce. In Loving v. Virginia (1967), the Court struck down state laws banning interracial marriage, citing equal protection and due process. These rulings attacked barriers in different places: a traveler's lodging and a couple's choice to marry.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What barrier did the NAACP and Marshall challenge in Sipuel, and what did the Supreme Court require Oklahoma to do?

2. How did Brown challenge the rule of separate public schools, and what did the Supreme Court decide?

3. How did the Heart of Atlanta Motel ruling support an attack on segregation in travel, and what power supported the law?

4. What barrier did Loving remove, and what constitutional protections did the Supreme Court cite?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label showing how court challenges reached beyond schools. Connect one education ruling to either the motel or marriage ruling, explain what each decision changed, and distinguish the NAACP and Marshall's campaign from the later case.

ANSWER KEY

Barriers Before the Court

HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.7.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the barrier challenged in each case, circle what the Supreme Court decided, and number the cases in order to trace how legal attacks on segregation spread. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What barrier did the NAACP and Marshall challenge in Sipuel, and what did the Supreme Court require Oklahoma to do?	**Oklahoma denied Sipuel admission to its law school because she was Black and offered no law school for Black students. The Court required the state to provide her a legal education on equal terms with white applicants and without delay.**
2	How did Brown challenge the rule of separate public schools, and what did the Supreme Court decide?	**Marshall argued that separating students damaged equal education. The Court ruled that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause and that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal.**
3	How did the Heart of Atlanta Motel ruling support an attack on segregation in travel, and what power supported the law?	**The Court upheld the Civil Rights Act's ban on racial discrimination in public accommodations, including a motel serving interstate travelers. Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce supported the law.**
4	What barrier did Loving remove, and what constitutional protections did the Supreme Court cite?	**The Court struck down state bans on interracial marriage, citing equal protection and due process.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Marshall and the NAACP challenged Oklahoma's refusal to give Ada Lois Sipuel an equal chance to study law. The Supreme Court required the state to provide her a legal education on equal terms and without delay. Years later, the Court upheld a ban on racial discrimination at a motel serving interstate travelers in Heart of Atlanta Motel. The NAACP and Marshall did not argue that motel case, but both rulings challenged barriers in daily life.

Accept accurate descriptions of each ruling in students' own words. For the museum label, look for two distinct settings and a clear distinction between the NAACP and Marshall's education campaign and the later ruling.