

Votes, Schools, Courts

Tracing Virginia's struggle over voting rights and public schools.

VS.11.a "explaining the social and political events connected to disenfranchisement of African American voters in Virginia in the early 20th century, desegregation, court decisions, and Massive Resistance..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each rule or action that limited African American voting or school desegregation. Circle each court decision, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside the circled decisions in time order.

Virginia Changes Through Courts

- ① In 1902, Virginia adopted a new state constitution. Its poll tax and reading or understanding requirements made voting much harder for African American men. Officials could decide whether a person understood a passage, so the rules were used unfairly. These barriers, called disenfranchisement, took political power from many Black citizens. Fewer voters could choose leaders or influence laws.
- ② During the 1950s, Black families challenged separate public schools. In Prince Edward County, Virginia, student Barbara Johns helped lead a 1951 protest against the unequal Moton High School. Lawyers turned the students' case, *Davis v. County School Board*, into a challenge to segregation. It became one of five cases decided together in *Brown v. Board of Education*. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that segregated public schools were unconstitutional.
- ③ Many Virginia leaders opposed the *Brown* decision. Senator Harry F. Byrd Sr. supported Massive Resistance, a plan to avoid desegregation. Virginia passed laws that cut funds from, or closed, schools ordered to desegregate. In 1959, courts struck down key Virginia laws. Later, *Green v. County School Board* involved Charles Green's family in New Kent County. In 1968, the Supreme Court said "freedom-of-choice" plans were not enough when schools stayed segregated.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How did Virginia's 1902 voting requirements disenfranchise many African American men?

2 What Virginia school case became part of Brown v. Board of Education, and what did the Supreme Court rule in 1954?

3 What was Massive Resistance, and what happened to key Virginia laws in 1959?

4 According to Green v. County School Board, why were freedom-of-choice plans not enough?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write exactly three sentences that explain a cause-and-effect connection between Virginia's Massive Resistance actions and a court response. Include one effect of the court response.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each rule or action that limited African American voting or school desegregation. Circle each court decision, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside the circled decisions in time order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Virginia's 1902 voting requirements disenfranchise many African American men?	The poll tax and reading or understanding requirements made voting difficult, and officials could use the rules unfairly.
2	What Virginia school case became part of Brown v. Board of Education, and what did the Supreme Court rule in 1954?	Davis v. County School Board became one of the Brown cases. The Supreme Court ruled that segregated public schools were unconstitutional.
3	What was Massive Resistance, and what happened to key Virginia laws in 1959?	Massive Resistance was a plan to avoid desegregation, including laws that cut funds from or closed ordered-to-desegregate schools. Courts struck down key Virginia laws in 1959.
4	According to Green v. County School Board, why were freedom-of-choice plans not enough?	They were not enough when schools stayed segregated.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Virginia used school-closing laws as part of Massive Resistance to avoid desegregation. Courts struck down key Virginia laws in 1959. This court action removed a barrier to desegregation.

Accept any accurate three-sentence cause-and-effect explanation that names Massive Resistance actions, the 1959 court response, and a reasonable effect on desegregation. Students may use their own wording for disenfranchisement, segregation, and court rulings.