

## Before You Read

### Rosa

#### Connect to the Poem

Think about a time when you faced a great challenge. How did you act? How did you feel?

**Quickwrite** Freewrite for a few minutes about a time you faced a challenge with courage. How did you stay calm and composed?

#### Build Background

From the late 1800s into the 1960s, a system of laws and practices known as segregation kept African Americans separate from white people in the American South.

- In Montgomery, Alabama, African American passengers had to ride in the back of public buses. They also had to give up their seats if white passengers wanted them.
- Rosa Parks was an African American woman who lived in Montgomery, Alabama. On December 1, 1955, she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger.
- In protest, African Americans in Montgomery stopped riding the buses. In 1956, the United States Supreme Court ended segregation on the buses.

#### Set Purposes for Reading

##### **BO** BIG Question

As you read, notice the descriptions of Rosa. Ask yourself, whom does Rosa count on for help?

##### **Literary Element** Characterization

A character is a person in a literary work. **Characterization** is the method an author uses to develop the personality of a character. In **direct characterization**, the narrator or speaker—the voice of the poem—makes direct statements about a character's personality. In **indirect characterization**, the author reveals a character's personality through the character's words and actions and through what other characters think and say about the character.

As you read, ask yourself, what does the speaker tell me about Rosa Parks? How does the speaker describe Rosa?

#### Learning Objectives

For pages 104–106

In studying this text, you will focus on the following objective:

**Literary Study:** Analyzing characterization.

#### Meet Rita Dove



*"I see poetry as the root of all writing."*

—Rita Dove

**Poet Laureate** Rita Dove had the special honor of serving two terms as Poet Laureate of the United States. She is best known for her poetry, but she has also written short stories, a novel, several essays, and a play. "Rosa" appeared in a book of poetry published in 1986. Rita Dove was born in 1952.



Literature Online

**Author Search** For more about Rita Dove, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code GL29763u1.

# Rosa

Rita Dove



*Civil Rights Activist*, 1983. Marshall D. Rumbaugh. Painted limewood, height: 33 in. National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC. Gift of Barry Bingham.

How she sat there,  
the time right inside a place  
so wrong it was ready.

5 That trim name with  
its dream of a bench  
to rest on. Her sensible coat.

Doing nothing was the doing:  
the clean flame of her gaze  
carved by a camera flash.

10 How she stood up  
when they bent down to retrieve  
her purse.° That courtesy.

12 When Rosa Parks was arrested, a police officer picked up her purse and carried it to the police car for her.

#1

**Characterization** What do the details in lines 4–6 tell you about Rosa Parks?

**BQ** **BIG Question** #2

What did Rosa Parks teach others about standing up for oneself?

## After You Read

### Respond and Think Critically

1. In the poem, where is Rosa Parks? [Recall]
2. Restate the first stanza in your own words. [Paraphrase]
3. What does the speaker suggest by pointing out Rosa's "courtesy" in the fourth stanza? [Infer]
4. Think about the way Rosa appears in this poem. What do you find most impressive about her? Explain. [Connect]
5. **Literary Element** Characterization Is the description of Rosa an example of direct or indirect characterization? Is it both? Support your answer with details from the poem. [Analyze]
6. **BQ** **BIG Question** In this poem, how do Rosa's actions show that she's a person others can count on? Explain. [Analyze]

### Spelling Link

**Formation of Compound Words** A compound word is made by joining two words to make a new word. Compound words can be spelled closed (as in *birthday*), hyphenated (as in *worn-out*), or open (as in *high school*). Keep the original spelling of both words, no matter how the words begin or end. If you aren't sure about the spelling of a compound word, check a dictionary.

#### Examples

surf + board = surfboard      heavy + duty = heavy-duty  
count + down = countdown      living + room = living room

**Practice** On a sheet of paper, combine the words below to make as many compound words as you can. Share your answers with a partner.

home	down	room	wagon	wind
work	band	up	run	fall

### Writing

**Write a Journal Entry** Rosa Parks's actions helped to put an end to the unfair system of segregation. Think about a time that you, or someone you know, stood up for what was right or fair. What were you fighting for? What happened when you stood up? Tell the story in a journal entry. Use methods of direct and indirect characterization to describe the people you write about.

### TIP

#### Inferring

To answer question 3, you have to use your knowledge and clues from the poem to make a good guess. Here are some tips to help you make an inference.

- Consider what you know about Rosa Parks. What happened to her when she refused to give up her seat?
- Read the last stanza carefully, looking for clues. What does Parks do in these lines? What else happens?
- Combine the clues you found with what you already know. Why do you think the speaker mentions Parks's "courtesy"?

#### FOLDABLES Study Organizer

Keep track of your ideas about the **BIG Question** in your unit Foldable.

GO  
ON

Literature Online

#### Selection Resources

For Selection Quizzes, eFlashcards, and Reading-Writing Connection activities, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code GL29763u1.

