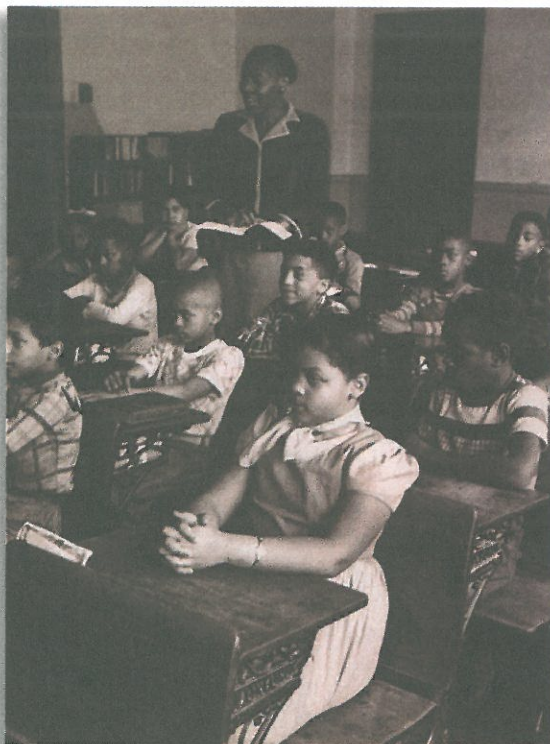


# LINDA BROWN GOES TO SCHOOL

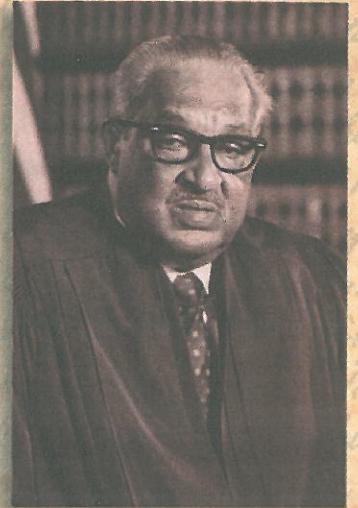
Seven-year-old Linda Brown was an African American. She lived in a segregated world in the 1950s. That meant that, in her hometown of Topeka, Kansas, Linda had to go to a school for African American children. The problem was, the African American school was far from her home. To get there, this little girl had to cross railroad tracks. Plus, she had to ride a bus for a long time every morning and afternoon.

Linda's father knew that there was an all-white school much closer to the Brown home. So, he decided to sue the Topeka Board of Education. He hoped to force the Board to let his daughter go to the school nearby.



Linda Brown's father sued the Topeka Board of Education so that she could go to a school closer to her home.

Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall



## Thurgood Marshall

Thurgood Marshall was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1908. He became a lawyer in 1933. In 1938, he went to work for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (the NAACP). It was while he worked for the NAACP that he helped argue the case for school integration before the Supreme Court.

In 1967, President Lyndon Johnson appointed Thurgood Marshall to the United States Supreme Court. Justice Marshall became the first African American to sit on the Court. He remained a voice for equal rights until he retired from the Supreme Court in 1991.

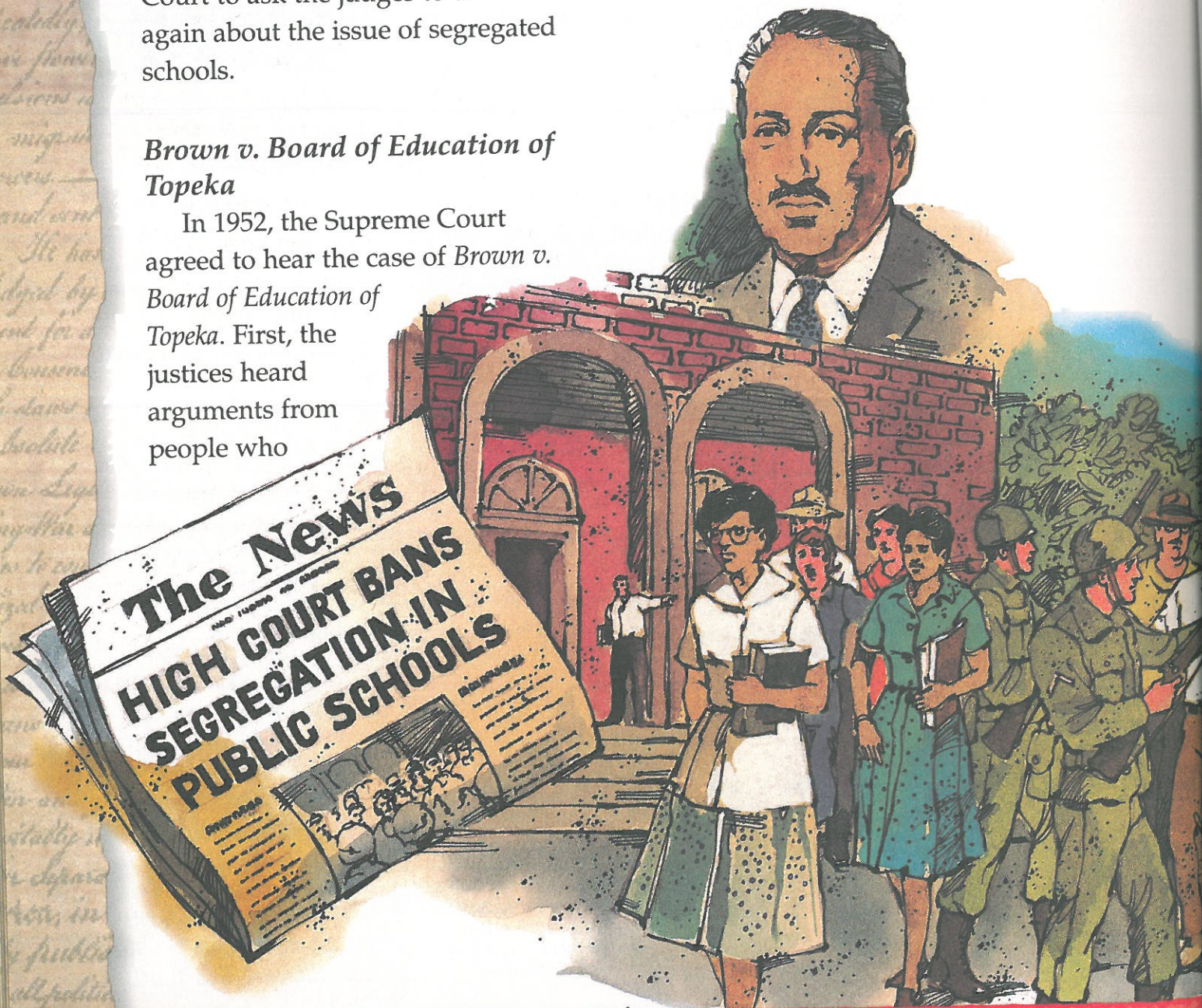


The Topeka Board of Education would not change its mind. After all, it was obeying the law. Over 50 years earlier, the Supreme Court had ruled that “separate but equal” schools were legal. Mr. Brown—and many, many others, both black and white—did not think that Supreme Court decision was a fair one. He took his case before the Court to ask the judges to think again about the issue of segregated schools.

were for segregated schools, then from people who were against them. For example, Robert Figg, an attorney for the defense, told the Court that “states have the right to separate the races in public schools. . . . It is a normal and not an abnormal procedure.” On the other side, lawyer Thurgood Marshall argued that “The Negro child is

### *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*

In 1952, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. First, the justices heard arguments from people who





made to go to an inferior school; he is branded in his own mind inferior. This sets up a road block to his mind which prevents his ever feeling he is equal." After all the lawyers had a chance to speak, the Supreme Court justices spent months and months thinking about the issue.

Finally, on Monday, May 17, 1954, just after noon, the Supreme Court announced its decision. It said, "We conclude, unanimously, that in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently [by their nature] unequal." In other words, Linda Brown should be allowed to attend an all-white school. In fact, according to the Supreme Court, there shouldn't be any all-white or all-black schools.

You might think that this ruling changed everything right away. Eventually, it did, but it took years for some people to follow what the Supreme Court said. In fact, it took the federal government to force some schools to let African Americans attend.

---

*The National Guard prevented African American students from attending an all-white school in Little Rock, Arkansas, so U.S. troops had to be sent in by the president.*

## Trouble at Central High School

The Little Rock, Arkansas, School Board decided to try to support the Supreme Court's decision. It would let nine African American children attend the all-White Central High School.

But Arkansas's governor, Orval Faubus, had different ideas. He warned that there would be trouble if the nine students tried to go to Central High. He even called out the National Guard to surround the school. The governor said the National Guard was there to keep order. However, what the National Guard did was keep the African American students from entering the school.

Now, it had come to the point that the federal government had to get involved. A governor could not defy a Supreme Court ruling. So, President Dwight Eisenhower sent 1,000 U.S. troops to Little Rock. On September 24, 1957, many of these soldiers surrounded Central High. Still other soldiers escorted those brave African American children through jeering crowds and into the school. For the rest of the year, soldiers protected the African American students as they went to their classes.





The first African American to graduate from Central High School was Ernest Green. His graduation day was May 29, 1958. Ernest later remembered that day.

He said, "When they called my name, there was nothing, just the

name, and then there was eerie silence. Nobody clapped. But I figured they didn't have to . . . because after I got that diploma, that was it. I had accomplished what I had come there for."

### Show What You Know

Find all these terms in the word search puzzle on this page. Words can be found written up, down, across, diagonally, or backwards. Then, in the space below the word search, write a sentence using at least three of the terms you have found in the puzzle.

Linda Brown    courage    Topeka    Supreme Court  
 separate but equal    brave    NAACP  
 Thurgood Marshall    school    board of education

N T H U R G O O D M A R S H A L L D  
 O A S E P A R A T E B U T E Q U A L  
 B R A M U B R A V E Y A O Q U T D L  
 H I S C H O O L I N E R P B A G B E  
 G O N L P O A S U M T D E I L O R F  
 L H L I N D A B R O W N K C I O O L  
 T R U O C E M E R P U S A Q N D D Y  
 N P B O A R D O F E D U C A T I O N  
 C O U R A G E N M O R B W H E A D L

---



---