

# It's Her Story: Shirley Chisholm — A Graphic Novel



## TEACHER'S NOTES

**Shirley Chisholm** was the first Black woman elected to the United States Congress, where she served for seven terms. She worked to improve the lives of children in need and was an outspoken champion of women's rights. In 1972, she was the first Black person ever to seek the nomination of President of the United States from a major party.

It's Her Story: Shirley Chisholm

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Illustrated by Markia Jenai

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Ages 7 to 10

48 pages

Hardcover, 218 x 157 mm

## DISCUSSION

Ask these questions to the class as a whole or have students discuss in small groups.

1. Shirley Chisholm said, "I want to be remembered as a catalyst for change in America." Look up "catalyst." What does it mean in Shirley's sentence? (A person who causes change.)
2. Based on Shirley's life, what skills and traits are needed to be a catalyst for change?
3. On p. 15 Shirley says she needs to see how to help people in her Brooklyn neighbourhood. On p. 20 she mentions how she listens to families and workers.
  - a. What is empathy? (The ability to understand people's feelings, needs, and hopes, even if they are very different from your own.)
  - b. Where in the book do you see Shirley showing empathy for others?

## CRITICAL THINKING CONNECTION

Remind students that, throughout her life, Shirley sometimes followed rules and sometimes broke them. Sometimes she used new rules to break old rules!

1. Review with students the rules Shirley encountered or made up herself (pages 9, 15–17, and 18–19, as well as pages 34 and 38).
2. As a class or in small groups, ask students to discuss: Why are rules needed or helpful? Are there times when they are not helpful?
3. Create a handout like the one pictured. Have each student record three rules they must follow in school or at home, and then develop three rules of their own (for example, "Only be friends with nice people," "Never stop trying to get to the next game level," or "Knowledge is power").
4. Come together as a class for a guided discussion.
  - a. In what ways are your two sets of rules the same? In what ways are they different?
  - b. How is it that sometimes two different sets of rules can both be useful? Do you find one set of your rules more "correct" or more useful than the other?



## Rules for Home/School

1.

2.

3.

## My Rules

1.

2.

3.

## LANGUAGE ARTS CONNECTION

Shirley Chisholm's presidential campaign slogan, "Unbought and Unbossed," captured who she was, and why she was different from other candidates. It was also catchy. In this activity students will come up with a slogan for someone they admire.

1. As a class or in small groups, have students look at the following presidential campaign slogans and discuss the language techniques that help make them catchy or effective.

Slogan	Subject	Techniques
Unbought and Unbossed	Shirley Chisholm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• repetition of sounds (un- ; bò)</li><li>• repetition of words or syllables (un-)</li><li>• contrast (turning negatives into positives)</li></ul>
Honest Old Abe	Abraham Lincoln	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• assonance (repeated vowel sounds)</li><li>• rhythm (three words in a series)</li></ul>
Patriotism, Protection, and Prosperity	William McKinley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• alliteration (repeated beginning consonant sounds)</li><li>• rhythm (series of three words) alliteration</li></ul>
A Leader, for a Change	Jimmy Carter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• double meaning of word or phrase</li></ul>

Note that each of these slogans also tells the audience something important about the candidate's character or essence (as opposed to, for example, "I like Ike," which uses rhyme as a technique, but doesn't communicate Eisenhower's outlook or work).

2. Tell students that they will come up with a slogan for someone they admire that captures **who that person is** and **why they are special**. Students may choose a public figure or someone they know personally.
3. Have students create a poster featuring a photo or drawing of the person and the slogan. If you wish, have each student speak briefly about the person and how the slogan captures them.

