

Shirley Chisholm

(February 2020)

Shirley Chisholm began her career as a teacher and later went into politics to help the U.S. change and progress. With hard work and trust in herself, she became the first black woman elected to Congress.

Shirley was born in NY in 1924. Her mom and dad were both immigrants from the island of Barbados. They both had to work, so Shirley went to live with her grandmother back in Barbados in 1929. Shirley went to a very demanding school there which was a great help to her in the future. She came back to the U.S. in 1934. She attended a well-respected high school in 1939 and went on to finish college in 1946. She even followed up with a master's degree in 1951.

While getting her degree, Shirley began working as a teacher. She was quick to move up the ranks as an expert with small children. It was at this time that she would also try her hand in politics. She was upset

about the way low-income and minority families were treated, and the fact that they did not have access to the same quality of education as others in her state.

Shirley began her work in politics as a volunteer. She became part of the NY State Assembly in 1965. Not long after, Shirley made history by becoming the first black woman elected to Congress in 1968. She would work in this role to help revise policy and even ran for president in 1972. Sadly, a lot of people did not want her to have this job. She did not get a fair chance, in large part because she was black and female. She left Congress in 1983 and went back to teaching.

Shirley's work was very important to progress in the U.S. She received several honors before she passed away in 2005. Even the Presidential Medal of Freedom was awarded to her posthumously in 2015. Shirley was an amazing activist who left behind an impressive legacy of change and growth.

Teacher Resources

Please note: this non-controlled readable text passage features a *chronological sequence text structure*. As such, it is written to be **at least 80% decodable at Substep 5.2**. A specific decodability score is listed below.

- This text passage is 80.12% decodable at Substep 5.2.

Text Easability Scores

If you would like to measure the text easability scores of this passage, please follow the directions below.

1. Visit the Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor website at <http://tea.cohmetrix.com/>. If you do not already have a login and password, create one. It is free and easy to sign up for access to the website.
2. Once you have created an account and sign in, you will be taken to a page with an empty, white text box. Copy and paste the text from this passage into the empty, white text box. Make sure you are only copying and pasting the body of the passage. Do not include the title, date, or any of the resources present in the passage.
3. When you have pasted the passage into the text box, click on the red button beneath the text box that says "Analyze." There will be a short delay and after a few seconds, you will see a bar graph appear to the right of the screen.
4. The bar graph will give you the percentages for several text characteristics including: narrativity, syntactic simplicity, word concreteness, referential cohesion, and deep cohesion.
5. Below the bar graph, the Flesch Kincaid Grade Level is also included for your benefit.
6. Lastly, a paragraph is provided that explains the meaning of the measurements of the text characteristics for your particular passage.
7. Once you have completed measuring your passage, you can click on the "Clear" button below the text box and measure another passage, if you wish.

This text passage is archived under *People*.