

The Importance of Education

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Education plays an important role in the life of every person. However, some are more fortunate than others. Through my thirteen years of life, I have been given countless opportunities and blessings. I'm part of a talented soccer team, I've traveled around and out of the country, I take part in many club activities, and I go to a great school. All of these things can be so easily taken for granted. That is why it is important to remember the struggle many went through to achieve what is right at my fingertips.

Starting from the time of slavery, African Americans had to fight to obtain what was rightfully theirs: education. They were forbidden to learn, and severely punished if caught. Still, brave individuals taught slaves quietly, in hopes that one day they would not have to struggle for their basic rights.

When slavery was abolished in 1865, only part of the battle for the African Americans was over. Even when considered equals by law, socially they were shunned and deprived of their freedoms. Schools were now becoming common, but were completely segregated. The country was just beginning the long-awaited adjustment of allowing Africans into the schooling system. It would not be for many years to come that the full effect would be forgotten.

In 1875 the Civil Rights Act was passed. This was a major milestone for the transformation of African Americans. Black children shouldn't have to get up in their black neighborhood, get on a black bus, and go to a black school. The Civil Rights Act worked against these everyday routines. Many questioned the conditions of the black vs the white schools. Whites feared the educated blacks would no longer be satisfied with field work and other hard

labor, causing black schools to have far less funding. Poor buildings, few books, and low paid teachers were a result. This prepared the children for a life of discrimination.

As those children grew up, they fought for the same rights for their children. Many parents were exasperated with the actions of the government. In 1954, *Brown vs The Board of Education* took place. Oliver Brown was a parent to a child who was denied access to a white school. Brown claimed segregation violated the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Individuals such as Brown were those who really pushed the Civil Rights movement into action, changing the future for many generations to come.

In 1957, federal officers watched as both white and black students entered a high school in Little Rock Arkansas. Year after year, higher percentages of African American students enrolled in integrated schools rose. As the time passed by, separate bathrooms, drinking fountains, and classrooms, were eradicated.

Although we do not live in a society where racism does not exist, the world has truly evolved. I am excited to see the day when my grandchildren will tell me, that they never knew of a world where everyone wasn't equal.