

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



The Educator Materials for this Young Reader edition of *Ruth Bader Ginsburg: In Her Own Words* are organized according to the main parts of the book (Part I, Part II, and Part III). For each part, you will find:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This is information you may wish to share with students to help them better understand the context of or references in a quotation.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

These prompts are connected to specific quotations but allow students to conduct research and engage in discussion beyond the information provided in the text.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CONNECTIONS

These prompts are connected to specific quotations and allow students to consider questions related to one or more SEL topics such as: identity, identifying or managing emotions, relationship building, empathy, or decision-making.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

This is a page that can be given directly to students and asks readers to consider multiple quotations from one part of the text. Students may work on this page individually, with a partner, or in small groups.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 17] The word that is never used in the Constitution is “slavery,” but it was the burning problem. And the original Constitution has certain imperfections. One of them is, in the very first article, the slave trade was allowed to continue until the year 1808. . . . Our original Constitution doesn’t have any equality provision in it because some humans were held in bondage by other humans. Our Constitution didn’t get perfected in that regard until after the Civil War.

—Annenberg Classroom, December 2006

[p. 23] My first exposure [to the law] was as a college student in the heyday of Senator Joe McCarthy from Wisconsin. There was a huge Red Scare in the country, and this was a senator who saw a Communist in every corner and was hauling people before the Senate investigating committee [and] the House Un-American Activities Committee and drilling them about some organization they had joined in the depths of the Depression. . . . I had a professor for constitutional law who pointed out to me that there were lawyers standing up for these people and reminding our Congress that our Constitution guarantees our right to think, speak, and write as we believe, and not as a big brother government tells us is the right way to think, speak, and write. And we have a Fifth Amendment that protects people against self-incrimination. So I thought that was a pretty nifty thing—a lawyer could make a living, and yet do good for the society in which he lives.

—Duke University School of Law, July 21, 2017

NOTE: *The Thirteenth Amendment passed in 1865 and abolished slavery in the United States. Prior to the passage of this amendment to the Constitution, the practice of slavery was widespread, especially in southern states whose economy relied on cotton production.*

NOTE: *The Red Scare refers to fears about the spread of communism. This occurred at two main points in U.S. History: after World War I and again after World War II. This second Red Scare is also known as McCarthyism, after Senator Joseph McCarthy (who Ginsburg mentions). He was extremely vocal about his distrust and fears surrounding the Soviet Union and the Cold War. McCarthy notably used smear tactics as a part of his campaign. Smear tactics are when someone tries to destroy another person’s reputation to make themselves look better.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 26] That is why we have the law. That is why we have a system of *stare decisis*. It keeps judges from infusing their own moral beliefs, from making themselves kings or queens.

—confirmation hearings before the
Senate Committee on the Judiciary, July 1993

NOTE: The Greek philosopher Plato divided his “ideal society” into three groups: the producers (the common people), the auxiliaries (the warriors), and the guardians (the rulers). Guardians were chosen from the smaller auxiliary group and were considered philosopher-kings—the only holders of true knowledge. Ginsburg was fearful that judges could consider themselves Platonic guardians and that no one should hold that level of control in a democracy.

Stare decisis is a legal principle that states courts must follow the precedent of similar rulings in the past. As Ginsburg notes, this limits the power of judges, ensuring they cannot hold the power of a Platonic guardian even if they seek it.

[p. 34] A Justice, contemplating publication of a separate writing, should always ask herself: is this dissent or concurrence really necessary? Consider the extra weight carried by the Court’s unanimous opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education*. In that case, all nine justices signed one opinion making it clear that the Constitution does not tolerate legally enforced segregation in our Nation’s schools.

—Harvard Club of Washington, DC, December 17, 2009

NOTE: After the Supreme Court hears a case, the justices discuss the details, then vote. A member of the majority will write the Supreme Court’s final ruling on the case, and after some discussion, the decision will be made public.

A “concurring opinion,” or concurrence, is a separate, published opinion of a judge who voted with the majority. A “dissenting opinion,” or dissent, is a separate, published opinion of a judge who disagreed with the ruling. Ginsburg had a special collar that she wore with her judicial robes when she dissented, and she’s known for several scathing dissents, typically surrounding gender discrimination and civil rights.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 35] What this court produces is an opinion of the court, so you're not writing just for yourself. You're writing, hopefully, for the entire court, but if not, at least for the majority of the members. And you have to take account of what they think.

—C-SPAN, July 1, 2009

NOTE: After the Supreme Court votes on a case, a member of the majority will be asked to write the court's majority opinion. A member of the minority will be asked to write the minority opinion. The justice charged with writing the opinion (either the majority or the minority) cannot write their own opinion as it is but must represent the entire group of like-minded justices. If the other justices don't like what is written, they won't "sign on" to the opinion. It's rare, but sometimes justices will switch from the majority opinion to the minority opinion or vice versa after reading the drafts. Sometimes opinions need to be drafted over and over again, which is why some Supreme Court decisions take months. A Supreme Court opinion is not considered final until it is delivered to the public.

[p. 35] I fully expect that someday we will have campaign finance regulation. I hope it will be in my lifetime, but as each year goes by and we see more and more the pernicious effects of huge campaign drives, I think it's the reality that your contribution is going to give you access to a legislator that you wouldn't have without it.

—University of Minnesota Law School, September 16, 2014

NOTE: Decided in 2010, the ruling for the Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission case held that the free speech clause of the First Amendment prohibits the government from restricting independent spending for political campaigns. In practice, this means that corporations, labor unions, and associations can give as much money to a candidate's political campaign as they'd like—there aren't any campaign finance regulations. This makes it easier for candidates with more funding or more connections to large corporations to have a platform and run for office, and harder for candidates with less funding and fewer connections to be seen and heard widely enough to get a substantial number of votes.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 36] I can't imagine what this place would be—I can't imagine what the country would be—with Donald Trump as our president. For the country, it could be four years. For the court, it could be—I don't even want to contemplate that.

— *New York Times*, July 10, 2016

NOTE: Donald Trump was elected in 2016, and he appointed three justices to the Supreme Court: Neil Gorsuch was appointed in 2017 to replace the late Antonin Scalia, Brett Kavanaugh was appointed in 2018 to replace retiring justice Anthony Kennedy, and Amy Coney Barrett was appointed in 2020 after her predecessor Ginsburg's death.

[p. 39] Why did it take distinguished lawmen so long to open the gates? Tradition was a large factor. For most of our nation's history, the concepts "woman" and "lawyer" were thought incompatible. Until 1920, there was the excuse that citizens who had no vote, no voice in making laws, had no business administering, enforcing, or interpreting them.

—*University of Puget Sound School of Law*,
November 2, 1978

NOTE: Women in the United States did not officially have the right to vote until 1920, with the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment. Before that point, women could run for office, but couldn't cast votes. However, women in some states were voting prior to the Nineteenth Amendment. Women in Wyoming were voting as early as 1869—and twelve other states in the western United States also granted women full voting rights by 1919. (For comparison, only two states east of the Mississippi River granted women those same voting rights in that time frame.) In the southern United States, women struggled to cast their votes even after the Nineteenth Amendment, as local governments restricted access to voting booths for women and people of color.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

[p. 16] What may seem constitutional in the abstract may be revealed as unconstitutional when viewed in a specific, contemporary world context—a context that the legislators who passed the law foresaw only dimly, if at all.

—Paul M. Hebert Law Center, October 24, 1996

[p. 21] Some things that I would like to change: one is the electoral college. But that would require a constitutional amendment, which is . . . powerfully hard to do.

—Rathbun Lecture on a Meaningful Life
at Stanford University, February 6, 2017

TOPIC: Ask learners to imagine themselves as legislators in the late 1700s, making decisions for the newly formed United States. After researching the Bill of Rights and the Constitution, ask students to pick a specific section to focus on, such as an article of the Bill of Rights. Ask students to consider why that specific section was added in that time period. How is that same section applied to the law now? Would the legislators who passed the law in the 1700s agree or disagree with the way the law is currently applied? Learners can be separated into discussion groups based on the focused research they completed.

TOPIC: The Electoral College was established in the Constitution as a way to elect a president and vice president and is an alternative to determining the outcome of an election based solely on the popular vote. Usually, the winner of the popular vote is the same as the winner of the Electoral College votes, but that's not always the case. The elections of 2000 and 2016 are the most recent exceptions to this.

ASK learners to research the Electoral College and its history and to think about the following questions: What is the Electoral College? Why was it originally established? Have the reasons the Electoral College exists changed through U.S. history? Should we still have the Electoral College today?

ASK learners to discuss their responses in pairs, groups, or as a class, and instruct students to support their opinions with facts found in their research.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CONNECTIONS

[p. 29] All of us appreciate that the institution we serve is far more important than the particular individuals who compose the Court's bench at any given time. And our job, in my view, is the best work a jurist anywhere could have. Our charge is to pursue justice as best we can.

—New England Law, March 13, 2009

CONNECTION: Invite learners to discuss what qualities make someone a good judge. For example, judges need to be impartial, compassionate, and intelligent. They establish whether the cases that are brought to them should be heard and ensure that trials they preside over comply with federal, state, and local laws. And, most difficult of all, they interpret the law. Ask learners whether they think they could be a judge and whether they would be a good one. Would they be able to remain impartial on subjects that are important to them? Why or why not? What would be the most difficult part of being a judge? What would be the most rewarding?

[p. 41] When I graduated from Columbia Law School in 1959, not a law firm in the entire city of New York would employ me. . . . I struck out on three grounds: I was Jewish, a woman, and a mother. The first raised one eyebrow, the second two, the third made me indubitably inadmissible.

—Harvard University, October 7, 1993

CONNECTION: Ginsburg experienced discrimination after graduating law school because she was Jewish, a woman, and a mother. Ask learners if they have ever been discriminated against, either for something they could control or something they could not. How did that make them feel? What actions can we all take to make sure others aren't subjected to discrimination?

STUDENT ACTIVITY: CHARACTER TRAITS



Based on what you've learned in "Part I: The Law," list three character traits displayed by Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Then, find two quotations from Part I that provide evidence of each trait. Include page numbers for the quotations you cite.

CHARACTER TRAIT	EVIDENCE	EVIDENCE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 50] We must never forget the horrors which our brethren were subjected to in Bergen-Belsen and other Nazi concentration camps. Then, too, we must try hard to understand that for righteous people hate and prejudice are neither good occupations nor fit companions.

—bulletin of the East Midwood Jewish Center, June 21, 1946

[p. 57] If we don't protect the people we don't like, we're going to lose protections for ourselves. The Fourth Amendment doesn't say, "You can search the bad guys, but not the good guys."

—Aspen Institute Socrates Program, October 23, 2014

NOTE: Bergen-Belsen became a Nazi concentration camp in 1943. Before the end of World War II, Bergen-Belsen housed over sixty thousand prisoners. An estimated fifty thousand people died there, including Anne Frank, the well-known child writer of a Holocaust diary.

NOTE: The Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects people from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government. It does allow for searches and seizures that are considered reasonable under the law, such as instances supported by a warrant or those acted upon with probable cause. For example, probable cause might allow for a warrantless arrest based on clear facts of active criminal activity or a search in the belief that a crime was committed at the place to be searched. The Fourth Amendment is central to privacy law and criminal law, including instances involving search warrants and surveillance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 72] Justice Rehnquist said, “And so, Mrs. Ginsburg, you won’t settle for Susan B. Anthony’s . . . face on the new dollar coin.” . . . I couldn’t think of something fast enough. You always think of your best argument in the car going back. So mine would have been, “No, your honor, tokens won’t do.”

—Duke University School of Law, January 31, 2005

[p. 76] My client, Stephen Wiesenfeld, was determined to rear his infant son personally after his wife’s unanticipated death. He sought Social Security benefits as caretaker of a deceased wage earner’s child, but he was told he could not even apply. The law provided child-in-care benefits for widowed mothers but not for widowed fathers. The stereotyping was plain: Men were preferred as wage earners, women as caregivers. And the system did not accommodate people who refused to fit into the mold.

—on *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld*, *Reason and Passion: Justice Brennan’s Enduring Influence*, April 1, 1997

NOTE: President Jimmy Carter signed the Susan B. Anthony Dollar Coin Act into law in 1978, which allowed for the creation of the first circulating coin that featured a woman. Susan B. Anthony was a social reformer and abolitionist, and one of the most prominent leaders in women’s rights and suffrage during the mid-to-late 1800s. She helped introduce the first women’s suffrage amendment in Congress in 1878. Her work was pivotal in what would become the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, passed in 1920, which secured the right of women to vote.

NOTE: Social Security provides supplemental or partial retirement income for qualified retirees and their families. When a person works, they pay into Social Security. When a person reaches retirement age, they can claim monthly benefits if they have earned enough work credits. A person may also potentially receive benefits if they are disabled or are a spouse or dependent of a qualified person who died.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 84] Managers, like all humankind, may be prey to biases of which they are unaware. The risk of discrimination is heightened when those managers are predominantly of one sex, and are steeped in a corporate culture that perpetuates gender stereotypes.

—on workplace gender discrimination, concurring-in-part, dissenting-in-part opinion, *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. v. Dukes*, June 20, 2011

NOTE: In a 2001 lawsuit, Betty Dukes, a 54-year-old Walmart worker in California, claimed that Walmart was discriminating against her, and other employees, on the basis of sex. She alleged that women were paid less than men for comparable work, denied advancement and training opportunities, subjected to a sexually hostile environment, and retaliated against when they attempted to address these issues. The plaintiffs wanted to represent women who were currently working or who had previously worked in a Walmart store since December 1998, which included about 1.5 million women. The U.S. Supreme Court agreed to decide whether these women could file in one suit or whether they would have to split up and file against the individual stores. The Supreme Court ruled in Walmart's favor, saying the plaintiffs did not have enough in common to constitute a class and therefore could not file as a class-action suit.

[p. 92] If we imagine the worst-case scenario, with *Roe v. Wade* overruled, there would remain many states that would not go back to the way it once was. What that means is any woman who has the wherewithal to travel, to take a plane, to take a train to a state that provides access to abortion, that woman will never have a problem. It doesn't matter what Congress or the state legislatures do, there will be other states that provide this facility, and women will have access to it if they can pay for it. Women who can't pay are the only women who would be affected.

—*New Republic*, September 28, 2014

NOTE: In 2022, the “worst-case scenario” Ginsburg refers to came to pass when the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, effectively overturning *Roe v. Wade*. As Ginsburg predicted, some states are instituting safeguards to keep abortion legal and maintain access to this procedure. In an attempt to address the last point Ginsburg makes, that only “women who can't pay” would be impacted by this court decision, many businesses have expanded their health care offerings to include reimbursement of travel costs should employees need to cross state lines to obtain medical care.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 93] The Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act and the court's defense of it cannot be understood as anything other than an effort to chip away at a right declared again and again by this court and with increasing comprehension of its centrality to women's lives.

—dissent bench announcement, *Gonzales v. Carhart*,
April 18, 2007

NOTE: A U.S. law enacted on November 5, 2003, banned a specific type of abortion procedure performed in the second trimester (fifteen to twenty-six weeks). Medically known as an "intact dilation and extraction," it is also called "partial-birth abortion." Under this law, any physician who knowingly performs a partial-birth abortion could be fined or imprisoned. The law does not address fetal viability but does provide an opportunity for a defense if the procedure was necessary to save the life of the mother.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

[p. 49] How can I describe the American dream? . . . Maybe it's captured by the first ride I took on a New York subway after returning from several months in Sweden, where everybody looked the same. And here I was on the subway, and [there was] the amazing diversity of the people of the United States. You know, the motto is "E pluribus unum," "Of many one," and that's the idea that we, more than just tolerating, we can appreciate our differences and yet pull together for the long haul.

—Academy of Achievement interview, August 17, 2010

[p. 91] One of the reasons, to be frank, that there's not so much pro-choice activity is that young women, including my daughter and my granddaughter, have grown up in a world where they know if they need an abortion, they can get it.

—*Elle*, September 23, 2014

TOPIC: *The United States is known for its diverse population. Ask students to use census data to research the demographics data (such as overall population, population by race, and population by age) of the U.S. along with two or three states within the U.S. (Alternatively, provide students with the demographics data for where they live, New York, and the U.S.) Have students explore similar data from Sweden and other countries. Have students present their findings and discuss the similarities and differences between the researched locations. Discuss how diversity or lack of diversity may affect individuals who live in those areas.*

TOPIC: *Have students choose a right they consider to be established, such as freedom of speech, public education, or the ability to vote. Ask them to research instances when the right they selected was challenged, either by practice or by laws being introduced to suppress that right. After completing the research, ask students if they felt any right was ever at risk. How was it defended and are there still obstacles that people face regarding this right? Why is it important to continue to advocate or protect rights, even if they have already been granted?*

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

[p. 52] I think the press has played a tremendously important role as watchdog over what the government is doing. And that keeps the government from getting too far out of line, because they would be in the limelight. So yes, there are all kinds of excesses in the press too, but we have to put up with that, I think, given the alternative.

—*The Kalb Report*, April 17, 2014

TOPIC: Ask students to explore the role of a free press in a democracy and how freedom of speech, guaranteed in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, protects the press. Students may research any or all the following:

- What is “freedom of speech”? When can freedom of speech conflict with other needs or priorities, such as public health or safety?
- Does the press have a responsibility to be a “watchdog”? What does that mean and why is it important to have a free press be able to investigate and report on the government, corporations, or even individuals?
- What are some examples of investigative journalism that have revealed illegal or problematic events or actions and helped encourage change from lawmakers, social movements, or law enforcement?
- What are some instances where reporters have been stopped from doing their jobs by being detained, arrested, or silenced in some other way, either in the United States or in other countries? What are the risks to society of stopping reporters and the press from being able to do their jobs?

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CONNECTIONS

[p. 52] A great jurist said the way to fight false facts is by true facts. So when a false fact is stated, the people who care will say, “No, that’s not so, that is not the fact. Indeed the fact is—whatever it really is.” So I think the best check is people who will call out those who are disseminating falsehoods and criticize them for what they are.

—University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, February 16, 2017

CONNECTION: Ask students to respond to the following questions as part of a class discussion or journal writing activity: What would you do if someone tried to convince you of a “false fact”? How could you determine whether the information was true or false? How would you respond to the person who believed the “false fact”?

[p. 70] Along the way, an attitude is instilled insidiously. This attitude is described in a nutshell in graffiti etched in a college library carrel in the early 1950s. The epigram reads, “Study hard, get good grades, get your degree, get married. Have three kids, die, and be buried.” From the first line, the sex of the writer is impossible to determine. From the second, her sex is impossible to mistake. To cure the problem felt so acutely by the young woman who wrote those words and so many others like her, the law must stop using sex as a shorthand for functional description. It must deal with the parent, not the mother. With the homemaker, not the housewife. With the surviving spouse, not the widow.

—oral argument, *Kahn v. Shevin*, February 25, 1974

CONNECTION: Have students consider this epigram and ask if they would have made the same assumptions about the gender and life of the writer. Have students consider the emotions the writer of this epigram was feeling when they wrote it. What does it say about the expectations and assumptions about how a woman lives, and what limitations does it put on her? Ask the class to consider whether women today still experience these kinds of expectations and limitations.

STUDENT ACTIVITY: CONNECTING TO MILESTONES



Choose three major milestones for women's rights or in women's history from the list below, or choose your own milestones not listed here. Then, find a quotation in "Part II: Civil Liberties: Free to Be You and Me" that you think connects to that milestone.

- Nineteenth Amendment and the right to vote
- Title VII
- Title IX
- *Roe v. Wade*
- U.S. military removal of the ban on women serving in combat positions
- Election of Kamala Harris as vice president of the United States

MILESTONE	IMPACT OF MILESTONE	CONNECTED QUOTATION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 98] Two is my lucky number. I was the second woman on the Rutgers faculty, before Columbia. Then the second woman, but the first tenured woman, at Columbia. The second woman on the DC Circuit. And the second woman on the US Supreme Court.

—*The Aaron Harber Show*

[p. 100] [Gerald Gunther] was determined to get me a federal clerkship. So he recommended me to a judge who always hired his law clerks from Columbia, and said, “My candidate for you this year is Ruth Bader Ginsburg.” And the judge said, “Well, I’ve looked at her resume. She has a four-year-old daughter. How can I rely on her?” And the great professor said, “Judge Palmieri, give her a chance. If she doesn’t work out, there’s a man in her class who will step in and take over for her.” That’s the carrot. The stick: “If you don’t give her a chance, I will never recommend another Columbia clerk to you.”

—*University of Colorado Law School, September 19, 2012*

NOTE: *Tenure is a type of academic appointment where a professor cannot be fired under normal circumstances. It is meant to be a reward for distinguished work and a protection of academic freedom, allowing scholars to conduct research without fear of losing their jobs.*

Most universities in the United States have adopted a tenure system where some faculty members are awarded it and some faculty members are not. The system gives a professor on tenure track a “trial” period where they complete research, write academic papers, and attract grants and funding for the university. At the end of this trial period, the professor is either tenured or fired. Some positions aren’t on the tenure track, and professors in these roles don’t have the chance to compete for tenure.

NOTE: *In the United States, law or judicial clerks are staff members—usually lawyers—who do research and provide advice to judges. These clerks are typically recent graduates of law school and are usually top of their class. Law clerk positions are very prestigious. There are a lot of applicants, and not a lot of spaces. Judges usually only have one or two clerks. A federal clerkship is the most prestigious type of law clerk assignment, as federal clerks work with federal judges rather than state or local judges.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[p. 104] Growing up, there weren't too many [role models] because women were hardly there, so I had one real and one fictitious role model. The real one was Amelia Earhart. The fictitious one was Nancy Drew.

—Rathbun Lecture on a Meaningful Life at Stanford University, February 6, 2017

[p. 105] [Marty]'s always made me feel I was better than I thought myself. And so I started out by being very unsure of, could I do this brief, could I make this oral argument. Until now. Where I am, I look at my colleagues and I say, "It's a hard job, but I can do it at least as well as those guys."

—Wheaton College, June 8, 1997

NOTE: Amelia Earhart was one of the first female pilots. She was the first female aviator to fly across the Atlantic Ocean by herself. She wrote best-selling books, broke records, and taught at universities. She was an early advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment and formed organizations in promotion of and spoke about women's rights. She disappeared in 1937 while trying to be the first woman to ever fly around the globe.

The first Nancy Drew story was published in 1930 and was followed by hundreds more. Nancy Drew is a young, independent amateur detective. She is smart, engaging, and multi-talented. The stories broke the character norm of girls for the time. Nancy Drew was a direct contrast to the popular Dick and Jane stories, also initially published in 1930, whose characters maintained traditional gender roles and perpetuated class, gender, and racial stereotypes.

NOTE: A legal brief is a written statement offered to a court. It provides an overview of the facts of a case and explains why the person submitting the brief should prevail. An oral argument is a spoken presentation to a court. It focuses on the key points in a case and may have to be given within a particular time constraint.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

[p. 110] If our friendship encourages others to appreciate that some very good people have ideas with which we disagree, and that despite differences, people of goodwill can pull together for the well-being of the institutions we serve and our country, I will be overjoyed, and I am confident Justice Scalia would be too.

—Aspen Institute McCloskey Speaker Series, August 1, 2017

[p. 113] Most of us have a perspective, most thinking people do, but . . . it's important to disclose one's biases. I'm not trying to brainwash people, but I'm not going to present myself as neutral.

—*Women of Wisdom*, 1981

TOPIC: *Justices Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg served on the Supreme Court together for over twenty years. They often had differing opinions on the cases they heard but had a great working relationship and were good friends. Ask learners to research why Scalia and Ginsburg had such differing opinions. How did their interpretations of the U.S. Constitution differ? Then ask learners to pick a Supreme Court justice past or present they'd like to learn more about. Ask them to research that justice's interpretation of the Constitution, and to compare their chosen justice to Ginsburg and/or Scalia.*

TOPIC: *Ask learners to research bias, specifically with regard to Supreme Court nomination hearings. Ask learners to identify the steps it takes for someone to become a Supreme Court judge, then to focus in on Supreme Court nomination hearings. This research should include watching video clips (or reading transcripts) of hearings for a few different nominees. After watching a variety of these clips and completing their research, ask learners to consider how Supreme Court nominees are often pressed to reveal their biases. Why are these hearings important? Which questions posed to the nominees do students think are most useful? Why?*

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CONNECTIONS

[p. 99] The dean [of Harvard Law School] greeted the women in the first-year class with an invitation to dinner at his home. . . . The dean brought us into his living room and called on each of us to tell him in turn why we were at the Harvard Law School occupying a seat that could be held by a man.

—*Makers*, February 26, 2013

[p. 100] I don't know how many meetings I attended in the '60s and the '70s, where I would say something, and I thought it was a pretty good idea. . . . Then somebody else would say exactly what I said. Then people would become alert to it, respond to it.

—*USA Today*, May 2009

CONNECTION: *Out of five hundred students in her Harvard Law School class, Ginsburg was one of only nine women. Ask students to respond to any or all of the following questions as part of a class discussion or journal writing activity: How do you think that felt? What emotions do you think she and the other women there experienced because of discrimination against them? What problem-solving strategies would you recommend someone in a similar situation today use?*

CONNECTION: *Ginsburg talks about how, as a young Jewish woman and mother, she was often ignored or talked over during work meetings. When someone else "borrowed" an idea of hers, saying the exact thing she did, that person was applauded, and Ginsburg wasn't acknowledged.*

Ask learners to reflect on a time when they felt invisible, or when someone else took the credit for their hard work. How did it make them feel? Did they speak up? Why or why not?

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CONNECTIONS

[p. 114] I began to doubt whether I could manage a young child and law school. And my father-in-law gave me some wonderful advice. He said, "Ruth, if you don't want to go to law school, you have the best reason in the world, and no one will think the less of you. But if you really want to become a lawyer, you will stop feeling sorry for yourself and you will find a way to do it." And I have taken that advice at every difficult turn in my life.

—*Only in America*, September 2, 2004

CONNECTION: Ask learners to reflect on their life schedules. Their classes, after-school activities, sports, jobs, chores, etc.—all the things that fill up their time. Ask if they have ever felt pulled in multiple directions, with too many responsibilities and not enough time in the day. How did they handle it? Did they have to choose between two after-school activities, do chores instead of hanging out with friends, or lose sleep to finish their homework? What would they say to a family member or friend who asked for advice about feeling overwhelmed?

STUDENT ACTIVITY: LIFE LESSONS



Find quotations in “Part III: A Life of Her Own” that represent lessons Ginsburg wanted to impart and that you identify with. Write out the quote, your interpretation of the lesson Ginsburg wanted to share, and a reflection about how you can apply that lesson to your own life.

QUOTATION	LESSON	APPLICATION