

# MÉNDEZ v. WESTMINSTER

for all the children / para todos los niños

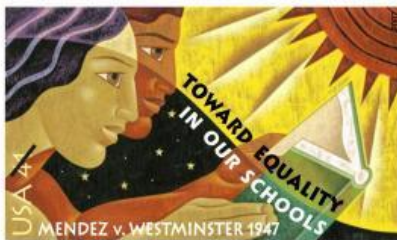
v. = vs. = versus = against or fighting against

The Constitution protects people. It says all people have the same rights. When a person's rights are violated (disrespected, denied), that person has the right to take the person or group who disrespected them to court. In court, a judge will decide if a right was violated.

How does the Constitution protect people? \_\_\_\_\_

What can you do if you feel your rights have been violated? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will decide if your rights have been violated? \_\_\_\_\_



Translate these words into your native language:

sue = \_\_\_\_\_ court case = \_\_\_\_\_

class = a group whose members are the same in some

way = \_\_\_\_\_

deny = not give = \_\_\_\_\_

Watch the video. **TURN ON THE CAPTIONS**  **HERE!**



The school did not allow Sylvia to enroll because she was "too dark." Explain.

Why didn't Sylvia's parents want her to go to the Hispanic school? \_\_\_\_\_

Why was her education important to them? \_\_\_\_\_

Her parents sued the schools. What does this mean? \_\_\_\_\_

Sylvia's parents did not sue the schools only to protect their children's rights. They learned that there were how many Hispanic students in segregated schools in their area? \_\_\_\_ They made a class action suit. That is, they sued to protect



CLASS ACTION  
LAWSUITS



the rights of all families who, like them, had to put their children in poor, segregated schools. Why do you think they did that? \_\_\_\_\_

Who won the court case, the Mendez family or the town of Westminster? \_\_\_\_\_ Describe how Sylvia may have felt about that ending. \_\_\_\_\_

Their judge is famous for saying, "Separate is never equal."

Many places were segregated at the time: schools, movie theatres, restaurants, trains, bathrooms, hotels... Why is separate never equal? Write 4 or more sentences. \_\_\_\_\_

Watch and hear Sylvia talk about that time in her life.  
Click [HERE](#) if you want to use captions.

<https://youtu.be/SIMWdfSxoh8?si=WG65-wo45RIMNN1V>

There were no "academics" at Sylvia's school: reading, math, history, etc. The students learned to be maids or laborers- people who worked with their bodies, not their minds. Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
How did Sylvia feel after her first day at the new school? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_ What did her mother tell her? \_\_\_\_\_



### Reflect!

Imagine how Sylvia felt on her first day at the whites-only school.  
Write a paragraph about how she felt and what she was expecting  
that morning before she went to school.

Write a second paragraph about what happened at school that day  
and what her feelings were then.



Write a third paragraph about how she felt after school,  
before she talked to her mother and after she talked to  
her mother.

Write a fourth paragraph about how she might have felt  
the next morning when it was time to go back to school.

