

QUICK GUIDE



AS BOOK BANS CONTINUE TO BE ENACTED ACROSS AMERICA, WE KNOW THAT OUR SPOKEN TRUTHS CANNOT BE BANNED, SILENCED, OR FORGOTTEN. THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR FAMILY'S TRUTH AS PART OF THIS NATIONAL EFFORT.

Dear Interviewer-

THANK YOU for agreeing to interview your family and loved ones about their personal experiences with segregation. Hearing their stories will help generations present, and well into the future, have a more intimate understanding of where we have been as a country, and why we must continue to work hard to ensure that we never accept the return to **racially-divided** laws and policies.

As the current social climate begins to feel more reminiscent of the past, it is our hope that real life testimonials, such as those from your family members and loved ones will help America remember how bad things were and how bad they can get again, if we do not combat hate-based, and white supremacy-based laws. As book bans continue to be enacted across America, we know that our spoken truths cannot be banned, silenced, or forgotten. Thank you for sharing your family's truth as part of this national effort.

For your convenience, the Before 54 team has created a suggested script for you. **You may use this script exactly as it is written, or you may use it as a guide and add your own spin, language and questions to it. The below is offered as a tool to help you with your interview. But please feel free to make your recording your own.**

When you are ready, let's begin!

WARM UP QUESTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to let me interview you for the Before54 campaign. I am recording this interview to learn as much as possible about our family's experiences living under segregation law.

With your permission, I plan to submit this video for inclusion in a national collection of Black Americans' stories about segregation so they can be preserved for the future. **The purpose of this exercise is to document as many real-life segregation stories as possible, so that we can educate generations to come on the realities of racism and provide our future relatives with a personal connection to what our family members went through, and a personal motivation to continue to help ensure that racial discrimination, segregation and oppression is never legal again.** Once complete, the full archive will serve as a powerful way to help educate We are working to make sure your experiences, and others like yours, are always remembered.

{Interviewer to begin recording if you have not already}

- 1.** To start off, would you please state your name for the camera?
- 2.** And would you tell us your date of birth?
- 3.** Where did you grow up (city, town/state)? Do you recall your actual street address?
- 4.** Who did you live with? What can you tell us about your home/family life?
- 5.** How would you describe growing up there?
- 6.** If you grew up in the south, what did you know about life for Black people in the north? If you grew up in the North, what did you know about life for Black people in the South?

SEGREGATION QUESTIONS

(Suggested Script Continues Below)

Great! Thank you! The next questions I will ask will be about your experience with segregation specifically. Please be as detailed and as candid as you can.

I know some of these memories may be difficult. If you need to take a break at any moment while we are recording, please feel free to do so. Your experiences may also be the key to saving the lives of future generations, so I am grateful to you for talking to me about them, as painful as remembering some of this might be.

- 1.** Growing up, did you know that white people lived differently than Black people? What did you know about the way they lived vs. the way you and other Black people in your community lived? How did that make you feel?
- 2.** What were some of your experiences with segregation when you were out in public, for example playing outside, shopping, dining out, or going to a movie? Can you describe what kinds of rules you had to follow because you were Black? How did that make you feel back then? When you think back on it, how does it make you feel now?
- 3.** What was the worst part of living under racial discrimination laws that you can remember?
- 4.** Were you aware of hate groups like the KKK in your area? What do you remember knowing about them at that time?
 - o Do you have any personal memories or experiences with them directly? Do you have any memories of experiences with the KKK that did not involve you directly- but stories or incidents in your community that you heard about?
 - o Do you recall knowing or hearing about any "mysterious" deaths of Black people in your community that were thought to be related to the KKK?
 - o Do you recall ever learning about justice being done for a Black person or family after an incident involving the KKK?
- 5.** We've heard stories about how white civilians would be allowed to take "justice" into their own hands when someone Black was accused of doing something to a white person, even without it ever going to trial or without the accusation ever being proven true. Did you ever know of a Black person being "punished" by white people who were not law enforcement members? If so, can you tell us what you remember about that?
- 6.** Can you recall stories of how you, your family or others fought against discrimination?
- 7.** What do you want future generations of our family to know about what it was like living under segregation?