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# Barack Obama

Barack Hussein Obama is a politician and a lawyer who was the first Black president of the United States of America. He is an advocate for affordable healthcare and global education.



## Childhood

On 4<sup>th</sup> August 1961, Barack Hussein Obama was born in Hawaii, USA. His father, also called Barack Hussein Obama, grew up in Kenya and moved to Hawaii in 1960. His mother, Stanley Ann Dunham, moved from Kansas to Hawaii with her parents, also in 1960.

As a young child, Barack lived in Jakarta, Indonesia, with his mother, his stepfather, Lolo, and his half-sister, Maya. By the age of four, Barack could fluently speak both English and Indonesian. At the age of ten, Barack moved back to Honolulu – the capital city of Hawaii – to live with his grandparents, Stanley and Madelyn Dunham.

## Education

While living with his grandparents in Hawaii, Barack attended a prestigious school and excelled in basketball. After graduating from high school in 1979, he moved to Los Angeles and then to New York City to study political science – a subject which focuses on how governments operate.

In 1988, Barack went on to attend Harvard Law School. After winning an election, he was appointed as the president of the Harvard Law Review – a student-run journal of articles which people can use for legal research. Barack was the first Black person to hold this position.

While attending Harvard Law School, Barack completed a summer internship at a law firm. Here, he was supervised by Michelle LaVaughn Robinson, who would later become his wife. In 1991, Barack was awarded with his Juris Doctor – a professional degree that is required if someone is to practise law.

## Career

Barack began to work as a community organiser in Chicago. As part of this role, he set up a program which helped people to develop the skills that they needed for their future careers. He established a tutoring program and founded an organisation that supported the rights of people living in the area.

After this, he utilised his Juris Doctor to begin his career as a civil rights lawyer, helping to protect the freedom and equality of his clients. He also taught others about law part-time at the University of Chicago Law School. It was at this time that Barack first became involved in politics.

### Political Beginnings

Barack's first role within politics was as the director of a project which encouraged all members of the public to register to vote. After working tirelessly between April and October 1992, Barack and his team ensured that 150,000 citizens, who were previously unable to vote, would be able to have their say in the upcoming election.

In 1996, Barack launched his first political campaign: he sought to become a state senator in Illinois. Once elected, he immediately set to work helping to establish laws to help children, elderly citizens and low-income families.

### Presidency

In 2007, Barack announced that he intended to run for President of the United States and his campaign slogans focused on the themes of hope and change. The following year, after receiving 365 votes (compared to the 173 votes received by his opposition), Obama was elected as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America – the first Black US president since the role was established in 1789. He officially began the role on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

Four years later, in the election in which a new president could have been chosen, Barack again received the majority of votes – 332 compared to his opponent's 206.

Among many notable achievements during his term of office, Barack signed a law which provided healthcare to over 20 million citizens who previously could not afford to receive it. He also supported the LGBTQ+ community's campaign for marriage equality and he made significant steps towards tackling climate change.

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009, Barack was awarded with a Nobel Peace Prize for his work in uniting people around the world. Although Barack's presidency ended in 2017, he continues to work towards supporting good causes through a foundation that he created alongside his wife. Their mission is to inspire people to take action, to empower them to change their world for the better and to connect them so that they can achieve more together than they can alone.

## Summer 2 Week 7 Reading Comp

### Questions

1. What did Barack study while in New York? Tick one.

- ☐ global education
- ☐ political science
- ☐ a professional degree in law
- ☐ civil rights law

2. Draw **four** lines and match each year to the event which happened in it.

1991

He received the Nobel Peace Prize.

1992

Barack and his team ensured that 150,000 more people could vote.

2007

He was awarded with his Juris Doctor.

2009

He announced his intention to run for presidency.

3. What is Honolulu?

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4. **He is an advocate for affordable healthcare and global education.**

How else could the author have written this sentence?

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5. Find and copy the meaning of the phrase **political science**.

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6. Discuss Barack Obama's impact on US citizens based on information from the text.

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## Summer 2 Week 7 Reading Comp

7. Summarise the beliefs of Barack and Michelle's foundation in 20 words or fewer.

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8. Compare **two** elections that Barack won and explain why they are similar.

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9. 'Barack promotes equality.'

Give **two** ways that text supports this statement.

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10. Compare how Barack's job as President of the United States of America was similar to another job that he had.

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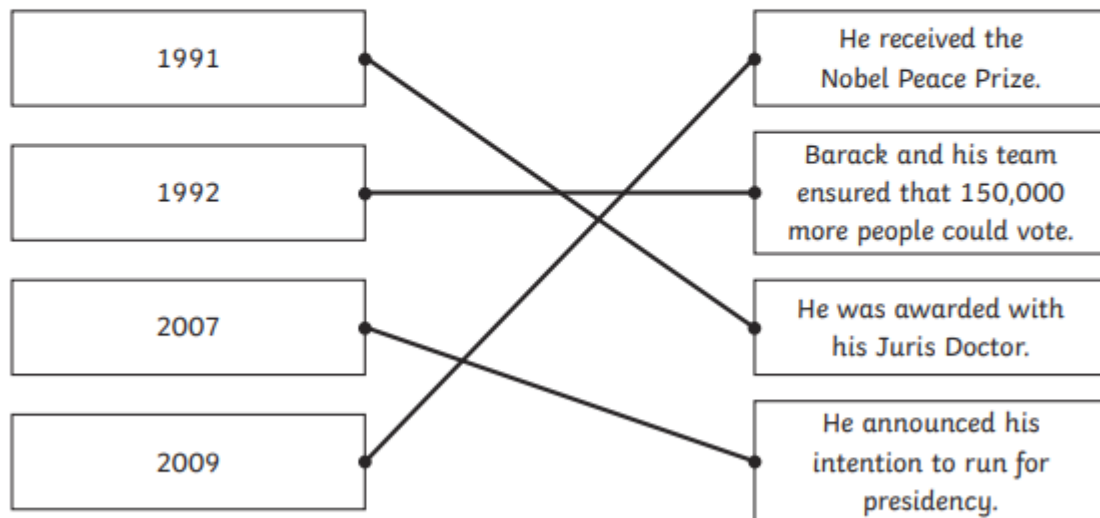


## Answers

1. What did Barack study while in New York? Tick one.

- ☐ global education
- ☒ **political science**
- ☐ a professional degree in law
- ☐ civil rights law

2. Draw **four** lines and match each year to the event which happened in it.



3. What is Honolulu?

**Honolulu is the capital city of Hawaii.**

4. **He is an advocate for affordable healthcare and global education.**

How else could the author have written this sentence?

**Accept any suitable rewording which retains the meaning of the original sentence, such as: He thinks that people should have affordable healthcare and that people around the world should have access to education.**

5. Find and copy the meaning of the phrase **political science**.

**a subject which focuses on how governments operate**

6. Discuss Barack Obama's impact on US citizens based on information from the text.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Barack Obama has had a positive impact on US citizens due to the many laws he has passed and schemes he has established to ensure equality. Examples of these are when he helped people as a community organiser, when he established laws as a state senator and when he signed laws as a president.**

## Summer 2 Week 7 Reading Comp

7. Summarise the beliefs of Barack and Michelle's foundation in 20 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Their foundation believes that ordinary people can connect, take action, change the world for the better and change history.**

8. Compare **two** elections that Barack won and explain why they are similar.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: When Barack was appointed president of the Harvard Law Review, he was the first Black person to hold the position. When he became President of the United States of America, he was also the first Black person to hold the position.**

9. 'Barack promotes equality.'

Give **two** ways that text supports this statement.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: The text shows that Barack promotes equality because he worked as a civil rights lawyer who protected his clients' equality and he also supported the LGBTQ+ community's campaign for marriage equality while he was president.**

10. Compare how Barack's job as President of the United States of America was similar to another job that he had.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Barack's job as President of the United States of America was similar to his job as a state senator because, in both roles, he established laws to help the citizens of the USA.**