

Edward Brooke wins a Senate election

1966 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

election — a process in which people vote to choose leaders or decide questions

represent — speak or act for others

equality — having equal rights or standing

Look closely



Edward Brooke

Read the story

Edward Brooke was elected a U.S. senator from Massachusetts. He was the first Black person popularly elected to the U.S. Senate. His election was an important political milestone.

Earlier Black senators had been chosen by state legislatures. Brooke's distinction concerns popular election, not being the first Black senator ever. Precision helps honor achievements without erasing earlier people.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: Chappaquiddick and public accountability

1969

Mary Jo Kopechne died after a car driven by Senator Edward Kennedy went into water on Chappaquiddick. The event raised serious questions about actions, reporting, and responsibility.

Kennedy's delayed report and later legal proceedings became part of the public record. Keep Kopechne's life visible, rather than reducing the event to its effect on a politician's career.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: Edward Brooke was elected a U.S. senator from Massachusetts. He was the first Black person popularly elected to the U.S. Senate. His election was an important political milestone. Earlier Black senators had been chosen by state legislatures. Brooke's distinction concerns popular election, not being the first Black senator ever. Precision helps honor achievements without erasing earlier people.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

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The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.