

## **Barack Obama**

Barack Obama was born in Hawaii on August 4th, 1961.

His father, Barack Obama Sr., was born in Kenya. His father grew up herding goats as a domestic servant. His father later won a scholarship that allowed him to leave Kenya and attend the University of Hawaii.

Barack's mother, Ann Dunham, grew up in Kansas. Ann's father worked on oil rigs during the Depression, and later signed up for World War II after Pearl Harbour. Her mother went to work on a bomber assembly line during the war. After the war, her parents moved to Hawaii.

Barack's parents, Ann Dunham and Barack Obama Sr. met at the University of Hawaii where they were both attending school.

The marriage between Obama's parents was a short-lived one and when Barack was two years old his parents divorced. Barack's father eventually returned to Kenya and later died in a car accident there in the early 1980s.

Barack's mother remarried a man from Indonesia who worked in the oil industry. When Barack was six, they moved to Indonesia near the capital of Jakarta where his half-sister Maya was born. At the age of ten, Barack returned to Hawaii, and lived with his maternal grandparents; later his mother and sister returned as well. Barack was called "Barry" by his family and friends and he was sent to a private academy called Punahou School in Honolulu.

Barack Obama graduated from Punahou and went on to attend Occidental College in Los Angeles. He later transferred to Columbia University in New York City where he graduated from in 1983.

Barack admitted that there was a time that he experimented with drugs. He stated in an interview with Kenneth Meeks for Black Enterprise. "I was affected by the problems that I think a lot of young African American teens have. They feel that they need to rebel against society as a way of proving their blackness. And often, this results in self-destructive behaviour."

He earned his undergraduate degree in political science and he became a community organizer in Harlem. He later moved to Chicago to work for a church-based social-services organization there. The group was active on the city's South Side.

Barack Obama soon applied to and was accepted at Harvard Law School. In 1990, he was elected president of the Harvard Law Review journal. He was the first African American to serve in the post. After graduation from law school, he declined job offers from top Manhattan law firms, with starting salaries that neared the \$100,000-a-year range. Barack chose to return to Chicago and work for a small firm that specialized in civil-rights law. His work involved defending the poor in housing and employment discrimination cases.

During his Harvard Law School years, Barack took a job as a summer associate at a Chicago firm and the attorney assigned to mentor him was Michelle Robinson. Robinson came from a working-class black family and grew up on the South Side. The two began dating and were married in 1992.

Barack's advocacy work led him to run for the Illinois State Senate, where he served for eight years. In 2004, he became the third African American since Reconstruction to be elected to the

U.S. Senate. Barack was chosen as the presidential candidate for the Democratic Party in August of 2008.

Barack is proud and grateful for his family, his wife, Michelle, and his two daughters, Malia and Sasha.

**Answer the questions below:**

1. In what state was Barack Obama born?
2. Where was Barack Obama's father born?
3. Where was Barack Obama's mother born?
4. Barack Obama was two years old when his parents divorced.

True

False

5. When Barack Obama was six, where did his family move to?
6. At the age of ten, Barack moved back to Hawaii and lived with who?
7. Barack's family and friends called him what?
8. Barack Obama earned his undergraduate degree in which field?
9. Where did Barack Obama go to law school?
10. Barack Obama was elected what of the Harvard Law Review journal?
11. Barack Obama served eight years in what?
12. What is Barack Obama most proud of?
13. After Harvard Law School, Barack worked on civil-rights cases

True

False

15. The Democratic Party chose Barack Obama as their presidential candidate in August of 2008.

True

False