Barack Obama

Barack Hussein Obama is a politician and a lawyer. He was the first Black president of the United States of America.

Childhood

Barack Hussein Obama was born on 4th August 1961 in Hawaii, USA. Barack's father was also called Barack Hussein Obama. He grew up in Kenya and moved to Hawaii in 1960. Barack's mother was called Stanley Ann Dunham and she also moved to Hawaii in 1960.

Barack spent time living in Jakarta, Indonesia, when he was a young child. By the time that he was four years old, Barack could fluently speak both English and Indonesian. When Barack was ten years old, he moved back to Hawaii to live with his grandparents.

Education

Barack went to an important school and he was very good at basketball. After leaving high school in 1979, he moved to Los Angeles and then to New York City. In both of these cities, he went to university to learn about how governments work.

In 1988, Barack went on to attend Harvard Law School. He was chosen to be the president of the Harvard Law Review. This is a **journal** that is made by students and people can use it for legal research.

While he was attending Harvard Law School, Barack started to work as a trainee at a law firm so that he could gain experience. Michelle LaVaughn Robinson was asked to supervise him. Soon, they became friends and, not long later, they were married on 3rd October 1992.

In 1991, Barack was awarded with his Juris Doctor, which is a professional degree that is needed if someone wants to practise law.

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Career

Barack began to work as a community organiser in Chicago. He set up a program which helped people to get the skills that they need in order to do the job that they'd like. He set up a teaching program and he founded an organisation that supported the rights of people living in the area.

After this, Barack began working as a civil rights lawyer and he helped to protect the freedom and equality of his clients. He also taught others about law. It was at this time that Barack first became involved in **politics**.

Political Beginnings

Barack's first role within politics was as part of a project which tried to get all members of the public to register to vote. Barack and his team made sure that 150,000 new people would be able to have their say in the next election.

After this, Barack became a state senator and he worked to create laws which helped children, elderly citizens and families with low incomes.

Becoming President

In 2008, Barack was elected President of the United States and, the following year, he officially started the role. As the 44th President of the United States of America, he became the first Black president in US history.

During his time as president, Barack signed a law which meant that over 20 million people were able to access healthcare that they could not previously afford. He also supported marriage equality and he made huge steps towards tackling climate change.

Barack's presidency ended in 2017 but he continues to work towards supporting these causes. Barack and his wife, Michelle, set up a foundation which believes that ordinary people can change history when they work together.

Glossary

journal:	A newspaper or magazine about one particular subject.
politics:	Activities which relate to the governance of a country or area.

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Questions

1. Where was Barack born? Tick one.

   ○ Jakarta
   ○ Hawaii
   ○ New York City
   ○ Chicago

2. In which year was Barack awarded with his Juris Doctor? Tick one.

   ○ 1961
   ○ 1979
   ○ 1988
   ○ 1991

3. Find and copy the **two** languages that Barack could speak when he was four years old.

   • _____

   • _____

4. What did Barack do while he was attending Harvard Law School?

   _____

5. Look at the section called **Education**.
   Find and copy one word which means 'someone who is not fully qualified'.

   _____

6. Explain how Barack has improved the lives of US citizens.

   _____

   _____

   _____

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7. Using information from the text, summarise Barack's childhood in 30 words or fewer.

8. Discuss how Barack continues to improve people's lives today.

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Answers

1. Where was Barack born? Tick one.

   - ○ Jakarta
   - ✓ **Hawaii**
   - ○ New York City
   - ○ Chicago

2. In which year was Barack awarded with his Juris Doctor? Tick one.

   - ○ 1961
   - ○ 1979
   - ○ 1988
   - ✓ **1991**

3. Find and copy the **two** languages that Barack could speak when he was four years old.

   - **English**
   - **Indonesian**

4. What did Barack do while he was attending Harvard Law School?

   While studying at Harvard Law School, Barack was the president of the Harvard Law Review and he worked as a trainee at a law firm.

5. Look at the section called **Education**.
   Find and copy one word which means 'someone who is not fully qualified'.

   trainee

6. Explain how Barack has improved the lives of US citizens.

   Pupils' own responses, such as: Barack has improved the lives of US citizens by setting up lots of schemes and passing laws to make sure that they have healthcare and equal rights.

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7. Using information from the text, summarise Barack's childhood in 30 words or fewer.

   Pupils' own responses, such as: Barack was born in Hawaii and moved to Jakarta before returning back to Hawaii at the age of ten. He went to an important school.

8. Discuss how Barack continues to improve people's lives today.

   Pupils' own responses, such as: Barack continues to improve people's lives today through the foundation that he set up with his wife which supports good causes.

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