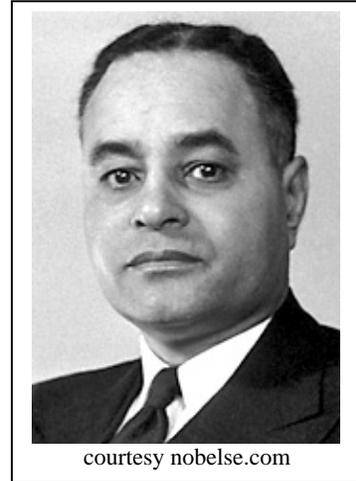


## Ralph Bunche

1951

*The United Nations is our one great hope for a peaceful and free world*

Ralph Bunche was born in Michigan. His father was a barber in a whites-only shop. His mother was a musician. His grandmother lived with them. She had been born a slave. The family moved to New Mexico when Ralph was ten. Both parents had serious health problems. Both died within two years. Ralph was raised by his grandmother. They moved to Los Angeles. Ralph worked selling newspapers and doing chores. He did odd jobs for rich people.



In elementary school Ralph won academic prizes in history and English. He graduated first in his class in high school. In high school he was on the debate team. He also competed in football, basket, baseball, and track.

- **Raised by a grandmother who was born a slave**
- **Worked with President Roosevelt**
- **UN Undersecretary**
- **Negotiated Arab Israel partition 1948**

**“Hearts are strongest when they beat in response to noble ideas.”**

He attended the University of California. He received an athletic scholarship. At college Bunche had a job. He worked as a janitor. He played basketball. He joined the debate team. He worked on the college newspaper. He graduated in 1927 with honors. His major was in **international** relations.

Ralph studied political science in graduate school. He attended Harvard University. He had a scholarship. The black community of Los Angeles gave him a thousand dollars. He graduated in 1928. He taught at Howard University. He also worked on his **doctorate** at Harvard. In 1932-1933 he went to Africa. He wanted to research French rule in Togoland and

Dahomey. In 1934 he completed this work. He was awarded the Toppan Prize for his research in social studies.

In 1936-1938 he did post doctorate work in London and South Africa. Dr. Bunche was chairman of the Department of Political Science at Howard University from 1928-1950. He served on the New York City Board of Education.

Bunche joined the cabinet of President Roosevelt. He worked on minority problems in the United States. President Truman asked Bunche to serve in his cabinet. He refused because of **segregated** housing conditions in Washington, DC. These conditions included failing schools and poor housing.

Bunche helped organize and lead the civil rights movement. He worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. He was a leader in the **NAACP**. This was an important civil rights group. He worked with civil rights groups during 1945-1965. He wrote speeches. He attended many meetings and events.

In 1946 Bunche began to work with the United Nations. He would work with the UN for the rest of his life. He was asked to **mediate** between Arabs and Jews over land conflicts. He was the assistant to the UN Special Committee on Palestine. Later he was the principal secretary of the UN Palestine Commission. This Commission was formed to work on a **partition** of Palestine. A partition would separate Palestine. This would be approved by the UN general assembly. In 1948 this plan was dropped. Fighting between Arabs and Israelis increased. The UN appointed Count Folke Bernadotte as a mediator. Ralph Bunche was his assistant. Four months later Bernadotte was killed. Bunche was named UN mediator in Palestine. Bunche helped create an agreement for peace between Israel and the Arab States.

Bunche returned to the United States. There was a hero's parade in New York City. Los Angeles declared a "Ralph Bunche Day." He was honored by the NAACP in 1949. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950. This was awarded to him for all of his work with peace in the world.

## **Classroom Activities**

### **Vocabulary**

- 1. International**
- 2. doctorate**
- 3. NAACP**
- 4. Segregated**
- 5. Mediate**
- 6. Partition**

### **Introduction/Warm Up:**

Discuss the history of the struggle against racism in the United States.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What personal experiences did Ralph Bunche have, as a child, with racism?
2. What demonstrates that Bunche had courage to enter into the peace-making process in the Middle East?
3. In which civil rights activities did Bunche participate in that also demonstrated his courage?
4. Do you believe in equal rights for everybody? EVERYBODY? Explain your answer.

### **Classroom Activities:**

1. List all of the reasons why Ralph Bunche might have thought that mediation was the most important thing that he did in his life.
2. List all of the reasons why he might have thought that mediation was NOT the most important thing that he did in his life.

3. Write: What do YOU think was the most important thing that he did in his life? Explain your conclusion.

### Technology Option:

Go to <http://search.comcast.net/?q=Ralph+Bimcje&cat=Images&con=net>.

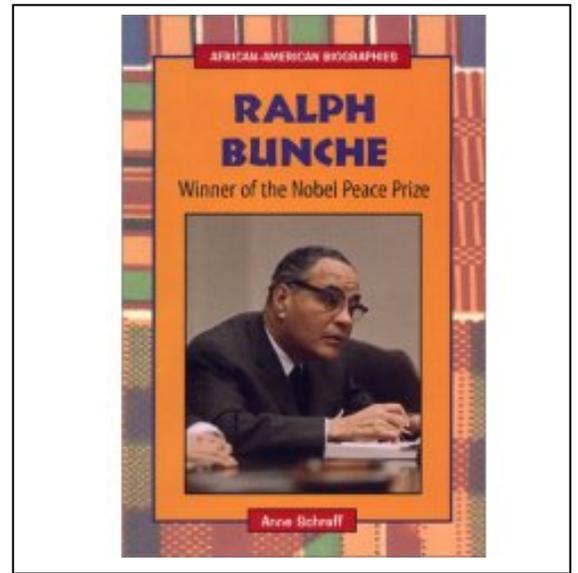
Select photos that represent several different important events in Ralph Bunche's life. Assemble these photos into a presentation board, including labels, explaining these events and their importance.

### Read together:

#### **Ralph Bunche: Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (African-American Biographies)**

(Library Binding)

By [Anne E. Schraff](#) (Author)



### Bibliography

<http://www.pbs.org/ralphbunche/credit.html>

Ralph Bunche, an American Odyssey

[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/)

This is the official Nobel Laureate Site

<http://search.comcast.net/?q=Ralph+Bimcje&cat=Images&con=net>