



## Septima Education Performance

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- There will be a pre-show discussion with the cast at 11:00am.
- The performance will start promptly at 12:00pm.
- The show will run for 90 minutes with no intermission.

### STUDENT AND CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS

We are extremely excited to welcome you to our production of *Septima!*

To ensure a positive experience for everyone, including all students and actors, please review these guidelines with your students and chaperones before attending the performance.

- The actors welcome responses to their performance. Laugh when it's funny, cry when it's sad, and above all else listen to the actors tell their story. If you enjoy the performance, applaud as the cast takes their bow at the end.
- Please remember that the actors can see you and hear you, even if you speak quietly or whisper to your neighbor. Offer your respect by providing your complete attention and refrain from talking during the performance.
- In an effort to keep the space in great shape, we ask that you do not bring food, drink, gum and candy to the theatre.
- Other items that can cause big distractions are cell phones, iPods, video games, laser pointers, cameras and anything else that makes noise or gives off light. Please refrain from using these devices during the performance.
- Due to copyright laws forbidding recording, no pictures, video, or any other recording can be done during the performance.
- Students must remain in the theatre during the performance.
- Teachers and chaperones are expected to help manage students' behavior while viewing the play. We ask that teachers and chaperones intersperse themselves amongst their students.
- Have a great time! Thanks!



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## BACKGROUND

Septima Poinsette Clark was a civil rights activist born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1898. She attended the Avery Normal Institute and graduated in 1916. Clark started her career as a schoolteacher in a one room schoolhouse at the age of 18. Unable to go to college, Clark received her licentiate of instruction and began working on John's Island as an educator. She taught for nearly 20 years before enrolling at Benedict as a part-time student. Clark eventually earned her BA from Benedict College in Columbia, and her MA from Virginia's Hampton Institute. She wanted to do more to advance the rights of African Americans, so she joined the Charleston branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Many southern states enforced segregation until the mid-1900s, denying African Americans the right to attend white schools. African American teachers were not allowed to teach in the Charleston public school system, and instead, had to accept teaching in rural school districts. Clark and others thought this was unfair, and they protested to win African Americans the right to teach at Charleston public schools. The campaign was successful and Clark believed that social activism had the power to better the lives of African Americans.

In the 1950s, Clark and the NAACP advocated for integrating public schools. Her involvement in the NAACP caught the attention of the Charleston City School Board. Clark was asked to deny her membership in the NAACP, but she refused. As a result, the school board fired her. No longer employed, she devoted all of her time to activism. Clark was particularly upset by the voting system in the South. Black men and women had the right to vote but were often kept from the voting polls by literacy tests and poll taxes.

Clark designed educational programs to teach African Americans how to read and write by tying their everyday lives to the vote. Her idea for "citizen education" became the foundation of the Citizenship Schools. She worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to win rights for African Americans.

Septima Clark served as an advocate and a leader until her death in 1987.



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## KEY TERMS

- Harriet Tubman's Freedom Train
- The Avery School
- 1919 teacher petition for equal employment opportunities for black educators
- The NAACP
- Women's Suffrage movement
- Rosa Parks
- Highlander School
- Esau Jenkins and the Johns Island Progressive Club
- Citizenships Schools on Johns Island
- 1960's rise of Black voter registration

## OTHER NAMES MENTIONED

- Nerie Clarke & Nerie Clarke Jr.
- Dorothy Cotton
- Andrew Young
- First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt
- Martin Luther King
- Maria Stewart
- Jarena Lee
- W.E.B Dubois
- Ida B. Wells

## STANDARDS

### Grade 5 Standards

Standard 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the conflicts, innovations, and social changes in the United States, including South Carolina, from 1950–1980. (5.4.CE, 5.4.C, 5.4.E)

### Grade 6 Standards

Standard 5: Demonstrate an understanding of the development of global interdependence from 1920 to the present. (6.5.CO)

### Grade 8 Standards

Standard 5: Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of world events on South Carolina and the United States from 1929 to present. (8.5.CE)

### United States Government Deconstructed Skills

Standard 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in the United States. (USG.4.ER)

### United States History and Constitution

Standard 5: Demonstrate the impact of America's global leadership on technological advancements, the transition to a post-industrial society, and ongoing debates over identity in the period 1945–present. (USHC.5.CC)