



# NOTORIOUS RBG

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF  
RUTH BADER GINSBURG

## FAMILY GUIDE

Parents and group chaperones, we've created this guide to help you prepare for your visit to the Skirball Cultural Center!

Who is Ruth Bader Ginsburg? What is this exhibition about?

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a.k.a. RBG (b.1933), is an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Prior to that she was a student, a professor, a lawyer, an activist, and an appellate judge.
- This exhibition explores RBG's personal life, ongoing career, and her place in popular culture.
- At the age of eighty, RBG became celebrated in popular culture as "Notorious RBG" after a series of fiery dissents, or statements of opposition, that she made in 2013 to Supreme Court decisions she thought were unfair to women and/or people of color.
- Behind the nickname is a woman with a lifelong commitment to helping build a society in which all Americans are treated equally under the law. Inspired by role models in her own life and in history, and fueled by her courage, hard work, and close relationships, RBG has made a huge positive difference in our country and inspired millions of people. And she's not done yet!
- On your visit, think about the active role that we can all play in helping build a more just society, no matter our age.

What can I do in the exhibition?

- Explore Ruth's childhood home in Brooklyn, New York, in the 1930s and 1940s.
- Sit at a recreation of her elementary school desk and learn about the important role education (and baton twirling!) played in her life.
- "Ride" along with Ruth and her future husband Martin Ginsburg, a.k.a. "Marty," on their first date.
- Check out the colorful ERA bracelet on display and learn about why it was created.
- Take a seat at an imaginative recreation of RBG's desk, where you can view the 2018–2019 Supreme Court calendar.
- Watch RBG work out! Not bad for someone over 80!
- Dress up as justices and make your voice heard at a recreation of the Supreme Court bench.
- Stop at ten listening stations and hear RBG's delivery of oral arguments, majority opinions, and forceful dissents in landmark Supreme Court cases.
- Pick up a gallery guide that explores how our government functions and describes legal terms in plain English.

Note to parents and chaperones:

- On your visit, be sure to stop at the sections highlighted on the reverse, and discuss the guiding questions with the young people in your group.
- Photography is very limited in the exhibition. See signage at the entrance to the gallery for more information. If you do take a picture at the designated spots, share your photos on social media and tag #NotoriousRBG and @skirball\_la.
- This exhibition presents landmark gender-based discrimination cases in the US. Terms like abortion, strip-searching, and reproductive rights are used in the exhibition text panels.

## STOP 1: RBG PHOTO MURAL



- Based on what you saw as we walked into the gallery and this collage of images in front of you, what are your impressions of RBG?
- When RBG dissents—or disagrees with the majority of justices on the Supreme Court—she wears a special bejeweled neck collar, known as a jabot (pronounced “jah-BOW”), to signal her opinion. Do you wear a special outfit or accessory when doing something important?
- RBG says, “You can disagree without being disagreeable,” meaning being rude or disrespectful. How do you express yourself when you don’t agree with someone?
- Have you ever had an opinion that you had to stand up for even though other people disagreed with you?
- What is an idea that you feel is worth fighting for?

## STOP 2: RBG’S CHILDHOOD LIVING ROOM AND SCHOOL



- What do you see here? What is the same or different about your living room or school today?
- Identify an artifact or quote that tells us about the people who may have lived or gone to school here. What might this object or quote tell us about what they cared about or valued? What makes you say that?
- Read the panel “Just some of the things women couldn’t do in the 1930s and 1940s.” Does anything surprise you? Many things were simply off-limits to women, but RBG and other trailblazing women worked to change these things.
- RBG has had many role models who shaped her life and career. One was her mother, who encouraged her to get a good education at a time when most girls were simply told to find a husband. Another was Professor Vladimir Nabokov, who taught her to develop strong writing and editing skills, which she still uses today. Think of a role model in your life. How do they support or encourage you?
- How are you a role model, supporting or encouraging others?

## STOP 3: SUPREME COURT BENCH



- What does this area remind you of?
- This is a recreation of the Supreme Court, the highest court of law in the US, whose function is to interpret the laws spelled out in the US Constitution. Take a seat at the bench. How does it feel to sit at that long desk?
- Why do you think the justices wear black robes? Tell me more. Try on the different neck collars that RBG wears, and see how each makes you feel.
- RBG is the second female Supreme Court justice in history; she is now joined by two other women, Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor (the first Latina justice on the court). Why do you think it’s important for women to be represented at all levels of government?
- What do you think are the qualities that make someone a good judge, or someone who successfully fights for the rights of others? Which of these qualities does RBG seem to have?
- Like RBG, how can you use your voice to make a difference?