

Obama's Background

Eighty six-year-old Sarah Obama, the US Democratic president Barack Obama's grandmother seems to be his biggest supporter. A day after the Illinois senator formally accepted his party's nomination the elated grandma said she would visit him if he was elected as the President of United States. "It is about give and take if you want to win a battle," the 86-year-old said in her native Luo language. "I stayed up late on Thursday night watching clips of the convention," she added. Sarah Obama was the third wife of Obama's paternal grandfather Hussein Onyango Obama. Although not a blood relation, Obama often refers to her as his grandmother.

Obama's candidature has already stirred excitement in Kenya. Kenyan Prime Minister saying his ascent was good for Africa. The Prime Minister is an ethnic Luo, as was Obama's late father. Barack Obama, who was born in the United States, barely knew his Kenyan father who returned to his homeland when Barack was a young boy. However, Obama was given a hero's welcome during his last visit to the rural village in 2006 when he visited his grandmother. Barack Obama's life story has been unconventional from the start. His biography — white mother, African father, a childhood spent in Hawaii and Indonesia, working in one of the nation's poorest communities, studying and teaching at some of America's most prestigious universities — was unlike that of any other presidential candidate.

If his eclectic background has fuelled his extraordinary rise, his foreign-sounding name and race also made his candidacy a tough sell in some corners of America. He has fended off countless rumours that he's Muslim (he's Christian) and this summer, he told the crowd at a Missouri fundraiser that he knew it was "a leap" electing a black man with his name.

1. Comprehension exercises (2 points)

1.a. According to the text (0.5 points)

- a. Obama was born in Indonesia.
- b. His father didn't know him.
- c. **Obama's father was Kenyan and returned to Kenya being young.**

1.b. According to the text (0.5 points)

- a. **His background has been good for his career.**
- b. His background has been tough for his career.
- c. His background, race and name have been good for his career.

1.c. Sarah Obama is Obama's real grandmother.

(Answer 'True' or 'False' AND write the sentence supporting this idea) (0.5 points)

- FALSE - Sarah Obama was the third wife of Obama's paternal grandfather Hussein Onyango Obama. Although not a blood relation, Obama often refers to her as his grandmother.

1.d. His life has been absolutely different from any other candidate's.

(Answer 'True' or 'False' AND write the sentence supporting this idea) (0.5 points)

- TRUE - Barack Obama's life story has been unconventional from the start. His biography—white mother, African father, a childhood spent in Hawaii and Indonesia, working in one of the nation's poorest communities, studying and teaching at some of America's most prestigious universities—is unlike that of any other presidential candidate.

2. Do the following grammar exercises according to the instructions given (2 points)

2.a. Complete the second sentence using 'likely' so that it has a similar meaning to the first one. (0.5 points)

- It will probably rain tomorrow.
- **It is likely to rain tomorrow.**

2.b. Turn the two sentences into a clause containing 'as well as' (0.5 points)

- I'm interested in mountaineering. I'm interested in running.
- **I'm interested in mountaineering as well as running.**

2.c. Complete the second sentence using 'used to' so that it has a similar meaning to the first one (0.5 points)

- Oliver liked collecting stamps when he was a child.
- Oliver **used to like collecting stamps when he was a child.**

2.d. Write the appropriate verb form of the verb in brackets (0.5 points)

- This time tomorrow **I will be lying** (to lie) in the sun.

3. Identify ONLY FOUR words from their definitions (1 point)

- A person who backs a politician or a team. (**supporter**)
- Exultantly proud and joyful. (**elated**)
- The fluid that is pumped by the heart. (**blood**)
- By a small margin. (**barely**)
- Unfortunate or hard to bear. (**tough**)
- A sudden and decisive increase. (**leap**)

4. Write a summary of the text of about 30 – 45 words using your own words (2 points)

5. Write a composition of about 100 – 150 words on ONLY ONE of the following topics (3 points)

5.a. Write a story about something frightening that happened to you or somebody you know.

5.b. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of being famous today.