

# Kamala Harris



Kamala Devi Harris is a **politician** and an **attorney**. She might be the **vice-president** of the United States of America and could make history by being the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian-American person to be the US vice-president.

## Childhood

Kamala was born on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1964 in Oakland, California. Kamala's mother, Shyamala, had moved to the USA from India so that she could continue to study science at university. Kamala's father, Donald, moved to the USA from Jamaica and he is a university **economics** professor. Shyamala and Donald divorced when Kamala was seven years old.

Kamala has a younger sister called Maya; the pair did lots of things together when they were young, including singing in a children's choir and travelling around the world to see their family.

## Education

When Kamala was 12 years old, she moved to Canada with her mother and her sister so that Shyamala could begin working at the Jewish General Hospital. This meant that Kamala and Maya attended a French-speaking primary school: Notre-Dame-des-Neiges. After this, they attended Westmount High School, where they spoke English.

After graduating from Westmount High School in 1981, Kamala moved back to the USA; she attended Howard University in Washington DC until 1986, where she studied political science and economics. After that, Kamala returned to California to attend law school at the University of California. In 1989, Kamala was awarded her Juris Doctor, which is a professional degree that is needed if someone wants to practise law.

After graduating with her Juris Doctor, Kamala's first job was as a deputy district attorney. This meant that she was responsible for making sure that the law was applied fairly if someone had committed a crime.

In 2010, Kamala was elected as California's Attorney General. This meant that she was the main person in charge of making sure that the laws of California were upheld. She was the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian person to have this job. After this, Kamala became a member of the US Senate. In this role, Kamala worked hard to promote equality for all people.

### Becoming Vice-President

In 2019, Kamala supported Joe Biden in his campaign to become president of the USA after reluctantly recognising that she did not have the money to fund her own successful campaign.

In 2020, Joe Biden announced that he had chosen Kamala to be his 'running mate'. This meant that Kamala would become vice-president if Joe was elected as president. Joe Biden is currently the projected winner of the presidential election. Any vote count disputes should be resolved by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and the president-elect and vice-president-elect will be sworn into office on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### Glossary

<b>attorney:</b>	A lawyer who works in court to help people who are on trial.
<b>economics:</b>	The study of how people choose to spend their money on goods and services.
<b>politician:</b>	A person whose job it is to be involved in governing an area or a country.
<b>vice-president:</b>	The person who is second in command after the president.

# Questions

1. Where was Kamala born? Tick one.

- ☐ India
- ☐ California
- ☐ Jamaica
- ☐ Canada

2. In which year was Kamala awarded her Juris Doctor? Tick one.

- ☐ 1964
- ☐ 1981
- ☐ 1989
- ☐ 2008

3. Find and copy the **two** languages that Kamala would have needed to speak while living in Canada.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

4. What did Kamala study at Howard University?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Look at the section called **Career**.

Find and copy one word which means 'chosen by votes'.

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6. Explain why Kamala might become vice-president rather than the president of the USA.

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

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8. Predict what you think Kamala will do over the next ten years.

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# Answers

1. Where was Kamala born? Tick one.

- ☐ India
- ☒ **California**
- ☐ Jamaica
- ☐ Canada

2. In which year was Kamala awarded her Juris Doctor? Tick one.

- ☐ 1964
- ☐ 1981
- ☒ **1989**
- ☐ 2008

3. Find and copy the **two** languages that Kamala would have needed to speak while living in Canada.

**French**  
**English**

4. What did Kamala study at Howard University?

**Kamala attended Howard University in Washington DC where she studied political science and economics.**

5. Look at the section called **Career**.

Find and copy one word which means 'chosen by votes'.

**elected**

6. Explain why Kamala might become vice-president rather than the president of the USA.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Kamala might become vice-president because she was Joe Biden's 'running mate' and he is the projected winner of the presidential election. She will not be president in 2021 because she could not afford to fund her own campaign.**

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

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Born in California in 1964 to Shyamala and Donald, Kamala had a younger sister called Maya with whom she sang in a choir and travelled to see family.**

8. Predict what you think Kamala will do over the next ten years.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I predict that Kamala will continue to support causes which give all people equal rights because this is something that she has been passionate about.**

# Kamala Harris



Kamala Devi Harris is a politician and an **attorney** who could make history in 2021 by becoming the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian-American person to be the vice-president of the United States of America.

## Childhood

On 20<sup>th</sup> October 1964, Kamala was born in Oakland, California. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, had moved to the

USA from India so that she could continue to study biology at university. Her father, Donald Harris, moved to the USA from Jamaica and he is a university **economics** professor. Shyamala and Donald divorced when Kamala was seven years old; from this point, Kamala and her younger sister Maya would spend weekdays with their mother and weekends with their father.

## Education

As Shyamala accepted a research and teaching position at the Jewish General Hospital in Quebec, Kamala and Maya moved with her to Canada when Kamala was 12 years old. This meant that Kamala and Maya attended a French-speaking primary school (Notre-Dame-des-Neiges) and then the English-speaking Westmount High School.

After graduating from Westmount High School in 1981, Kamala returned to the USA, attending Howard University in Washington DC to study political science and economics. While studying at Howard University, Kamala volunteered to sort the mail at the office of a Californian **senator**. She also ran the meetings of the university's economics society and led the debate team.

After graduating in 1986, Kamala returned to California to attend law school at the University of California. While studying, she served as the president of the university's Black Law Students Association group. In 1989, Kamala was awarded her Juris Doctor – a professional degree that is needed if someone wants to practise law.



## Career

After graduating, Kamala was hired as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County, California, meaning that she became responsible for ensuring that the law was applied fairly if someone had committed a crime. Kamala was passionate about making sure that young people who were accused of crimes were treated fairly and she began a programme that gave offenders opportunities to achieve qualifications and find a job.

In 2010, Kamala was elected as the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian person to serve as California's Attorney General. This meant that she was the main person in charge of making sure that the laws of California were upheld. As part of this role, Kamala endeavoured to make sure that all people in California were protected: she defended California's climate change law, she protected affordable healthcare for residents and she helped to secure marriage equality for all Californians.

After this, Kamala was elected as a member of the US Senate (there are only 100 senators at any one time and Kamala was elected to represent California in 2016). In this role, Kamala worked hard to promote equality for all people – she introduced laws to raise the minimum wage and she defended the legal rights of refugees and immigrants.

## Becoming Vice-President

In 2019, Kamala announced the intention to become the president of the United States of America and many people supported her, including former president Barack Obama. However, Kamala and her team did not have the funds to see the campaign through to the end. Instead, Kamala supported Joe Biden in his campaign and became his 'running mate'. This means that, if Joe becomes president of the USA, Kamala will be the vice-president. Joe Biden is currently the projected winner of the presidential election. Any vote count disputes should be resolved by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The US Congress will count the electoral votes on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and the president-elect and vice-president-elect will be sworn into office on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021.



**Glossary**

<b>attorney:</b>	A lawyer who works in court to help people who are on trial.
<b>economics:</b>	The study of how people choose to spend their money on goods and services.
<b>senator:</b>	A person who is a member of the US Senate and passes laws for their country or state.

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# Questions

1. Who are Kamala's parents? Tick **two**.

- ☐ Maya
- ☐ Donald
- ☐ Joe
- ☐ Shyamala

2. Draw **four** lines and match each year to what happened in that year.

1981	She attained her Juris Doctor.
1989	She was elected as a member of the US Senate.
2010	She graduated from Westmount High School.
2016	She was elected as California's Attorney General.

3. Find and copy one word which shows that Kamala was not paid for sorting the mail.

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4. Which significant event in Kamala's life happened when she was 12 years old?

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5. ... to study political science and economics.

What is **economics**?

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6. Comment on how Kamala's life might change in 2021.

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7. Summarise Kamala's impact while she was a member of the US Senate in 20 words or fewer.

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8. 'Kamala cares for other people.'

Explain how the information in the **Career** section of the text proves that this is true.

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9. What additional information would you have liked to see in this text?

Give a suitable sub-heading that it could have been found under.

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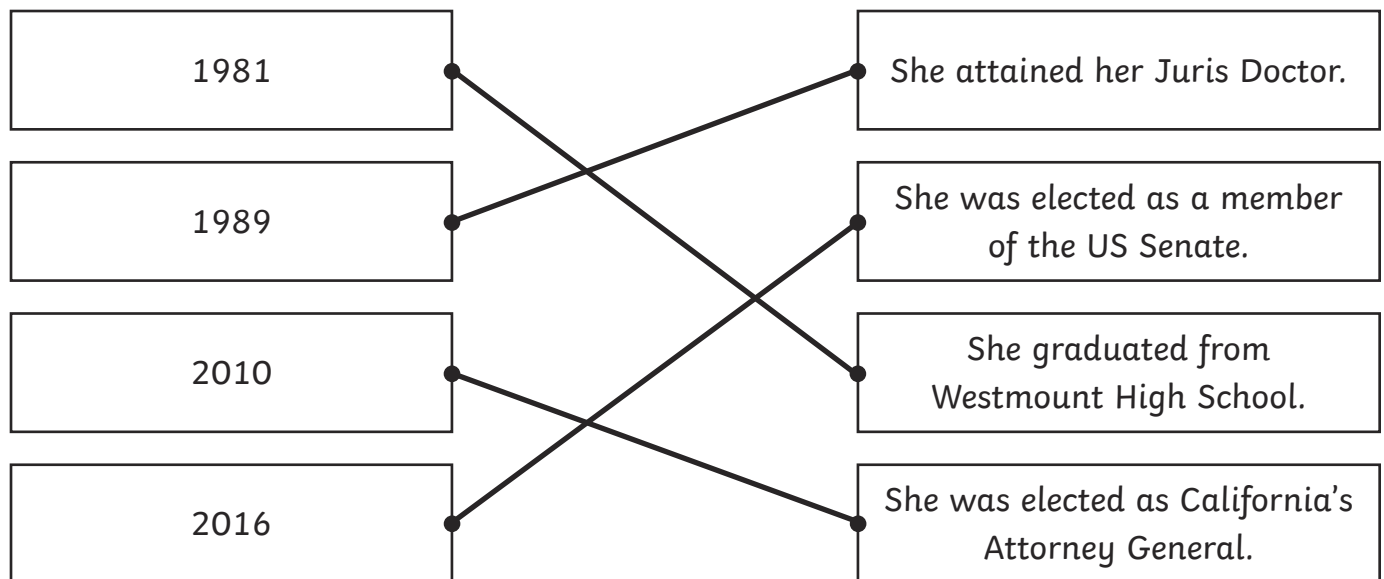
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# Answers

1. Who are Kamala's parents? Tick **two**.

- ☐ Maya
- ☒ **Donald**
- ☐ Joe
- ☒ **Shyamala**

2. Draw **four** lines and match each year to what happened in that year.



3. Find and copy one word which shows that Kamala was not paid for sorting the mail.

**volunteered**

4. Which significant event in Kamala's life happened when she was 12 years old?

**Kamala and Maya moved with their mother to Canada when Kamala was 12 years old.**

5. ... to study political science and economics.

What is **economics**?

**Economics is the study of how people choose to spend their money on goods and services.**

6. Comment on how Kamala's life might change in 2021.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Kamala's life might change in 2021 because she could become one of the most famous people in the world so she might do a lot more interviews and be on the TV a lot more.**

7. Summarise Kamala's impact while she was a member of the US Senate in 20 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Kamala worked to promote equality, to raise the minimum wage and to defend the rights of refugees and immigrants.**

8. 'Kamala cares for other people.'

Explain how the information in the **Career** section of the text proves that this is true.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I know that Kamala cares for other people because she has spent a lot of her career trying to make sure that people are treated equally and fairly. She has also done a lot for the people of California, which must mean that she cares about them.**

9. What additional information would you have liked to see in this text?

Give a suitable sub-heading that it could have been found under.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I would have liked to see information about Kamala's hobbies and interests and this could have been under the sub-heading 'Hobbies'.**

# Kamala Harris



## Who Is Kamala Harris?

Kamala Devi Harris is a politician and an attorney who could make history in 2021 by becoming the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian-American person to be the vice-president of the United States of America.

## Childhood

**On 20<sup>th</sup> October 1964, Kamala was born in Oakland, California. Initially, Kamala was given the middle name 'Iyer' but her parents changed their minds two weeks after she was born; they decided to amend Kamala's birth certificate and change her middle name to 'Devi' – an Indian name meaning 'goddess'.**

Kamala's mother, Shyamala Gopalan – a renowned biomedical scientist – had moved to the USA from India so that she could study nutrition and endocrinology (the study of hormones in the human body) at university. Her father, Donald Harris, moved to the USA from Jamaica and he works as a highly-respected university economics professor, meaning that he teaches others about how people choose to spend their money on goods and services.

Shyamala and Donald divorced when Kamala was seven years old; from this point, Kamala and her younger sister Maya would spend weekdays with their mother and weekends with their father. Kamala and Maya also travelled across the world as children to visit extended family members in India.

## Education

In light of Shyamala's acceptance of a research and teaching position at the Jewish General Hospital in Quebec, Kamala and Maya relocated to Canada when Kamala was 12 years old. This meant that Kamala and Maya attended a French-speaking primary school (Notre-Dame-des-Neiges) and then the English-speaking Westmount High School.



After graduating from Westmount High School in 1981, Kamala returned to the USA, attending Howard University in Washington DC to study political science and economics. While studying at Howard University, Kamala had an internship sorting the mail at the office of a Californian senator. She also ran the meetings of the university's economics society and led the debate team.

After graduating in 1986, Kamala returned to California to attend law school at the University of California. While studying, she served as the president of the university's Black Law Students Association group. In 1989, Kamala was awarded her Juris Doctor – a professional degree that is needed if someone wants to practise law.

### Career

**After graduating, Kamala was hired as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County, California, meaning that she became responsible for ensuring that the law was applied justly. Kamala was passionate about making sure that young people who were accused of crimes were treated fairly and she began a programme that gave offenders opportunities to achieve qualifications and find employment.**

In 2010, Kamala was elected as the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian person to serve as California's Attorney General. This meant that she was the main person in charge of making sure that the laws of California were upheld and oversaw more than 4,800 other attorneys and employees. As part of this role, Kamala endeavoured to make sure that all people in California were protected: she defended California's climate change law, she protected affordable healthcare for residents and she helped to secure marriage equality for all Californians. It was at this time that Kamala met Douglas Emhoff – a lawyer – whom she married in 2014. Kamala became stepmother to Cole and Ella Emhoff, who are said to lovingly refer to her as 'Momala' – a hybrid of 'mom' and 'Kamala'.

In 2016, Kamala was elected as a member of the US Senate to represent California – one of only 100 senators across the USA to hold the position at any one time. In this role, Kamala worked hard to promote equality for all people – she introduced laws to raise the minimum wage and she defended the legal rights of refugees and immigrants.



## Becoming Vice-President

In 2019, Kamala announced her candidacy to become the president of the United States of America in 2020 and many people supported her, including former president Barack Obama. However, Kamala and her team did not have the funds to see the campaign through to the end. Instead, Kamala endorsed Joe Biden in his campaign and became his 'running mate' – a position which could secure her place as vice-president of the USA if Joe is victorious.

Joe Biden is currently the projected winner of the presidential election. Any vote count disputes should be resolved by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The US Congress will count the electoral votes on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and the president-elect and vice-president-elect will be sworn into office on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

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# Questions

1. What did Kamala study while in Washington DC? Tick **two**.

- ☐ French
- ☐ political science
- ☐ a professional degree in law
- ☐ economics

2. Draw **four** lines and match each year to the event which happened in it.

1964	Kamala returned to the USA from Canada.
1981	Kamala and Douglas Emhoff married.
1986	Kamala's middle name was changed.
2014	Kamala returned to California from Washington DC.

3. What is endocrinology?

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4. ... **who could make history in 2021 by...**

How else could the author have written this phrase?

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5. Find and copy the name of the French-speaking primary school that Kamala attended.

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6. Discuss Kamala Harris's impact on Californian citizens based on information from the text.

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7. Summarise how Kamala could be elected as vice-president of the USA in 25 words or fewer.

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8. Compare **two** jobs that Kamala has had and explain why they are similar.

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9. 'Kamala promotes equality.'

Give **two** ways that the text supports this statement.

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10. Compare how Kamala's university studies are similar to her father's university teaching career.

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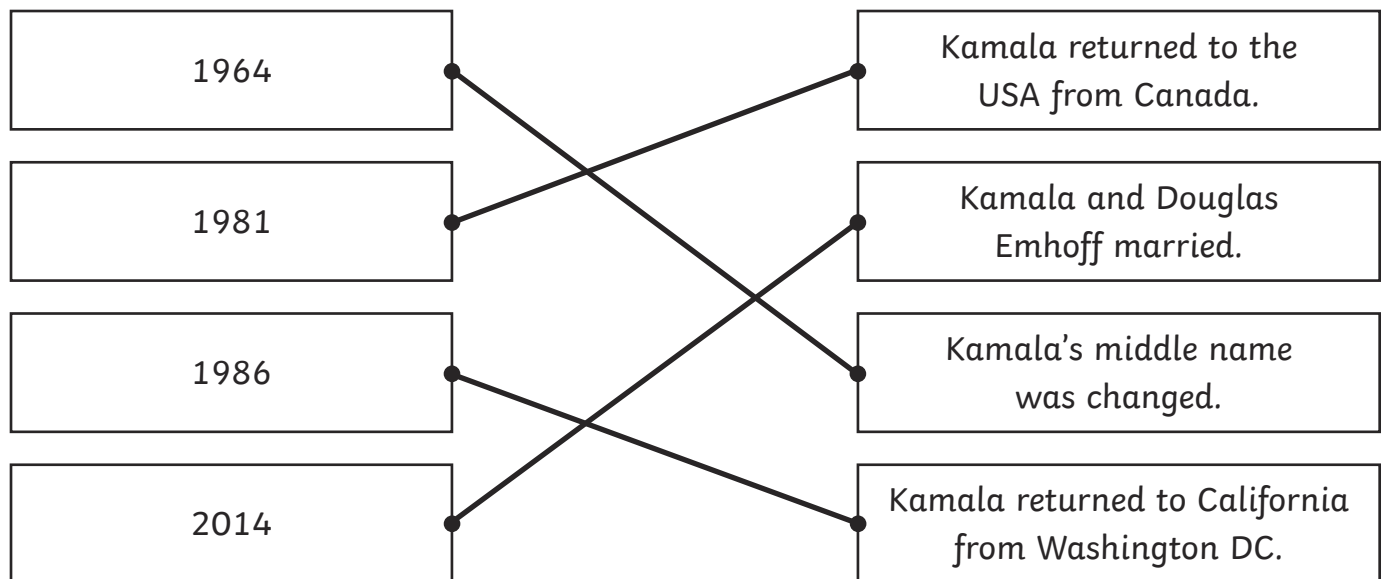
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# Answers

1. What did Kamala study while in Washington DC? Tick **two**.

- ☐ French
- ☒ **political science**
- ☐ a professional degree in law
- ☒ **economics**

2. Draw **four** lines and match each year to the event which happened in it.



3. What is endocrinology?

**Endocrinology is the study of hormones in the human body.**

4. **...who could make history in 2021 by...**

How else could the author have written this phrase?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: ... who could enter the history books by...**

5. Find and copy the name of the French-speaking primary school that Kamala attended.

**Notre-Dame-des-Neiges**

6. Discuss Kamala Harris's impact on Californian citizens based on information from the text.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Kamala has had a positive impact on the life of Californian citizens because she ensured that the law was applied justly and fairly in the state while creating new programmes and protecting their rights.**

7. Summarise how Kamala could be elected as vice-president of the USA in 25 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Kamala could be elected as vice-president because she was the 'running mate' of Joe Biden, who is projected to win the presidential election.**

8. Compare **two** jobs that Kamala has had and explain why they are similar.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Kamala's jobs as deputy district attorney and as California's Attorney General were similar because they both helped people in California and they were both jobs in which she made sure that the laws of California were upheld and applied fairly.**

9. 'Kamala promotes equality.'

Give **two** ways that the text supports this statement.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I know that this statement is true because the text says that she defended the legal rights of refugees and immigrants and that she helped to secure marriage equality for all Californians. Both of these things show that Kamala believes that everyone should be equal in the eyes of the law.**

10. Compare how Kamala's university studies are similar to her father's university teaching career.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Kamala studied economics at Howard University and her father, Donald, teaches economics as a professor at a university. This means that they must both really understand economics.**