

Landmark Supreme Court Cases

SS.7.C.3.12- Analyze the significance and outcomes of landmark Supreme Court cases including, but not limited to, *Marbury v. Madison*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Gideon v. Wainwright*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, *in re Gault*, *Tinker v. Des Moines*, *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmer*, *United States v. Nixon*, and *Bush v. Gore*.

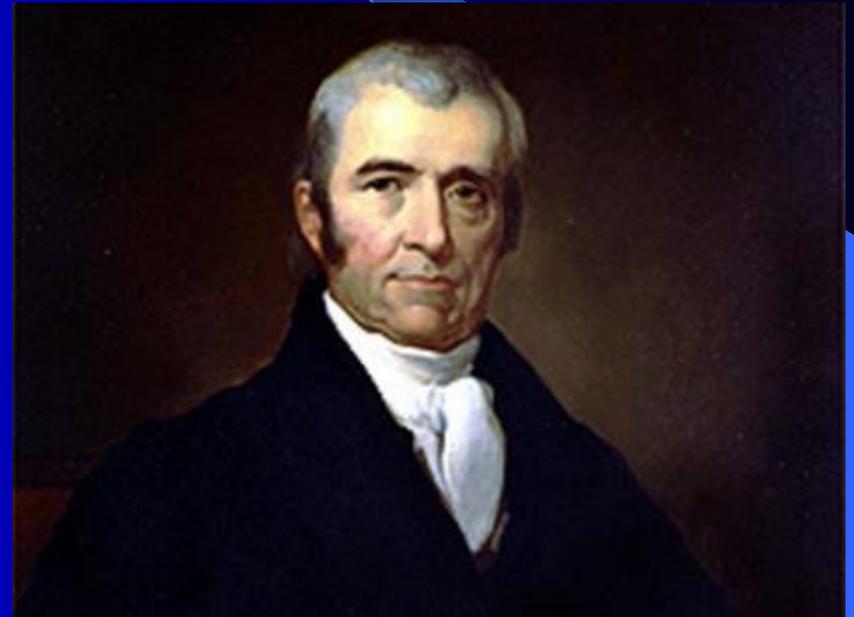


Marbury v. Madison

1803

Background Information

• President John Adams appointed John Marshall as the new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and William Marbury as Justice of Peace for Washington, D.C. before he his term in office was over.



Marbury v. Madison

- Not all of the appointments were finalized before the end of Adams presidency.
- President Jefferson refused to acknowledge the remaining commissions because he felt they were no longer valid.
- William Marbury sued Jefferson's Secretary of State, James Madison to receive his government position.



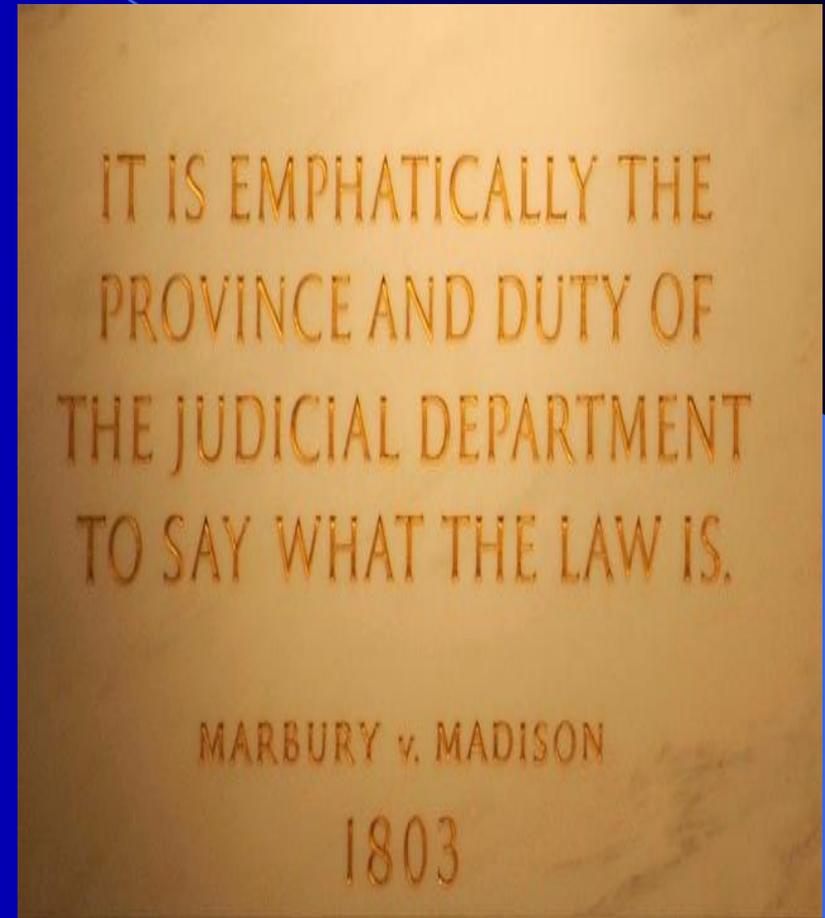
Marbury v. Madison

Results

- Supreme Court ruled in favor of Madison with four (4) votes.

- Helped define the checks and balances system.

- ★ Established the Supreme Court's power of judicial review.



Plessy v. Ferguson

1896

Background Information

- During this time, whites and blacks were required to ride in separate railway cars under Louisiana Law.
- Although Homer Plessy was seven-eighths (7/8) white, he was required to ride the “colored” car.



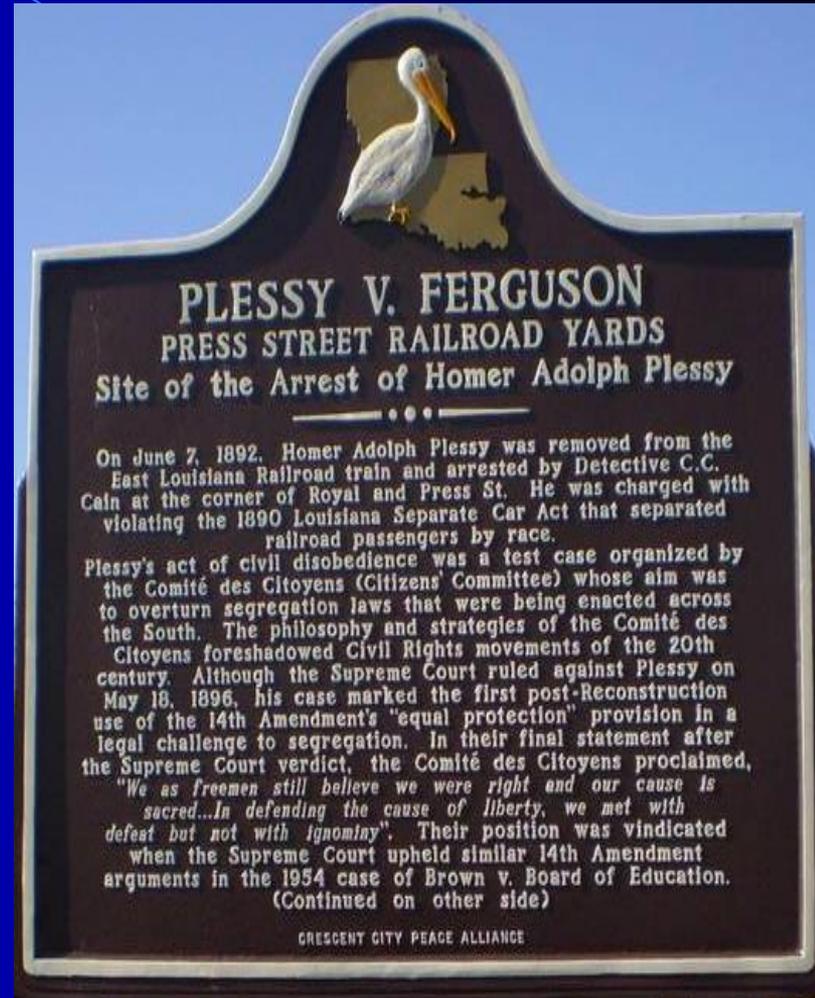
Plessy v. Ferguson

- Plessy was arrested for refusing to leave the “whites-only” railway car.
- He took his case to state court because he felt segregation violated his Constitutional rights protected by the 14th Amendment.
- The Louisiana judge, John Ferguson, ruled that Louisiana can enact segregation laws within the state.
- The case was taken to the United States Supreme Court.

Plessy v. Ferguson

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Ferguson with 7 votes.
- This decision upheld the separate-but-equal doctrine, that separate facilities for blacks and whites satisfied the Fourteenth (14th) Amendment as long as they are “equal”.

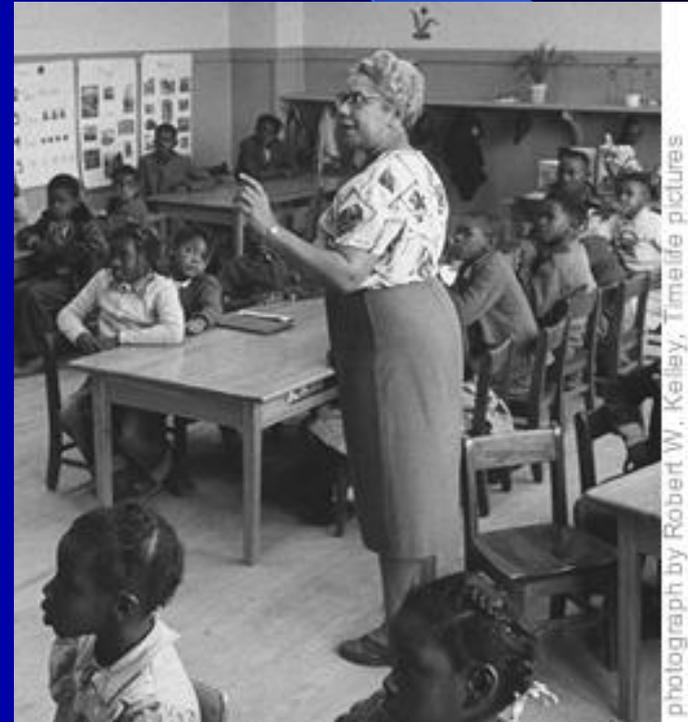


Brown v. Board of Education

1954

Background Information

- Black children were **NOT** allowed to attend the same public schools as white children because laws permitted racial segregation.



Brown v. Board of Education

- Several parents of black children, including Oliver Brown, sued the Topeka School Board claiming racial segregation is unequal and violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth (14th) Amendment.
- Lower courts agreed with the school system; the case was brought to the United States Supreme Court.



Brown v. Board of Education

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of *Brown* with 9 votes.
- The Supreme Court *overturned* *Plessy v. Ferguson*
- Racial segregation in public education will now be *unconstitutional.*

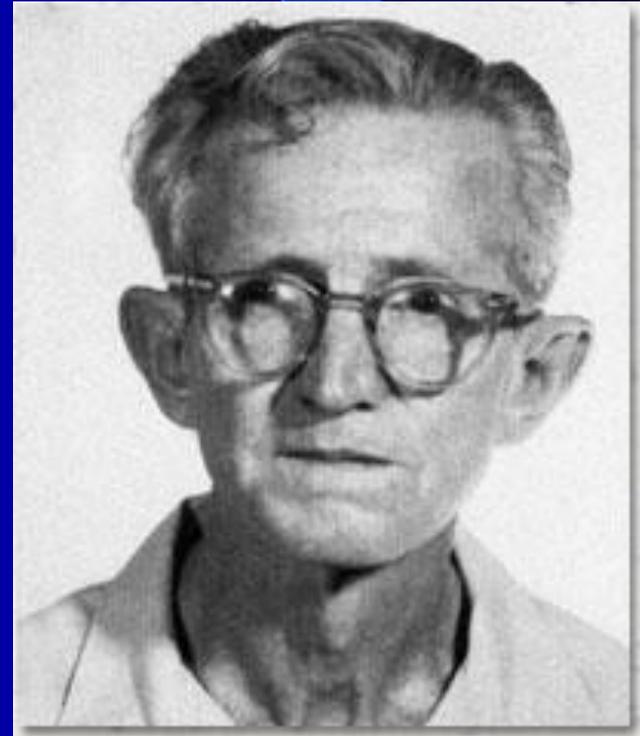


Gideon v. Wainwright

1962

Background Information

- Clarence Gideon was arrested and charged in a Florida court for breaking and entering.
- He was unable to afford a lawyer and the court refused to appoint a free lawyer.



Gideon v. Wainwright

- Gideon was forced to defend himself in court and the jury found him guilty.
- He appealed the court's decision to the United States Supreme Court claiming it violated his rights under 6th and 14th Amendment.

APR 21 1962
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CORRESPONDENCE REGULATIONS
OFFICE OF THE CLERK
SUPREME COURT, U.S.

MAIL WILL NOT BE DELIVERED WHICH DOES NOT CONFORM WITH THESE RULES

No. 1 -- Only 2 letters each week, not to exceed 2 sheets letter-size 8 1/2 x 11" and written on one side only, and if ruled paper, do not write between lines. Your complete name must be signed at the close of your letter. Clipping, stamp, letters from other people, stationary or such must not be enclosed in your letters.

No. 2 -- All letters must be addressed in the complete prison name of the inmate. Cell number, where applicable, and prison number must be placed in lower left corner of envelope, with your complete name and address in the upper left corner.

No. 3 -- Do not send any packages without a Package Permit. Unauthorized packages will be destroyed.

No. 4 -- Letters must be written in English only.

No. 5 -- Books, magazines, pamphlets, and newspapers of reputable character will be delivered only if mailed direct from the publisher.

No. 6 -- Money must be sent in the form of Postal Money Orders only. In the inmate's complete prison name and prison number.

INSTITUTION _____ CELL NUMBER _____
NAME _____ NUMBER _____

In The Supreme Court of the United States
October Term, 1961
No. 830 Misc.
Clarence Earl Gideon, petitioner
-VS-
H.G. Cochran, Jr., Director, Division of
Corrections, State of Florida, respondent.

"Answer to respondent's response to petition
for writ of certiorari."

Petitioner, Clarence Earl Gideon received
a copy of the response of the respondent
in the mail dated sixth day of April, 1962.
Petitioner, can not make any pretense
of being able to answer the learned
attorney General of the state of Florida
because the petitioner is not an attorney
or versed in law nor does not have the
law book to copy down the decisions of
this court. But the petitioner knows
there is many of them nor would the
petitioner be allowed to do so
according to the book of Revised
Rules of the Supreme Court of the
United States sent to me by Clerk of
the same court. The response of the
respondent is out of time (Rule 24)

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Gideon v. Wainwright

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of *Gideon* with 9 votes.
- The Supreme Court held that Gideon and other poor defendants in criminal cases have the right to a *court-appointed lawyers.*



Miranda v. Arizona

1966

Background Information

- Arizona arrested Ernesto Miranda for kidnapping and the state court found him guilty.
- He was questioned without being advised of his right to consult with an attorney or any of his other legal rights.



Miranda v. Arizona



- Miranda appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court claiming the police violated his rights under the 5th Amendment (self-incrimination).

Miranda v. Arizona

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Miranda with five votes.
- The decision held that the police cannot question a person in custody unless they have been read their legal rights.
 1. The right to remain silent
 2. The right to an attorney (at government expense if the accused is unable to pay)
 3. Anything the person says after stating that he or she understands these rights can be used as evidence in court.

In Re Gault

1966

Background Information

- At the age of 15, Gerald Gault was arrested for making an indecent phone call.
- Gault was denied the right of due process because he was a juvenile.



In Re Gault

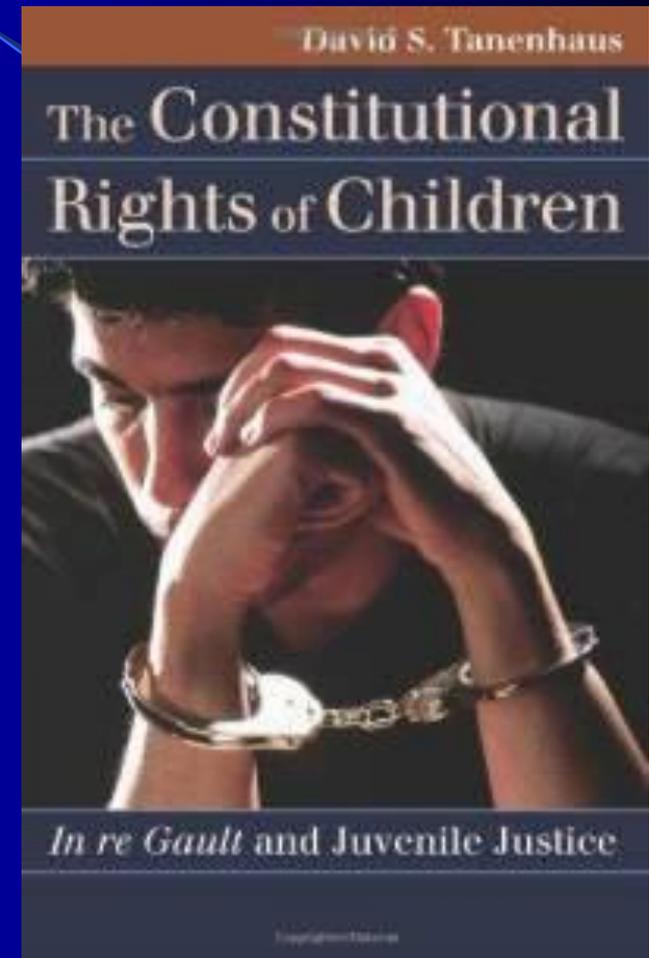
- Gault was tried in juvenile court and sentenced 6 years in the State Industrial School.
- The case was taken to the Supreme Court.



In Re Gault

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of *Gault* with eight votes.
- The Supreme Court ruled the *proceedings* of the Juvenile Court were unconstitutional.
- Criminal cases for *juveniles* must obey the *14th Amendment*.
- Minors have the *same rights* as adults.



Tinker v. Des Moines School District

1968

Background Information

- John Tinker, his sister Mary Beth Tinker, and other students decided to wear *black armbands* to school in protest of the Vietnam War.
- The school adopted a policy prohibiting armbands.



Tinker v. Des Moines School District

- When the students arrived to school, they refused to remove their armbands and were suspended.
- They claimed the school officials violated their 1st Amendment rights.



Tinker v. Des Moines School District

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Tinker with seven votes.
- The students were allowed to wear armbands because it is protected by the 1st Amendment.



United States v. Nixon

1974

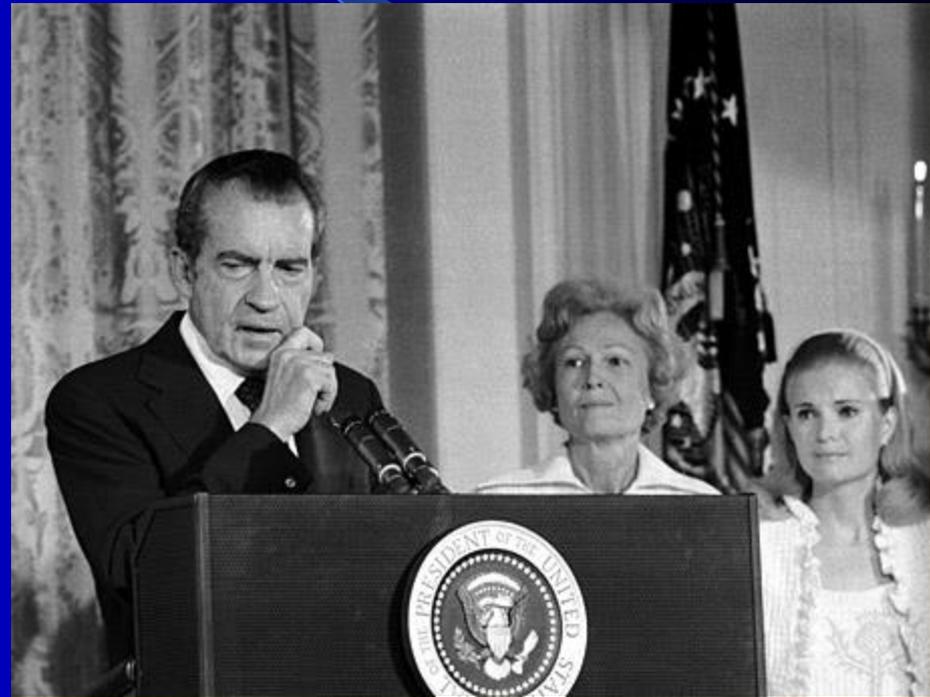
Background Information

- In 1972, the offices of the Democratic Party in Washington D.C. was broken into.
- During the criminal investigation, a federal judge ordered President Nixon to turn over audio tapes of conversations recorded by Nixon about the break-in.



United States v. Nixon

- Nixon refused and claimed *“executive privilege”* allowed him to withhold the conversation tapes from the other government branches and preserve confidentiality.



United States v. Nixon

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the United States with eight votes.
- The decision in this case made it clear that the president is NOT above the law.
- Nixon was required to turn in the tapes which revealed evidence linking the President to the conspiracy to obstruct justice .
- He resigned shortly after.

Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier

1987

Background Information

- Students of Hazelwood East High School wrote and edited the school-sponsored newspaper.
- The school principal removed two articles from the issue and claimed they were inappropriate.



Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier

•Cathy Kuhlmeier and two other students brought the case to court because they believed the principal violated their 1st Amendment rights.



Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of *Hazelwood School District* with five votes
- The Supreme Court ruled that *school officials* have the right to censor articles in the student newspaper or limit speech that interferes with the *school's educational mission.*



Bush v. Gore

2000

Background Information

- During the 2000 presidential election, Al Gore and George W. Bush were so close in their number of votes, the state of Florida was required to manually recount the disputed votes.



Bush v. Gore

- These votes determined which candidate won Florida's electoral votes and would ultimately win the election.
- Bush requested to stop the recount and claimed it violated the 14th Amendment.



Bush v. Gore

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Bush with five votes.
- The Supreme Court ruled the recount must be stopped because the manual recount had no uniform way to judge each disputed vote equally, which violated the Constitution.
- George W. Bush won the presidential election.



District of Columbia v. Heller

2007

Background Information

After the District of Columbia passed a law requiring the registration of handguns, requiring licenses for all pistols, and mandating that all legal firearms must be kept unloaded and disassembled or trigger locked, a group of private gun-owners brought suit claiming the laws violated their 2nd Amendment right to bear arms.



District of Columbia v. Heller



2007

Background Information



The federal court that heard the case first said the Second Amendment only protected ownership of firearms for those associated with a militia, like the National Guard.

The Court of Appeals, who heard the case next, voted 2-1 in favor of protecting private ownership.

D.C. appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court.

District of Columbia v. Heller

Results

- The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Heller with five votes
- The Court held that the Second Amendment does protect an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that firearm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home.

