

How have systems of law affected the fairness of rights over time?

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. Kuhlmeier, United States v. Nixon, and Bush v. Gore.



Use primary sources to assess the significance of these US Supreme Court cases.



Evaluate how these US Supreme Court cases have had an impact on society.



Recognize and/or apply constitutional principles and/or rights in relation to the relevant US Supreme Court decisions.

Mini Booklet: Landmark Cases

Create a mini-book with three categories to group these cases:

Judicial review, Civil Liberties, Equal Protection

Landmark Supreme Court Cases

*Marbury v.
Madison*

*Plessy v.
Ferguson*

*Brown v. Board
of Education*

*Gideon v.
Wainwright*

*Miranda v.
Arizona*

In re Gault

*Tinker v. Des
Moines*

US v. Nixon

*Hazelwood v.
Kuhlmeier*

Bush v. Gore

*Washington
DC v. Heller*

Marbury v. Madison

1803

Summary:

John Adams appointed several **federal judges** in his last days in office, but some **appointments** were not fully completed before he left office. **Thomas Jefferson** refused to let **James Madison** deliver appointment letters. **Marbury**, one of the new justices, took the issue to the courts to argue for his appointment based on an act of Congress. **Marbury lost** his case, but the law was declared **unconstitutional** and the Supreme Court stated it alone had the power to review laws and government actions in **judicial review**.

Outcome:

Established that the **Supreme Court** has the power of **judicial review**



Plessy v. Ferguson

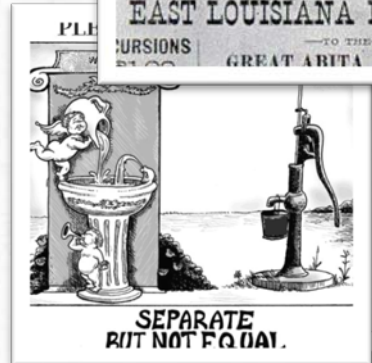
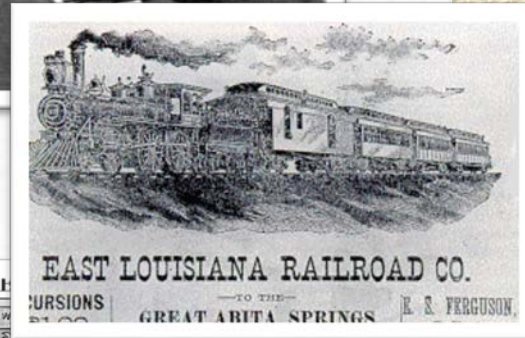
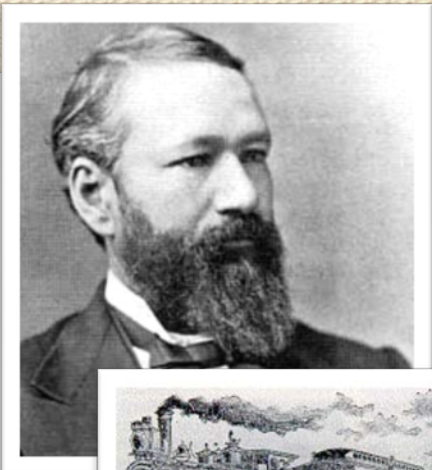
1896

Summary:

Homer Plessy broke a Louisiana law stating that **segregation** between blacks and whites was required on trains. Plessy and a group of black citizens staged this as an act of **civil disobedience**. Plessy lost his case and appealed it to the state Supreme Court, but they declared that “**separate but equal**” is lawful and that the Louisiana law did not break the constitution!

Outcome:

Established that the 13th and 14th amendments did not protect against **segregation**, and that “**separate but equal**” is constitutional.



Brown v. Board of Education

Summary:

1954

Linda Brown and her family sued the school system, **Board of Education of Topeka, KS** for **segregating** the black students to a lower quality, farther away school. The Browns appealed the decision of the district courts because they believed the law violated the **14th amendment** of the US Constitution guaranteeing equal treatment under the law. **Brown** and the other students won the case and **overturned** the outcome of the previous case, **Plessy v. Ferguson**.

Outcome:

Established that **segregation** was **unconstitutional** and violated the **14th amendment** guarantee of equal protection of the law.



Gideon v. Wainwright

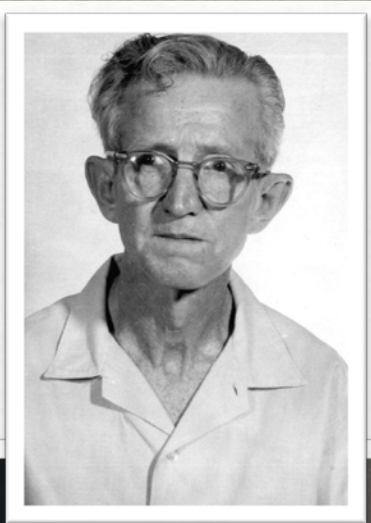
1963

Summary:

Clarence Gideon was arrested under suspicion for stealing from a Pool Room in Panama City, FL. He was poor and could not afford a **lawyer**, then a judge **denied** him one and he lost his case. He wrote a petition and sent it to the Supreme Court. They ruled that Gideon's case was unfair and he should have been given a lawyer according to the **6th and 14th amendments**.

Outcome:

Upheld that everyone has the right to **fair trial** and **due process** under the **6th and 14th amendments**- including the right to a **lawyer**.



Miranda v. Arizona

1966

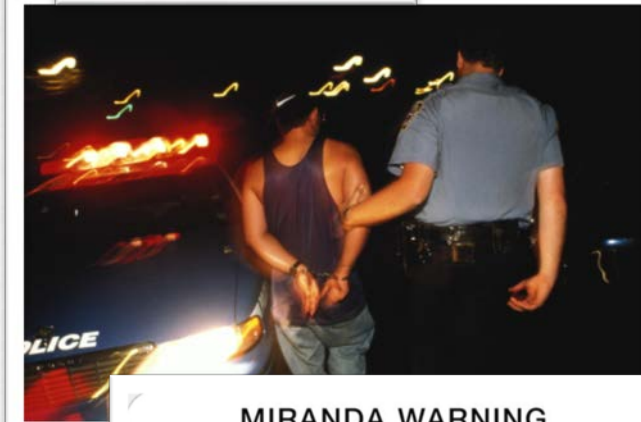
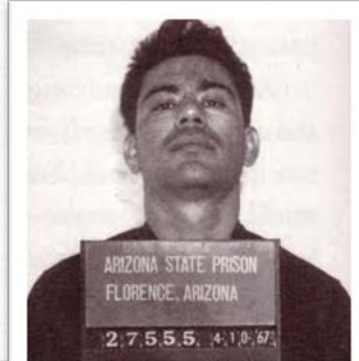
Summary:

Ernesto Miranda was **arrested** under suspicion for committing a crime and **questioned** for two hours. The police did not tell Miranda he had rights to **remain silent** and not **self incriminate**, so he signed a **confession** and was sentenced to 20-30 years. He appealed his case to the Arizona Supreme Court, but they denied it and upheld the conviction. Finally, the **Supreme Court** ruled that Miranda was denied **due process** rights and rights against **self incrimination**.

Outcome:

Upheld that **5th amendment** rights against **self-incrimination** and **14th amendment due process rights**

Also enforced procedures of “**Miranda Rights**” being read to all people being arrested.



MIRANDA WARNING

1. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT.
2. ANYTHING YOU SAY CAN AND WILL BE USED AGAINST YOU IN A COURT OF LAW.
3. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO TALK TO A LAWYER AND HAVE HIM PRESENT WITH YOU WHILE YOU ARE BEING QUESTIONED.
4. IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO HIRE A LAWYER, ONE WILL BE APPOINTED TO REPRESENT YOU BEFORE ANY QUESTIONING IF YOU WISH.
5. YOU CAN DECIDE AT ANY TIME TO EXERCISE THESE RIGHTS AND NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS OR MAKE ANY STATEMENTS.

WAIVER

DO YOU UNDERSTAND EACH OF THESE RIGHTS I HAVE EXPLAINED TO YOU?
HAVING THESE RIGHTS IN MIND, DO YOU WISH TO TALK TO US NOW?

In re Gault

1966

Summary:

Jerry Gault, a **15 year old boy**, was arrested and taken to jail for making **prank phone calls** to a neighbor. The police did not give Gault's parents notice that he was being arrested, and he remained in jail. He was found guilty **without any witnesses or evidence**, and sent to the State Industrial School with **no chance for appeal**. Gault's parents petitioned the Arizona Supreme Court and then to the US Supreme Court for not following **due process** because he was a **juvenile**.

Outcome:

Upheld **14th amendment** due process clause and equal protection for all citizens, even juveniles.

Upheld **5th amendment** rights of the accused and **6th amendment** rights in a criminal trial, even for juveniles.



Tinker v. Des Moines

1968

Summary:

John and Mary Beth Tinker were suspended from school until they agreed to remove **black armbands** they wore to **protest** the Vietnam War. The school officials believed the armbands were disruptive, but the Tinkers believed they had the right to **free symbolic speech**. They appealed their case to the Supreme Court because the School Board had violated the **1st and 14th amendments**.



Outcome:

Upheld that **symbolic speech** was protected under the **1st amendment** and that **14th equal protection laws** applied in schools.



United States v. Nixon

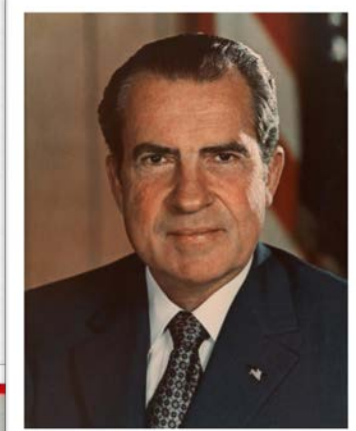
1974

Summary:

The **federal government** brought legal action against **President Richard Nixon** for committing illegal acts to break into and monitor the Democratic Party's headquarters in the **Watergate Scandal**. Nixon argued that his actions and any evidence were protected under **executive privilege** but the courts decided that the President was required to follow the **rule of law** and that **judicial review** allowed them to declare his executive actions **unconstitutional**.

Outcome:

Limited the **executive privilege** of the president and declared that even the president is not above the **rule of law**.



Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier

1987

Summary:

Students in a journalism class at **Hazelwood East High School** took their school to the US District Courts because they believed the actions of their teacher and principal to **edit their school newspaper** for content violated their **1st amendment freedom of speech rights**. However, the content that the officials edited from the newspaper was **inappropriate** and may have damaged other students' reputations. The school lost, but appealed its case because they believed they had reason to **limit student speech**.

Outcome:

Limited the **First Amendment** rights of students in public schools and gave school officials the rights to edit student work if there is **inappropriate content**.



Bush v. Gore

2000

Summary:

During the **2000 Presidential election**, Florida's electoral votes could not be decided in favor of **Bush or Gore**, so a **recount** was called by a Florida law. Some Florida counties missed the recount deadline but Bush was still declared a winner. Gore sued because the recount results were invalid, while Bush argued that a recount was **unconstitutional**. The Courts declared that the winner was George W Bush, and only **state legislatures** had the right to change **election law**, and that the recounts violated **14th amendment equal protection** laws for some voters.

Outcome:

Upheld the right of State Legislators to conduct elections (**Article II**), and the **14 amendment** equal protections of law for all voters.



District of Columbia v. Heller

2007

Summary:

Richard Heller, a security guard, sued Washington DC after they passed legislation barring the registration of handguns, requiring licenses for all pistols, and requiring that all firearms be kept unloaded and locked. He claimed that these new laws violated **2nd amendment** rights to **bear arms**. After the district courts sided with DC and stated the 2nd amendment does not apply to **private gun ownership**, the Supreme Court upheld the 2nd amendment rights for private citizens.

Outcome:

Upheld **2nd amendment right to bear arms** for private gun owners.

