

LANDMARK SUPREME COURT CASES

Title of Case	Issue in Question	Summary of Decision
Dred Scott v. Sanford 1857	Slavery; freedom based on state	Slaves were property, not citizens. No rights. Overturned Missouri Compromise (free states)
Plessy v. Ferguson 1896	14 th Amendment "Separate but Equal"	Separate but Equal constitutional; 14 th amendment only required equal access to facilities, not the same facilities
Brown v. Topeka Board of Ed 1954	14 th Amendment "Separate but Equal"	Overturned Plessy v. Ferguson Racial Segregation violates 14 th Amend. Equal Protection Clause
Marbury v. Madison 1803	Enforcing Judiciary Act-Writ of Mandamus Supremacy Clause	Judiciary Act is unconstitutional Established JUDICIAL REVIEW – Supreme Court has final say in interpreting Constitution
McCulloch v. Maryland 1819	Implied Powers of Congress Supremacy Clause; National Bank v. State	National Bank is constitutional (necessary) and States cannot interfere (Supremacy) with or tax National gov't.
Gibbons v. Ogden 1824	Interstate Commerce	National Government controls interstate trade.
Korematsu v. United States 1944	Discrimination and Racism Executive Order	Rights may be denied during times of crisis— "emergency and peril" Internment critical for national defense
Reynolds v. Sims 1964	Districting Equal Representation 14 th Amendment	All districts must have approximately the same number of people (equal population) "ONE MAN, ONE VOTE"
In Re Gault 1967	Treatment/Rights of Juveniles	Juveniles have same rights to due process as adults
Roe v. Wade 1973	Abortion Privacy (4 th , 9 th , 14 th)	Women choice to abort in 1 st trimester State to define Abortion policies during 2 nd and 3 rd
Furman v. Georgia 1972	8 th ; Cruel and Unusual Punishment – Death Penalty	Then-present Death Penalty laws were unconstitutional (discriminatory and arbitrary); set new requirements
United States v. Nixon 1974	President and Executive Privilege	Executive Privilege not absolute; can't cover up crimes! – Limits President's power
Regents of California v. Bakke 1978	Affirmative Action – Quotas (College admissions)	Colleges can't use race as the only determining factor in admissions; Quotas violate Civil Rights Act and 14 th Amendment
Swann v. Charlotte-Meck Schools 1971	Integration; forced busing	Fed. District Courts could order school districts to force busing to de-segregate
Leandro v. State (NC) 1997	Right to Equal education	Created guidelines to defining "sound basic education"; equal access to educ, not equal funding
Bethel Schools v. Frasier 1986	1 st Amendment; Free Speech	Schools can limit speech if it is lewd or offensive
Engel v. Vitale 1962	Establishment Clause Prayer in schools	Prayer in schools is an official approval of religion, violating the Establishment Clause