

The U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C.

## The U.S. Supreme Court

The Supreme Court of the United States is the highest court in the country. It is the final court in all federal court cases and all state court cases that involve federal issues.

The Supreme Court was established in Article III of the Constitution. The court is presided over by one chief justice and eight associate justices.

Each justice serves a life tenure, although a justice may resign or be removed through impeachment.

Justices are nominated by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. This process involves all three branches of the federal government. It is part of "checks and balances," the safeguards set forth in the Constitution to prevent one branch of government from becoming too powerful.

The role of the Supreme Court has evolved over the years. Originally, the court heard very few cases. Currently, the court hears between 50-85 cases a year.

The Supreme Court rulings on major cases, called landmark cases, have had a profound impact on the U.S. The ruling in Miranda v. Arizona in 1966 required that all criminal suspects be advised of their

rights. Gideon v. Wainwright in 1963 guaranteed a criminal defendant the right to legal counsel. Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka in 1954 ended racial segregation in schools.

Supreme Court of the United States	
No. 1 , October Term, 19 54	
Oliver Brown, Mrs. Richard Lawton, Mrs. Sadie Emmanuel et al., Appellants,	
78.	
Board of Education of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas, et al.	
Appeal from the United States District Court for the	
District of Kanasa.	
This cause come on to be heard on the transcript of the record from the United States	
District Court for the District of Kunnes,	
and was argued by counsel.	
On consideration whereof, It is ordered and adjudged by this Court that the judgment	
of the said District Count in this cause be, and the same is	
Arrely, reversed with costs; and that this cause be, and the same	
is hereby, remanded to the said District Court to take such	
proceedings and enter such orders and decrees consistent with	
the opinions of this Court as are necessary and proper to admit	
to public schools on a racially mondiscriminatory basis with all	
deliberate speed the parties to this case.	
Per Mr. Chief Justice Warren, May 31, 1955.	
May 51, 1955.	
Tw.	
1469	

The 1954 Supreme Court judgment on Brown v. Board of Education which desegregated the public schools.

## **QUICK QUIZ**

Fill in the blank with the correct answer.  What are checks and balances?	What did the ruling in Gideon v. Wainwright guarantee?
	How many justices are on the Supreme Court
Who nominates a Supreme Court justice?	What case desegregated the public schools?
What is a landmark case?	Who confirms a Supreme Court justice?
What document established the Supreme Court?	