

Name:

Block:

Plessy v. Ferguson
Paving the Way for Legalized Segregation

Directions: The questions below are designed to help organize the key background information needed to contextualize the landmark case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. In order to answer each question, refer to the handout and/or textbook resources mentioned within each step.

Step One: Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of the Supreme Court

Resources to use: Constitution Outline handout, Ch. 9 packet, History Alive! Chapter 9

1. What part of the Constitution deals with the Judicial Branch? _____
2. How many Supreme Court justices are there? _____
3. For how long do these justices serve? _____
4. Who picks new Supreme Court justices? _____
5. Who must approve this choice (example of Checks and Balances)? _____
6. What does the Supreme Court do? List two powers of this part of the government.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

Step Two: Contextualizing the Court Case

Resources to use: Analyzing Electoral Maps packet, The 13th/14th/15th Amendment handout, History Alive! Chapter 21: A Dividing Nation (sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9), History Alive! Chapter 23: The Reconstruction Era (sections 2, 3, 4, and 5)

1. Give a summary of the pre-Civil War attempts at compromising on the issue of slavery:
 - a. The Missouri Compromise: _____

 - b. The Compromise of 1850: _____

c. The Dred Scott Decision: _____

2. Who was elected in 1860? Why was this a controversial election? _____

3. Following the Civil War, three amendments are passed. Summarize each below:

a. 13th amendment: _____

b. 14th amendment: _____

c. 15th amendment: _____

4. What were **black codes**? What were their goals? _____

5. How did the Reconstruction Era end? _____

6. Describe the state of race-relations in the U.S. during the time of this case: _____

7. Who is president in 1896 (the year of the case)? _____

8. The Supreme Court justices who presided over this case are listed below, as well as the presidents who appointed them and their political party affiliation. Make some observations about this information. What impact do you think this will have on the Supreme Court's decision?

Stephen J. Field (A. Lincoln, Republican)

John M. Harland (Rutherford Hayes, R)

Horace Gray (Chester Arthur, R)

Melville W. Fuller (Grover Cleveland, Democrat)

David J. Brewer (Benjamin Harrison, R)

Henry B. Brown (Benjamin Harrison, R)

George Shiras, Jr. (Benjamin Harrison, R)

Edward D. White (Grover Cleveland, D)

Rufus W. Peckham (Grover Cleveland, D)

Step Three: The Facts of the Case

Resources to use: The Dispute in Plessy v. Ferguson handout

1. Summarize the facts of the case:
 - a. Who: _____
 - b. Where: _____
 - c. When: _____
2. What is the dispute? In other words, what is being argued in this case? *Remember, in order for a case to be heard by the Supreme Court, there must be a claim that the Constitution is somehow being violated.*

3. What do you think? Are Plessy's Constitutional Rights being violated? Do states have the right to pass these kinds of laws under the Constitution?

4. Read the decision that the court made. Summarize the two opinions below:

a. Majority opinion: _____

b. Dissenting opinion: _____

5. React to the Court's decision: _____
