

Court Decision Effects

Read how one Supreme Court ruling shaped segregation laws.

VS.8.e “describing the effect of the Supreme Court’s decision in Plessy v. Ferguson; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two sentences that tell what the Supreme Court decided. Circle three details that describe effects of the decision, so you can tell the ruling from its results.

The Plessy Decision

- ① After the Civil War, some Southern states passed laws that separated people by race in schools, trains, and other public places. In 1892, Homer Plessy, a man of mixed race, sat in a whites-only train car in Louisiana. He was arrested after he refused to move. His case reached the Supreme Court, the nation’s highest court.
- ② In 1896, the Court ruled, by a 7 to 1 vote, that state laws requiring separate public facilities for Black and white people did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment, as long as the facilities were equal. This ruling became known as “separate but equal.” The decision said racial separation was legal under the Constitution in many public settings.
- ③ The ruling gave states support for segregation, the forced separation of racial groups. Many states used separate-but-equal laws for decades. In real life, schools and other places for Black Americans were often poorer and had fewer resources than those for white Americans. The decision made racial discrimination harder to challenge in court. In 1954, Brown v. Board of Education overturned separate but equal in public schools.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did the Supreme Court rule about state laws that required separate public facilities?

2 What words became the name for the Court's ruling, and what did those words mean?

3 How did the Plessy decision affect states that wanted to use segregation laws?

4 What was one result for Black Americans when separate-but-equal laws were used?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences explaining one effect of the Plessy v. Ferguson decision on laws and public life. Use the word *segregation* in one sentence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the two sentences that tell what the Supreme Court decided. Circle three details that describe effects of the decision, so you can tell the ruling from its results. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did the Supreme Court rule about state laws that required separate public facilities?	The Court ruled that the laws did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment if the facilities were equal.
2	What words became the name for the Court's ruling, and what did those words mean?	"Separate but equal." It meant Black and white people could be kept in separate public facilities if the facilities were supposed to be equal.
3	How did the Plessy decision affect states that wanted to use segregation laws?	It gave states support to use separate-but-equal segregation laws for decades.
4	What was one result for Black Americans when separate-but-equal laws were used?	Their schools and other places were often poorer and had fewer resources than those for white Americans.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Court's decision allowed states to keep laws that separated Black and white people in public places. Because the ruling called separation legal, many states kept segregation for decades. Black Americans often had schools and other facilities with fewer resources.

Accept responses that accurately connect the ruling to legal support for segregation and to unequal public facilities or harder court challenges. The response must have exactly three sentences and use the word segregation.