

**Topic:**  
Dred Scott

**Time:**  
7-8 days

**Grade:**  
6

**Core:**

**Objectives:**

Students will use reading, writing, reference, and critical thinking skills to evaluate the protection offered by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to Dred Scott.

**Procedure:**

1. Spend 1-2 days in small groups to develop posters and/or paragraphs to compare and contrast the 1850's to the 2000's.
  - a. Clothing (from headgear to footwear)
  - b. Home life (home furnishings and appliances)
  - c. Recreation
  - d. Chores/tasks
  - e. Food or meal choices
  - f. School life (curricular and extra-curricular)
  - g. Hairstyles
2. As a class, read through the Preamble to the Constitution. In small groups of three, discuss vocabulary and ideas in the preamble. As a whole class, brainstorm the ideas of the small groups. (1 day)
3. Review the three branches of Government and the responsibilities of each.
4. Discuss that a Constitution is a written plan of government.
5. Read through the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment and discuss the vocabulary of each of the two sections.
6. Use reference books or text books to determine the years the Preamble was written and when the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment was adopted.
7. Have students research the case of *Dred Scott v. Sanford*. They may use Handout 1: Dred Scott and other readings from the library.

Questions to answer:

  - a. Explain the part or role of the state of Minnesota in the Dred Scott case.

**Additional Resources**

1. Handout 1: Dred Scott
2. U. S. Constitution

**Author:** Jean Blomgren & Minnesota Center for Community Legal Education

- b. What role did the Missouri Compromise play in the case?
  - c. In your words, write what Justice Taney said or wrote about the decision.
  - d. What was the ultimate ruling decided by the Supreme Court in *Dred Scott v. Sanford*?
8. Using what was found about Dred Scott's life, compare and contrast the “**rights**” of blacks in 1857 to 2000 in these areas:
  - a. Education
  - b. Employment
  - c. Careers and opportunities
9. Choose one person from the list and write, in your opinion, how the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment affected his/her life.
  - a. Bryant Gumbel
  - b. Michael Jackson
  - c. Oprah Winfrey
  - d. Magic Johnson
  - e. Bill Cosby
10. If Dred Scott were living in the metropolitan area of Salt Lake City today, what might his life be like? Have students write 2-3 paragraphs.

## HANDOUT 1

### ***DRED SCOTT V. SANFORD*** ***60 U.S.393 (1857)***

Dred Scott was born a slave. He was taken by his owner, Dr. John Emerson, into Illinois and Minnesota where slavery was prohibited by the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which excluded slavery from portions of United States territories. After living there for a few years, they both returned to Missouri, which was a slave state. After his owner died, Scott sued his new owner, John Sandford, for his freedom, claiming that the time he spent living in a state that did not allow slavery made him a free man. He also claimed that as a free man, he was entitled to sue in the courts.

The Supreme Court disagreed. Ruling that slaves were property rather than citizens, the Court said that Scott had no legal right to sue his owner in the courts. The Court also stated that because slaves were property, declaring Scott a free man would be a violation of his owner's Fifth Amendment right to property. Justice Taney, in his opinion, said that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in the territory and that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional.

