

## Tracking a Supreme Court Case

The Supreme Court resolves some of the most pressing and controversial issues in the United States today. The Court receives thousands of petitions each year, thus each case it decides to hear typically is one that tackles a politically volatile issue. To familiarize yourself with the process by which cases reach the Supreme Court and to better understand the political significance of one of the Court's decisions, **choose a case that has been heard in the Supreme Court in the past five years** and **answer the following questions**.

1. What is the title of the case you have chosen to examine?
2. Who is the plaintiff in the case?
3. Who is the defendant in the case?
4. Explain, in detail, the original case.
5. Who had original jurisdiction in the case?
6. Remember that appeals courts cannot make a decision on issues of fact, only on issues of law. What was the issue of law in question before the appeals court?
7. What was the decision of the appeals court?
8. Why did the Supreme Court agree to hear this case?

9. In whose favor did the Supreme Court find?

10. What was the final vote?

11. Who wrote the majority decision?

12. Summarize the majority decision.

13. Who wrote the dissenting opinion?

14. Summarize the dissenting opinion.

15. What is the political impact of this decision?

16. Do you agree with the majority opinion or the dissenting opinion?

17. Why?