

# dred scott v sandford answer key

**dred scott v sandford answer key** is a pivotal case in American legal history that encapsulates the complexities of race, citizenship, and the law during the pre-Civil War era. This landmark Supreme Court decision, rendered in 1857, not only impacted the lives of those involved but also set a precedent that influenced national discourse on slavery and civil rights. In this article, we will explore the case's background, the legal arguments presented, the Supreme Court's ruling, and its far-reaching implications. Additionally, we will provide a detailed answer key that highlights key points for understanding this significant historical event.

- Introduction
- Background of the Case
- Legal Arguments
- The Supreme Court's Decision
- Implications of the Ruling
- Answer Key Summary
- Frequently Asked Questions

## Background of the Case

The Dred Scott v. Sandford case originated in the early 1830s when Dred Scott, an enslaved African American man, was taken by his owner, Dr. John Emerson, from the slave state of Missouri to the free state of Illinois and then to the free territory of Wisconsin. Upon returning to Missouri, Scott filed a lawsuit against Emerson, claiming that his time spent in free territory entitled him to his freedom. The case made its way through the lower courts, ultimately reaching the United States Supreme Court.

This case arose against a backdrop of escalating tensions regarding slavery in the United States, particularly the debate over the extension of slavery into new territories acquired during the expansionist policies of the United States. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had attempted to address these tensions by regulating the spread of slavery, but the legal and moral questions surrounding slavery remained contentious.

# Legal Arguments

The legal arguments in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* centered on several key issues: citizenship, the status of enslaved individuals, and the constitutional rights of African Americans. Scott's team argued that because he had lived in free territories, he should be considered a free man. They contended that the Missouri Compromise and the principles of freedom inherent in the Declaration of Independence supported Scott's claim.

Conversely, Sanford's legal team argued that Scott, as an enslaved person, was not a citizen and therefore had no standing to sue in federal court. They maintained that the Constitution did not recognize African Americans as citizens, which was a significant point of contention. This case thus raised fundamental questions about the rights of enslaved persons and the extent of federal power over state laws regarding slavery.

## The Supreme Court's Decision

The Supreme Court's ruling in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* was delivered on March 6, 1857, by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney. The decision was controversial and is widely regarded as one of the worst Supreme Court decisions in American history. The Court ruled against Dred Scott, concluding that he was not a citizen and therefore had no right to bring a lawsuit. The ruling also stated that Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in the territories, effectively nullifying the Missouri Compromise.

Taney's opinion further stated that African Americans, whether enslaved or free, could not be considered citizens of the United States. This ruling had profound implications for the future of slavery and the rights of African Americans, as it denied them any legal standing in the eyes of the federal government.

## Implications of the Ruling

The implications of the *Dred Scott* decision were far-reaching and contributed to the growing divide between the North and South in the United States. The ruling intensified the debates over slavery and pushed the nation closer to civil conflict. Many abolitionists were outraged by the decision, using it as a rallying point for their cause. The decision also emboldened pro-slavery advocates, who viewed it as a validation of their position.

The legal precedent established by the *Dred Scott* case would lead to significant repercussions, including the eventual passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, which sought to rectify the injustices highlighted by the ruling. The *Dred Scott* decision ultimately underscored the need for constitutional reforms to address civil rights and the status of African Americans in the United States.

# Answer Key Summary

The following key points summarize the essential aspects of the Dred Scott v. Sandford case:

- **Case Background:** Dred Scott was an enslaved man who sued for his freedom after living in free territories.
- **Legal Arguments:** Central issues included citizenship, the status of enslaved individuals, and constitutional rights.
- **Supreme Court Decision:** The Court ruled that Scott was not a citizen and had no right to sue, declaring the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.
- **Implications:** The ruling exacerbated national tensions over slavery and contributed to the Civil War.
- **Legacy:** The case highlighted the need for legal and constitutional reforms regarding civil rights for African Americans.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: What was the primary issue in Dred Scott v. Sandford?**

A: The primary issue was whether Dred Scott, an enslaved African American, could sue for his freedom in federal court and whether he was considered a citizen under the Constitution.

### **Q: What was the Supreme Court's ruling in the case?**

A: The Supreme Court ruled that Dred Scott was not a citizen and therefore had no right to sue, and that Congress could not prohibit slavery in the territories.

### **Q: How did the ruling affect the status of slavery in the United States?**

A: The ruling effectively nullified the Missouri Compromise and allowed for the expansion of slavery into new territories, heightening tensions between free and slave states.

**Q: What were the long-term implications of the Dred Scott decision?**

A: The decision contributed to the national divide over slavery and set the stage for the Civil War, ultimately leading to the passage of amendments aimed at securing civil rights for African Americans.

**Q: Who wrote the majority opinion in the Dred Scott case?**

A: Chief Justice Roger B. Taney authored the majority opinion in the Dred Scott v. Sandford case.

**Q: What role did the Dred Scott case play in the abolitionist movement?**

A: The decision galvanized abolitionists and became a rallying point for those fighting against slavery, highlighting the urgent need for reform in civil rights.

**Q: Is the Dred Scott decision still relevant today?**

A: Yes, the Dred Scott decision remains relevant as it is often cited in discussions about civil rights, race, and the evolution of constitutional law in the United States.

**Q: How did the decision influence subsequent legal developments?**

A: The Dred Scott decision influenced the drafting and adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, which aimed to rectify the injustices faced by African Americans and establish their rights as citizens.

**Q: What were the dissenting opinions regarding the case?**

A: Some justices dissented, arguing that the Constitution should protect the rights of all individuals, regardless of race, and that Scott should have been considered a citizen due to his residence in free territories.

**Q: What societal reactions followed the Dred Scott**

## **decision?**

A: The ruling prompted widespread outrage in the North and increased support for the abolitionist movement, while simultaneously emboldening pro-slavery factions in the South.

## **Dred Scott V Sandford Answer Key**

Dred Scott V Sandford Answer Key

## **Related Articles**

- [does red light therapy increase vitamin d](#)
- [don t try this at home](#)
- [does my kid need speech therapy](#)

[Back to Home](#)