**Interpreting Democracy**

*Landmark Supreme Court Decisions*

In this project, you will be investigating a landmark Supreme Court decision to see how it has affected Americans’ civil liberties and the definition of democracy. The goal is to become more familiar with your rights and protections, as well as to see how we have expanded or contracted the definition of democracy and civil liberties over time.

Working individually, research each case and present the following to the class in a 10 minute (or less) powerpoint:

1) What are the facts of the case? Who or what is involved? Tell this in narrative form (like a story). Provide as much context, history, or background as necessary to understand this case.

2) What constitutional issue is being challenged?

3) How did lower courts rule in this issue?

4) What was the majority opinion?

5) What was the minority opinion?

6) What “precedent” was established, reinforced, or overturned in this case? What cases are either similar or related to this one, and how did they affect this ruling?

Keep your powerpoint “text-light”—i.e., include only key terms or concepts; explain the rest verbally. You may want to include audio or video in your presentation.

**Useful resources:**

* Your government textbook, esp. for cases asterisked (\*) (and short summaries of most cases pp. 799-806)
* [www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org)
* www.pbs.org/wnet/supremecourt/rights/landmark.html

**Landmark Cases**

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| Marbury v. Madison  McCulloch v. Maryland  Dred Scott v. Sandford  Plessy v. Ferguson  Brown v. Board of Education of  Topeka, Kansas  \* Tinker v. DesMoines I.S.D. | \* Korematsu v. US  \* Grutter v. Bollinger  Gideon v. Wainwright  Miranda v. Arizona  Roe v. Wade  Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier  New Jersey v. T.L.O. | Engel v. Vitale  Town of Greece v. Galloway (current)  Citizens United v. Federal  Election Commission  Stanford v. Kentucky  US v. Eichman  US v. Jones |

**Presentations are due and begin Monday, December 9.** Email me your presentation (sscharf@tamdistrict.org) no later than Sunday, December 8.