



Viewing Guide:
Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (1954)

The Background of the Case (00:00-3:36)

1. Who was John Richie and what role did he play in bringing African Americans to Kansas?

2. Why was the Monroe School created?

3. As a result of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, how had groups such as the NAACP first tried to fight segregation?

4. What changes occurred regarding segregation in education between 1896 (the *Plessy* decision) and the 1950s?

5. By the 1950s what was the status of segregation in Topeka, Kansas?

6. In the 1950s how did the NAACP decide to change its strategy to end segregation?

Stop and Think: What is your opinion of the NAACP's new argument against segregation?

Linda Brown (3:37-7:20)

7. Who was Linda Brown and why were her parents upset about the school she was to attend?

8. What was the result of the lawsuit in the U.S. District Court?

9. What did this decision mean for the NAACP?

10. What other states had similar cases before them and therefore decided to join forces with the plaintiffs in the *Brown* case?

Stop and Think: What does the fact that there were other states with cases involving the same questions about segregation in public schools as Kansas tell one about changing opinions in the United States?

Question Brought to the U.S. Supreme Court (7:21-10:25)

Stop and Think: How would you frame the issue that was brought to the Supreme Court?
[Formula for issue=Yes/No question + facts of the case using the NAACP's new argument + part of the U.S. Constitution in question]

11. How did the psychologists for the plaintiffs testify before the Supreme Court?

12. Why did it take so long to get a decision in the case?

13. What happened with regards to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court before the second time the case was heard?

Stop and Think: What do you think about Chief Justice Warren's strong belief that the *Brown* case should be a unanimous decision?

The Ruling (10:26-13:06)

14. How did the Supreme Court finally rule?

Impact of the Case (13:07-End)

15. How did the states which required racial segregation react to the Supreme Court's decision?

16. How did some of the states resist the decision?

17. Why was there a second *Brown* case known as “Brown 2”?
18. What happened at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas?
19. Why was the action of President Eisenhower important?
20. Even though segregation was now illegal, how effective was the decision in ending the practice in most Southern states?
21. What happened to the Monroe School in Topeka, Kansas in 1992?
22. Why is this case believed to be one of the most important Supreme Court cases in American history?

Conclusion: Explain the reasons that Professor Eads of Southern Methodist University uses to support her assertion that this case has truly changed America. What is your opinion of her assertions?