



SLAUGHTERHOUSE CASES

LANDMARK SUPREME COURT CASES LESSON PLAN

C-SPAN

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER



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Grade Levels: 9th –12th

Number of class periods: 1 (approximately 55 minutes)

ABSTRACT

During the period after the Civil War, known as Reconstruction, the Slaughterhouse Cases resulted in the first Supreme Court ruling that tested the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. In this lesson, students examine a constitutional challenge to the regulation of the New Orleans meat butchering industry under the Fourteenth Amendment. Students will use short clips from C-SPAN's *Landmark Cases* program on the Slaughterhouse Cases and additional resources to respond to an essay prompt. A rubric to assess students' writing and understanding of content is provided.

MATERIALS

- ★ C-SPAN *Bell Ringer* videos on the "Slaughterhouse Cases"
- ★ Rubric
- ★ Fourteenth Amendment graphic organizer

STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)

How do the Slaughterhouse Cases affect our interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ★ Identify the concept of "incorporation" resulting from application of the Fourteenth Amendment
- ★ Synthesize, into essay form, the facts of the Slaughterhouse Cases and the applicable constitutional principles of the Fourteenth Amendment



INTRODUCTION

In 1869, the Louisiana state legislature passed the Slaughterhouse Act, granting a monopoly of the New Orleans slaughtering business to a single corporation. Local butchers operating separate slaughtering businesses sued Louisiana under the Fourteenth Amendment's Privileges and Immunities Clause. The butchers argued that the state unconstitutionally deprived them of the "privilege" of operating slaughterhouse companies and earning a living free from government intrusion.

PROCEDURE

1. **(5 minutes)** Watch C-SPAN *Bell Ringer* "**Reconstruction in New Orleans and Slaughterhouse Background**" and discuss the introduction to the case as a class.

Video URL: c-spanclassroom.org/Lesson/2032/Bell+Ringer+Landmark+Cases+Series+Reconstruction+in+New+Orleans+and+Slaughterhouse+Background.aspx

2. **(15 minutes)** Watch the C-SPAN *Bell Ringers* "**Reasons for Litigation**" and "**Heart of the Case**" to learn more about how the butchers responded. Have students take notes while watching as a reference to be used later in this lesson. Students should consider questions such as: What complaints did residents have of the butcher industry in New Orleans? How did the legislature and then butcher industry respond to these complaints? What types of constitutional arguments did the challengers make?

"**Reasons**" Video URL: c-spanclassroom.org/Lesson/2033/Bell+Ringer+Landmark+Cases+Series+Slaughterhouse+Cases+Reasons+for+Litigation.aspx

3. **(10 minutes)** Using the National Constitution Center's *Interactive Constitution* materials on the **14th Amendment** and the C-SPAN *Bell Ringer* "**The Impact and Legal Questions of the Slaughterhouse Case**," students will complete the chart provided below.

14th Amendment URL: constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendments/amendment-xiv

"**Impact**" Video URL: c-spanclassroom.org/Lesson/2036/Bell+Ringer+Landmark+Cases+Series+Slaughterhouse+Cases+The+Impact+and+Legal+Questions+of+the+Slaughterhouse+Case.aspx

4. **(20 minutes)** Students will then use their notes from the previously watched *Bell Ringers*, as well as their completed chart to write an essay that answers the prompt provided below.

You will write an essay outlining the background, legal arguments, and ruling of this case that analyzes how this case and its legacy affected the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment.

For additional help: Watch the C-SPAN *Bell Ringers* "**Legacy**"

"**Legacy**" Video URL: c-spanclassroom.org/Lesson/2037/Bell+Ringer+Landmark+Cases+Series+Slaughterhouse+Cases+Legacy.aspx



LEGAL CONCEPT	WHAT DOES THE 14TH AMENDMENT SAY?	WHY IS THIS PRINCIPLE IMPORTANT FOR SLAUGHTERHOUSE CASE?
<p>Due process</p>		
<p>Privileges and Immunities</p>		
<p>Equal Protection</p>		



ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

CATEGORY	3 - ADVANCED	2 - PROFICIENT	1 -BASIC	0 - BELOW BASIC	SCORE
14th Amendment's key principles	Accurately describes and applies all three principles	Describes all three principles but fails to mention that Immunities and Privileges Clause is most important	Describes clauses but does not accurately apply to this case	Inaccurately describes and applies all three principles	
Facts of the case	Describes the facts of the case, including complaints on both sides	Describes the facts of the case but does not accurately portray one of the sides	Describes the facts of the case but does not accurately portray both sides	Does not seem to understand the facts of the case	
Immediate and long-term legacy	Describes the historical context and legal impact of the case	Describes the historical context or legal impact of the case	Describes the historical context but does not seem to understand its relation to the 14th Amendment	Does not mention or provides inaccurate detail of the case's historical context and legacy	
Writing	Essay includes all required elements, transitions between ideas, and conclusion making the argument cohesive Esasy has no spelling or grammatical errors	Essay includes all required elements, but the transitions between ideas and conclusion make the argument inconsistent at times Essay has some spelling and grammatical errors	Paper is missing some required elements necessary transitions, and conclusion does not wrap argument up Paper has many spelling and grammatical errors but the reader can still understand argument	Essay is disorganized and incomplete Essay has a number of spelling and grammatical errors that inhibits reader's ability to understand argument	

Final Grade and Comments: