Supreme Court Research Paper
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Poli-161 / American Federal Government
Term-Paper
All students will choose a landmark Supreme Court case of your choice. Your paper
should contain the following parts:
1. A summary of the case.
a. Your summary should include the background of your case.
b. Be sure to include all of the important players involved in your case.
c. Incorporate the history of the case (how did the trial courts / appellate
courts rule)
2. An in depth analysis of your case. Be sure to discuss all relevant opinions. If
there is a concurring or dissenting opinion incorporate this into your analysis.
Be sure to explain why the court ruled the way it did.
a. Include all Constitutional amendments that apply to your case. Be sure
to explain how these amendments are present.
b. Discuss the ramifications of your case. Was there a precedent
established? If so, what was it?
c. What pertinent issues were brought up in your case?
d. What societal factors influenced the court’s ruling?
e. Did the makeup of the court influence the opinion?
f. Be sure to make connections to course content. (Judicial Activism...)
3. A conclusion. Your conclusion should tie everything together. You may wish
to incorporate your opinion into your conclusion. (What did you learn from this
case? Are you surprised by this ruling? Do you think the court would have ruled
differently now?)

Requirements
✓ This paper can not meet the expected criteria in anything less than 5 pages.
✓ Required Length: 5-7 pages.
✓ Students are required to use 6 additional sources to aid in their analysis.
✓ TWO of the above sources should be from a scholarly journal. For law related
topics you may wish to take a look at JSTOR. This is an excellent database and I
believe you will find it extremely helpful.
✓ As always this term paper should be typed, double spaced and have one inch
margins. Typed assignments should be written in Times New Roman font and must
be size 12. Anyone who does not follow these guidelines will not receive full credit
for the assignment. Papers which are not type written or fail to follow MLA
guidelines will have points deducted. All papers should be checked for spelling and
grammar. Basic spelling and grammar is a distraction and will lessen the quality of
your paper as a whole. Purdue University has an excellent online explanation of
MLA format which can be found at the link below.
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/
 Be sure to incorporate in-paragraph citations in accordance with MLA format.
✓ Paper must include a title page, page numbers and a works cited page in accordance
with MLA or APA format. Papers not submitted in MLA or APA format will not
be accepted. Papers that do not meet the length requirements will not be accepted.
Papers are not accepted will result in a zero.