

FEATURED ARTICLES

Supreme Court Hears Birthright Case 1

Train Trouble in N.J. 3

New Tidibits 5

Kids' Corner 6

Academic Corner 7

Activity 8

This Week in History 9

Supreme Court Hears Birthright Case

What This Means for Immigrant Families

By Bonnie K. Goodman

On May 15, 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court started the hearing for a case surrounding President Trump's attempts to end birthright citizenship for children born to noncitizen parents. The case, *Trump v. CASA, Inc.*, was brought by the States of New Jersey and Washington and has become part of a hotly debated immigration issue.

Birthright Citizenship

The 14th Amendment of the U.S.

Constitution states that "all persons born or naturalized in the United States" are citizens. So a baby born on U.S. soil is automatically a citizen, whether the baby's parents are citizens or not.

In 2018, Trump signed an **executive order**¹ that canceled the birthright citizenship for children of certain immigrants. This policy faced legal challenges almost immediately and is now awaiting a Supreme Court decision.

Continued on next page →



1. **executive order**: a president's written instructions

Supreme Court Hears Birthright Case *Continued*

Both Sides' Arguments

Trump's policy supporters believe that the 14th Amendment was created for citizens in slavery and does not apply to children of immigrants. They argue that people not "subject to the **jurisdiction**²" of the U.S. cannot give citizenship to their children.

Supporters of birthright citizenship point out that it has been, and still is, a legal right and a Constitutional right for over a century. They warn that ending the policy will endanger millions and create **stateless**³ children.

Another argument proposed was that the president does not have the authority to decide matters of citizenship. This should only be allowed through an amendment to the Constitution, a long and difficult process. However, an equally challenging question is whether a court may block an executive order in these matters while the case is being decided.

The Court Proceedings

All nine justices took part in the hearing and brought

forward difficult queries. Some of the conservative justices seemed willing to withdraw birthright citizenship, while liberal justices stood firmly in support.

The deciding ruling is expected in June. Its impact would be immediate, either enabling and restoring immigration for thousands who are separated from their families or undoing these policies and blocking birthright citizenship.

Looking at the Bigger Picture

The issue contributes to the enduring struggle within the U.S. as to who is considered a citizen. The case tests U.S. tradition since the Civil War and has the potential to change what has been the country's understanding of citizenship for decades. Like many past landmark cases, from school desegregation to the expansion of civil rights, this case highlights, perhaps more powerfully, the enduring role of the Supreme Court in shaping the United States.

Review Questions



Supreme Court Hears Birthright Case

1. What is the primary legal question of the case that has been brought before the Supreme Court?

2. Which constitutional amendment is the focus of the case?

3. What do you think could happen if the court rules in favor of Trump's policy?

2. **jurisdiction**: authority and control

3. **stateless**: having no citizenship from any country



Train Trouble in N.J.

Engineers Go on Strike

By Bonnie K. Goodman

Starting on Friday, New Jersey commuters and students had a difficult time getting to work and school. That's because the state's major train system, NJ Transit, had completely shut down after its train engineers went on strike. This strike lasted several days, only ending on Tuesday.

The engineers were claiming that they have not received a raise in years and that NJ Transit has not been treating them fairly.

The sudden stop of trains left hundreds of thousands of travelers struggling to find alternative routes.

The Strike Begins

On Friday, during an ordinary school week, New Jersey residents headed towards their train stations, expecting to **commute**⁴ by train as usual. Instead, there were no trains, conductors, or engineers. Operators refused to work, and the train system was at a standstill.

The engineers belong to a **union**⁵ that organized the strike. Union members reported that they had not received a raise in five years, and since 2019, they had not been given a new contract.

They said they received lower wages than employees at competing railway companies such as Amtrak and Long Island Rail Road.

The engineers claimed they held numerous discussions with transit and state officials, but there were no changes.

Impact

Every workday, NJ Transit trains transport more than 350,000 commuters across the state. These individuals commute mostly to New York City, for work, school, leisure, travel, or other activities.

With the trains not running, the roads became congested, buses became overcrowded, and people missed their appointments. Some teachers reported that classrooms were half full because staff and students could not make it to school.

In an attempt to assist commuters, the transit system added more bus and ferry services. However, these alternatives can accommodate only 20 percent of the usual train commuters. This led to long wait times as people waited for overcrowded transport.

4. **commute**: daily travel for work or school

5. **union**: organization of workers

N.J. Governor Phil Murphy spoke about the strike. He mentioned that all parties, including the engineers, NJ Transit, and the public, should be given some consideration.

The governor accepted help from federal **mediators**,⁶ people trained to assist in resolving disputes, to get both groups back into the conference room for more discussions. Thankfully, the conflict was resolved by Monday, and train service resumed on Tuesday.

Strikes in the Past

Transit strikes have been a problem in New York and New Jersey before. NJ Transit workers had one of the

longest and most brutal strikes in the state's history back in 1983, lasting over a month. All train service stopped during this time.

In 2005, New York City subway and bus workers went on strike for three days. Not only was it annoying for millions of commuters, but it sparked a large debate about workers' rights, as well as future city planning.

Every time public transport workers go on strike, it creates a reminder for everyone about how crucial they are and the amount of strategy required to keep metropolitan areas running smoothly.

Review Questions



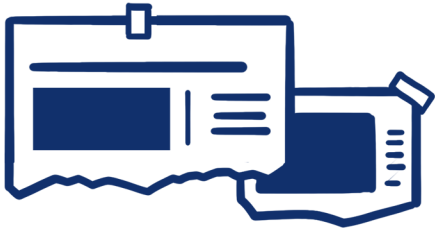
Train Trouble in N.J.

1. What prompted the cessation of NJ Transit train service?

2. What was Governor Murphy's response to the strike?

3. Why are the buses and ferries insufficient during the strike?

6. **mediator**: a neutral party who helps resolve a conflict between different parties



News Tidbits

By Chani Karp



Chimpanzees Administer First Aid

Humans are not the only living things that can pull out their first-aid kits to treat their injuries. Chimpanzees have now been observed doing something remarkably similar!

In a groundbreaking discovery, wild chimpanzees in the Budongo Forest in Uganda have been filmed applying leaves and chewed-up plants to their own wounds and even to the wounds of others.

Without any former training or healthcare lessons, chimpanzees were able to find specific plants with **medicinal**⁷ properties that they feed on or apply to their injuries in order to heal themselves. One young chimpanzee was seen chewing up a plant and then placing it on its mother's injury.

The chimpanzees have even been seen doing this to animals that aren't related to them. They seem to have a natural talent for health treatment even beyond their families.

Where did they learn all this from? Chimpanzees are very intelligent animals. They seem to have a natural instinct for how to use parts of their **natural habitat**⁸ to help them live. They are able to understand which plants are beneficial for which purposes.

They may even be able to show us plants that serve as natural **remedies**⁹

with healing powers that can be extremely useful to mankind. The chimpanzees might just be the key to unlocking some major forest-held secrets.

Only if they let us in on the secrets, of course.



Uber's Route Sharing Service

Uber has started a new cab service called "Route Share," in which passengers can book rides with other passengers.

On Wednesday, Uber announced that a passenger can reserve a seat on a Route Share with up to two additional passengers in the same vehicle. The Route Share Ubers will run every 20 minutes during rush hour and pick up passengers from designated pick-up points. This can save passengers a lot of money.

Uber has been trying to make its service more affordable for people on tighter budgets. Uber Shuttle followed a similar idea in which groups of people traveling to the airport or a one-off event could order an Uber shuttle for a cheaper fare than a private cab.

These budget-friendly options are needed by transport users who do not own cars. Private cabs are too costly for their everyday needs, especially if they need to be driven to and from work. Route Share may be the answer for the masses.

7. **medicinal**: related to medicine

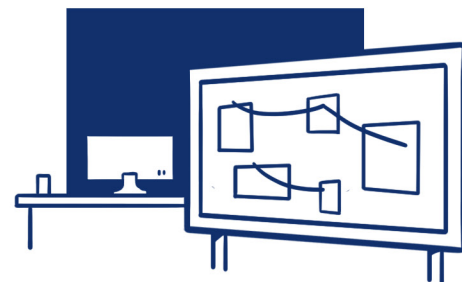
8. **natural habitat**: natural place where an animal lives

9. **remedies**: cures



Kids' Corner

By Chani Karp



Golden Steps of Discovery

Imagine being able to take the metal lead and transform it into gold. Is that not everyone's dream? Like the ancient days of **alchemy**¹⁰ gold-making, that dream became a reality when scientists were experimenting with lead and accidentally produced some gold.

Scientists in a laboratory in Switzerland were busy **monitoring**¹¹ the results of colliding pieces of lead together at an intense speed, almost as fast as the speed of light. Without realizing the potential of this experiment, they came out with pure gold!

Centuries ago, there were alchemists at work all over the world. Alchemy was a type of **pseudoscience**¹² that believed that precious metals could be created from cheaper materials. Although alchemists tried all sorts of experiments and recipes, they never managed to change any metals into pure gold.

Well, it seems the alchemists' goal of **eons**¹³ ago has finally happened in a laboratory. But before you leap for joy that your pieces of scrap metal can make you rich, here's a spoiler: they only managed to make 29 trillionths of a gram, too small for you to see.

How did scientists manage to produce pure gold? Lead and gold are very different metals. However, at the atomic level, the only difference between them is three extra protons. All one has to do is take away three protons from the lead, and it will become gold.

But to do that is no easy feat. The intense force required to knock off exactly three protons is very hard to duplicate. Who knows? We may be wearing gold-from-lead jewelry in just a few years' time!

10. alchemy: an old magical form of chemistry

11. monitoring: watching and checking something over time

12. pseudoscience: something falsely claimed to be science

Arden Named Sports Kid of 2024

Arden Pala is a 15-year-old boy from San Diego who just earned the title of Sports Kid of 2024. How did he earn this major title?

Arden began a charity aimed at helping **disadvantaged**¹⁴ children enjoy sports. He started his mission after he visited Perkins Elementary School in San Diego four years ago and found out that the school's sports clubs had ended due to a lack of funding. Arden decided to make a change in these children's lives.

Arden started on his own. Every Wednesday afternoon, he went over to the Perkins Elementary School to coach the children in soccer, basketball, and other sports — all by himself. It wasn't easy at first, but he kept going, hoping it would change their lives for the better.

And his efforts were completely worth it. Children were growing, learning things about themselves, and becoming healthier mentally despite their challenges. Seeing the positive change it was making, Arden wanted to spread his mission's reach even further to help more children.

He started a charity called Sports4Kids that funds sports groups for underprivileged children in a few schools, giving them the social outlet they deserve like any other children. Arden collected around \$300,000 for these children in the form of sports club funding and food. Now, Arden also hires coaches to teach the children properly, and they **thrive**¹⁵ in these sports clubs.

13. eons: a very long length of time

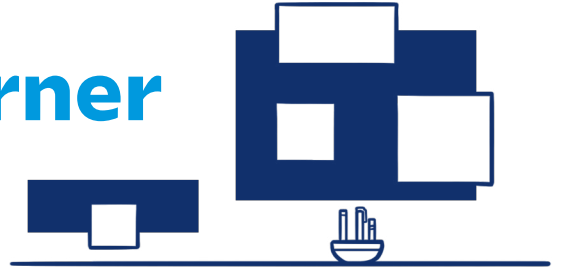
14. disadvantaged: lacking money or education

15. thrive: succeed; flourish



Academic Corner

By Chani Karp



Earthquakes

Earthquakes are potentially life-threatening events that occur when the ground shakes violently, often destroying buildings and killing people. Weaker earthquakes can pass without anyone knowing about them. However, severe earthquakes are deadly, often destroying buildings and killing people. On Sunday and Monday, several strong earthquakes struck close to Greece and was felt as far away as Egypt and Turkey. What are earthquakes, and how do they happen?

The Earth's outer surface is divided into many separate pieces called tectonic plates. These plates are constantly moving around due to the thick liquid magma that bubbles beneath them. It's like dozens of floating pieces of land all fitted together like perfect pieces of a puzzle. But underground movement can create tension above ground.

When the plates rub against each other or collide, it causes a huge force that shakes the Earth. The shaking creates an earthquake. But earthquakes rumbling across the Earth aren't the only fear. Earthquakes are the cause of



other major natural disasters, such as tsunamis and fires that are triggered by the movement. Tsunamis are tidal waves that are created by earthquakes deep under the water's surface.

Scientists use special instruments that can detect the energy that plates have when they are under pressure, known as seismic energy. Earthquakes are rated in strength from 1 to 10 on the Moment Magnitude Scale (MMS). This scale records the level of seismic energy released from the moving plates. Lower numbers

result in slight shaking with no big impact. Larger numbers can result in massive damage such as buildings collapsing, downed power lines, and floods.

Scientists can detect rising movements and quickly warn people nearby, but they usually have only a few minutes before the earthquake hits.



PAGE | 8

This Week in History

By Bonnie K. Goodman

MAY 17, 1954:

Brown v. Board of Ed

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on *Brown v. Board of Education*, marking a critical turning point in U.S. **civil rights**.¹⁶ The court deemed racial **segregation**¹⁷ in public schools **unconstitutional**¹⁸ and set a new course for U.S. education and civil rights. Children could no longer be separated by race at the schools, and they were legally required to be educated together.

This decision overturned an already existing judgment in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), wherein segregation was allowed if the establishments were “separate but equal,” disregarding the fact that Black schools received significantly less funding and were almost never materially equal.

The story began with Oliver Brown, a Black resident of Kansas, who tried to enroll his daughter Linda Brown in a closer white school. After the school barred her entry, Oliver Brown, together with other parents of children enrolled in the Black school and with support from the NAACP, took the case to court. Their argument was that segregation was harmful and unfair, especially to children.

The Supreme Court agreed. Apart from granting the petition, the justices also gave a ruling stating that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” This statement meant that the segregation of schools was unconstitutional on the basis that it violated the 14th Amendment, which grants all citizens equal protection under the law.



This was a landmark decision that paved the way for complete **integration**¹⁹ in schools.

May 16, 1868: The U.S. Senate failed by one vote to remove President Andrew Johnson from office after he was impeached, ending the first presidential impeachment in U.S. history.

May 18, 1896: The U.S. Supreme Court decided *Plessy v. Ferguson*, allowing “separate but equal” accommodations for Black people. The decision remained law until *Brown v. Board of Ed* in 1954.

May 19, 1921: A law called the Emergency Quota Act was passed that limited immigration to the U.S. This later proved to be a big obstacle for refugees trying to escape Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

16. civil rights: rights enjoyed by every citizen

17. segregation: separation, usually based on race

18. unconstitutional: against the U.S. Constitution

19. integration: bringing all people together

May 20, 1862: Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis received a patent for riveted denim pants, blue jeans designed to be strong for workers. Over time, their casual-looking jeans became a fashion item around the world.

May 21, 1932: Amelia Earhart completed her solo Atlantic flight, becoming the first woman to do so and inspiring generations of pilots.

May 22, 1856: Pro-slavery forces attacked the anti-slavery town of Lawrence, Kansas. The violence became known as “Bleeding Kansas,” an important event that helped bring on the Civil War.

Review Questions



Brown v. Board of Ed

1. What was the primary issue in the case *Brown v. Board of Education*?

2. In what way was “separate but equal” unjust?

3. Who was Linda Brown?



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