

Name _____

Critically Thinking About Brown V. Board of Education

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in *Brown v. Board of Education* that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. The Court said that keeping Black and white children in separate schools caused harm, even if the schools had equal facilities. It ruled that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal,” which overturned the earlier 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision that allowed segregation.



The ruling was seen as a victory for civil rights activists and a step toward ending racial injustice in America. However, the Court did not give a specific deadline or method for how schools should integrate. Some states began to follow the ruling quickly, but others resisted or found ways to delay it.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why do you think the Court’s statement that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal” was so powerful?
2. Was the *Brown* ruling alone enough to end school segregation? Why or why not? Support your answer with evidence from the passage.
3. What might have helped the Court’s decision be more effective in getting schools to integrate faster?