

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Citizenship Shift

**Directions:** Read the brief context below. Then write two short reflections explaining what citizenship meant *before* and *after* the Dred Scott decision. Use at least 3-4 strong sentences in each section.



**Before the Decision:** In the early 1800s, ideas about citizenship in the United States were changing. Many free African Americans lived in different states and contributed to their communities, yet their rights were not always recognized equally. There was confusion and disagreement over whether Black Americans could be seen as full citizens with legal rights and protections.

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**After the Decision:** In 1857, the Supreme Court ruled in the Dred Scott case that African Americans could not be considered U.S. citizens. The Court stated that they had "no rights which the white man was bound to respect," a ruling that shocked and angered many Americans. This decision deepened the national divide over slavery and pushed the nation closer to war.

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**Reflection Prompt:** How do you think the definition of citizenship impacts people's sense of belonging and equality in a country?

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