

## Questions related to The Dred Scott Decision

1. Describe the historical, legal, political, and social status of people of African descent in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (and later) by focusing on the first three paragraphs of the excerpt.
2. Did the thirteen colonies allow free blacks to marry whites?
3. “They spoke and acted according to the then established doctrines and principles, and in the ordinary language of the day, and no one misunderstood them.” What is this sentence referring to?
4. The Dred Scott opinion refers to how the Constitution “reserves to each of the thirteen states the right to import slaves until the year 1808,” which was true. But the relevant clause refers to more than just the importation of slaves from outside the country: “The *Migration or Importation* of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year (1808)...” How could this clause be used to argue that the framers of the Constitution were open to the future curtailment of slavery?