



# Mock Supreme Court

Assignment, Discussion & Activity  
with 8.3 & 8.4

# Pop Quiz 8

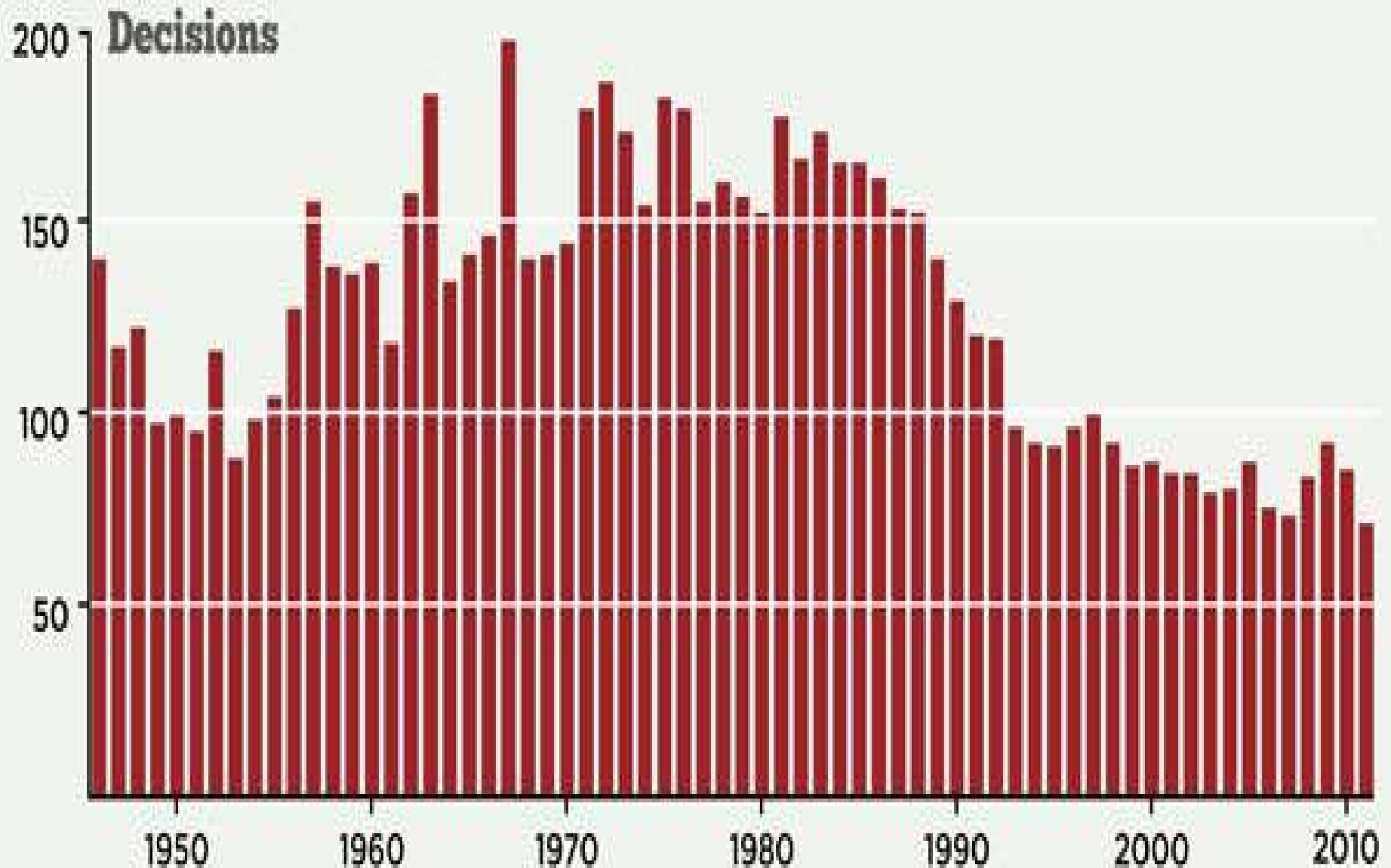
- Log on to [www.socrative.com](http://www.socrative.com) and join room 917563.
- Wait for me to launch the quiz.



# Facts about SCOTUS

- Term begins the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in October and runs through early June.
- The most controversial decisions are announced usually in the last few weeks of the term.
- SCOTUS hears 2 weeks of arguments M-Th in the mornings for 2 hour blocks; take the next two weeks to review cases and research decisions for opinions.

# U.S. Supreme Court Decisions By Term



# How do cases arrive at the Supreme Court?



# SCOTUS & Original Jurisdiction

- Redefine term.
- What types of federal cases begin with the SCOTUS?
  - Cases involving 2 or more states (Gaston ex.)
  - Cases involving the US and a state (AZ law)
  - Cases involving Foreign ambassadors or diplomats (GA ambassador DWI)
  - Cases involving a state against a citizen of another state

**Federal Appellate**

**Route:** Must involve a constitutional issue or legal error of federal law

US  
Supreme  
Court

**State Appellate**

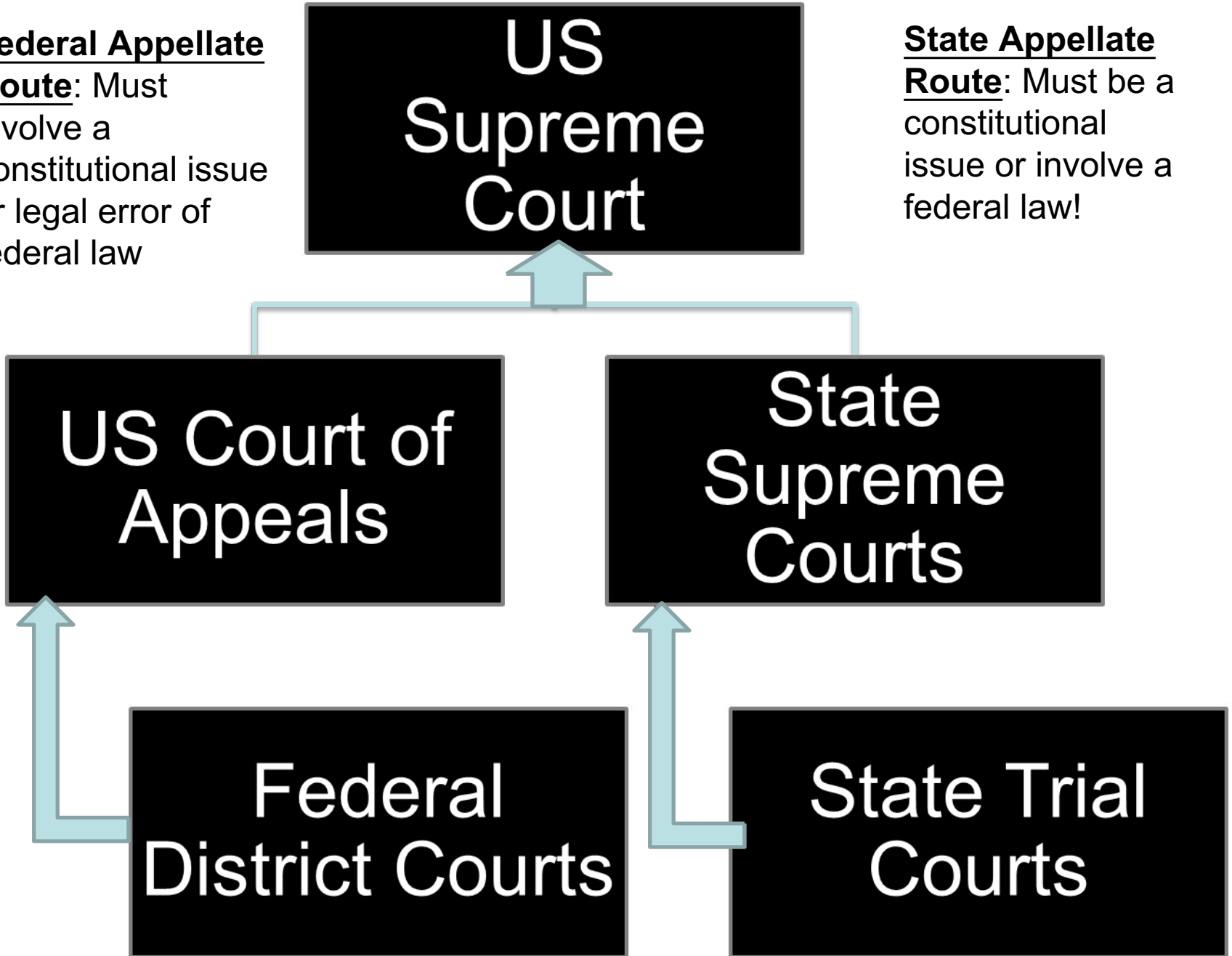
**Route:** Must be a constitutional issue or involve a federal law!

US Court of  
Appeals

State  
Supreme  
Courts

Federal  
District Courts

State Trial  
Courts





# Cases Before the SCOTUS

- When 4 justices agree to hear a case a *writ of certiorari* is issued. (“Rule of 4”)
- Go over steps:
  - Written arguments filed as “briefs.” Anyone with an interest can submit an “amicus brief.”
  - Oral arguments held. Each side gets 30 min.
  - Conference held on Fridays. Discuss order of discussion and voting.
  - Opinions written: Unanimous, majority, concurring, dissenting
  - Announcement

# Why are Opinions Important?

- Opinions rely on precedents. If no great conflicts exist, the “stare decisis” principle stands.
- If conflicts exist, the SCOTUS “breaks with the precedent” and establishes a new precedent. This flexibility allows the SCOTUS to evolve with the times. (Ex of Plessy and Brown decisions)
- Opinions guide the lower courts in their decisions.

# Mock Court, p. 79

- Choose a Chief Justice.
- Chief Justice appoints method to read case. (Either call on a “justice” or read to self). (Written Arguments)
- Debate the case. Take notes on sheet in notebook. (Oral Arguments)
- Vote on case. (Conference)
- Write unanimous, majority or dissenting opinions. (Opinion Writing)
- Present opinions. (Announcement) [Heien](#)  
[Greece](#)