SNAPFILE 7

Marriage is in the courtroom

TB → p. 73 (doc 2)

DIFFÉRENCIATION



▲ *Loving v. Virginia* at the Virginia Opera, 2025

RICHARD

April 9, 1967

Tomorrow our case gets heard in Washington.
Mr. Cohen asked us to attend.
We're not going.
We just want to be left alone and live our lives.
I know this is the last court.
You can't go higher than the U.S. Supreme Court.
When Mr. Cohen asked for a statement, I said,

Tell the Court I love my wife and it is just unfair that I can't live with her in Virginia. [...]

MILDRED

TWO MONTHS LATER
JUNE 12, 1967

We WON.
Mr. Cohen and Mr. Hirschkop are on the phone.
They ask us to come to the press conference at their office in Alexandria–right here in Virginia.
We don't have to pretend we live in Washington.
We can go–TOGETHER–to their Virginia office.
I put my hand over the phone and ask Richard about driving to Alexandria.
He frowns and says, "No. It's time they leave us alone."
I say to Mr. Cohen, "Thank you for everything, but I don't think so."
He says, "Mrs. Loving, this is important. I think it would be good for America to hear you speak."
I cover the phone again and say, "Richard, Mr. Cohen thinks this is important. We can take the kids to Garnet's." He nods.
"Okay, Mr. Cohen, we'll be there as soon as we can." [...]
At the press conference, I say, "I feel free now. It was a great burden." [...]
I start crying, but not hot angry tears. Tears stream down my cheeks because so much has happened. Nine years' worth of tears slide down my face.
Mr. Cohen says to the newsman, "We hope we have put to rest the last vestiges of racial discrimination in Virginia and all over the country."

Patricia Hruby Powell, *Loving vs. Virginia*, 2017

CULTURE SPOT

The 1967 Supreme Court decision ***Loving v. Virginia*** made it legal for people from different races to marry in all U.S. states. The case involved Richard and Mildred Loving, a **mixed-race couple**, who challenged the state of Virginia.

WAY 1 DIFFÉRENCIATION

1. a. Read the *Culture Spot* and **find** information about Richard and Mildred.

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b. Observe the date and the place. What do you know about the social context at that time in the U.S.? **Do research** about the past of this state if necessary to explain why it would ban mixed-race marriages.

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2. a. Observe the structure of the text and identify what the two parts correspond to.

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b. Read through the text quickly and **identify** these places:

- Where the couple comes from: .....
- Where the case is being judged: .....

c. Use your knowledge from **Doc 1** and the *Culture Spot* to sort the elements below in chronological order in order.

- The case is being judged by the Supreme Court. → .....
- The couple was denied the right to get married in their own state of Virginia. → .....
- The couple still believed in their rights and decided to keep fighting. → .....
- The couple decided to challenge their state. → .....
- The couple fell in love despite being a mixed couple. → .....

d. Quote the passage from Part 1 that illustrates this idea.

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3. a. Focus on the first part of Mildred's speech. **Explain** why some words are written in capital letters.

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b. Imagine why she says, "We don't have to pretend we live in Washington". **Tick** the most credible explanation.

They would pretend to live in Washington because …

❑ …it was possible for them to live their married life without hiding there.
❑ … they worked there anyway and it was easier to say they lived in Washington.
❑ … they did not want anyone to know they came from Virginia.
❑ … they wanted to hide from their neighbours.

4.a. Focus on the second part of Mildred's speech. **Imagine** why Mildred and Richard want to drive back to Virginia.

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b. Identify Mr Cohen's reaction. What does he want them to do?

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c. How can you make sense of this contrast? **Tick in** the correct answers.

❑ They don't fully realize how important their case is for the whole country.
❑ They are scared of the media.
❑ Mr Cohen sees their case as a symbol for civil rights in America.
❑ They don't trust Mr Cohen anymore.

d. Identify Mildred's feelings at the end of the text. Which of these adjectives best correspond to what she expresses? Get ready to **justify** orally.

free • relieved • angry • sad • overwhelmed • proud • exhausted

5. a. Observe the photograph and **analyse** its composition. You can use some of these elements:
from the back, in the shadow, solemn, austere, overlook, dominate

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b. Explain how this picture shows the impact that a personal story may have on the entire country.

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WAY 2

1. a. Read the *Culture Spot* and find information about Richard and Mildred.

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b. Rephrase the case in your own words. **Use** your knowledge from **Doc 1** if you want.

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c. Identify the date and the place. **Comment** on the social context in the U.S.A. at that time. **Do** some research if necessary.

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2. a. Read the entire text and **say** what moment of the case the two parts correspond to. **Use** these expressions: *(to) examine a case, (to) pronounce a verdict, (to) win a case*

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b. Focus on Mildred's speech. **Explain** why the author used capital letters.

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c. Explain how Mildred and Richard's plans after the verdict contrast with their lawyer's.

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d. Explain why their lawyer thinks it is so important for them to take part in a press conference.

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3. a. Observe the photograph and **analyse** its composition (position of the people, lights/shadows, symbols).

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b. Explain how this picture shows the impact that a personal story may have on the entire country.

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