**Gideon v. Wainwright**

In 1963, a case called Gideon v. Wainwright came before the U.S. Supreme Court. In this case, a Florida man named Clarence Gideon was charged with unlawful breaking and entering into a poolroom. Gideon asked the trial court to provide him with a free lawyer because he was too poor to hire one himself. The state court refused to provide him with an attorney. It said that state law provided free attorneys only to defendants charged with capital offenses (those crimes that carry a penalty of death or life imprisonment). The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution says that no state may deprive a person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Due process means fair treatment. Gideon argued that to try someone for a felony without providing him with a lawyer violated the person’s right to due process of law. The Supreme Court agreed with Gideon.

**Questions:**

1. In the case of Gideon v. Wainwright, what was the precedent/standard that the Supreme Court set?
2. Who would have had to follow the precedent/standard if the case had been decided by a judge in a state appeals court?
3. Does the Gideon case apply if you are charged with a misdemeanor? Does it apply if you are sued in a civil case?
4. Do you know of other precedents/standards established by the U.S. Supreme Court?

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