

CASE II

Libel: *More Challenging*

At a high school in 1974, there was a fight between two wrestling teams. Some people were hurt. The whole community got angry. The case went to court. A newspaper reporter wrote in his newspaper column that the coach lied in court.

The coach sued the reporter. He said he had not lied. The reporter had “damaged his reputation.” Now everyone would believe that the coach was a liar.

The newspaper reporter said he could write what he thought. He was protected by the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights: freedom of speech.

The Supreme Court agreed with the coach. The court ruled that it is “libel” when someone purposely says or writes something not proven that hurts someone else. Libel is not free speech.