

Literacy Design Collaborative Sample
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Task 21: [Insert question] After reading _____ (literature or informational texts), write a/an _____ (report, essay or substitutes) that addresses the question and analyzes _____ (content), providing examples to clarify your analysis. What conclusions or implications can you draw?

L2 In your discussion, address the credibility and origin of sources in view of your research topic.

L3 Identify any gaps or unanswered questions.

Optional: Include ____ (e.g. bibliography).

(Informational or Explanatory/Analysis)

Task 21 What is worth fighting for? After reading the texts below, write an essay that addresses the question and analyzes the concept of liberty, providing examples to clarify your analysis. What conclusions or implications can you draw?

L2 In your discussion, address the credibility and origin of sources in view of your research topic.

L3 Identify any gaps or unanswered questions.

Source A: (Hand)

Hand, Learned. "I Am an American Day Address." Print. (1944)

Note to Reader: An "I Am an American Day" ceremony was held on May 21, 1944, in Central Park, New York. Learned Hand was asked to address the audience—many of whom were new citizens. The speech was an instant classic.

We have gathered here to affirm a faith, a faith in a common purpose, a common conviction, a common devotion.

Some of us have chosen America as the land of our adoption; the rest have come from those who did the same. For this reason we have some right to consider ourselves a picked group, a group of those who had the courage to break from the past and brave the dangers and the loneliness of a strange land. What was the object that nerved us, or those who went before us, to this choice? We sought liberty; freedom from oppression, freedom from want, freedom to be ourselves. This we then sought; this we now believe that we are by way of winning. What do we mean when we say that first of all we seek liberty? I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws and upon courts. These are false hopes; believe me, these are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it. And what is this liberty which must lie in the hearts of men and women? It is not the ruthless, the unbridled will; it is not freedom to do as one

likes. That is the denial of liberty, and leads straight to its overthrow. A society in which men recognize no check upon their freedom soon becomes a society where freedom is the possession of only a savage few; as we have learned to our sorrow.

What then is the spirit of liberty? I cannot define it; I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the mind of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias; the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded; the spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, near two thousand years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned but never quite forgotten; that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest. And now in that spirit, that spirit of an America which has never been, and which may never be; nay, which never will be except as the conscience and courage of Americans create it; yet in the spirit of that America which lies hidden in some form in the aspirations of us all; in the spirit of that America for which our young men are at this moment fighting and dying; in that spirit of liberty and of America I ask you to rise and with me pledge our faith in the glorious destiny of our beloved country. . . .

Source B (King):

King, Coretta S. "Montgomery Boycott" *McDougal Littell Literature*. Evanston: McDougal Littell, 2009. Print. 882-89.

Note to Reader: Prior to 1954, many states, especially in the South, had laws to ensure segregation, the complete separation of the races in public places. After World War II, however, opponents of these laws began to challenge their legality. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to force whites and blacks to attend separate schools. Soon afterwards, African-Americans in Montgomery, Alabama, began the bus boycott that is the subject of this selection. The Montgomery boycott, which lasted for 381 days, brought about an end to segregation on public buses.

From "Montgomery Boycott" by Coretta S. King

Of all the facets of segregation in Montgomery, the most degrading were the rules of the Montgomery City Bus Lines. This northern-owned corporation outdid the South itself. Although seventy percent of its passengers were black, it treated them like cattle – worse than that, for nobody insults a cow. The first seats on all buses were reserved for whites. Even if they were unoccupied and the rear seats crowded, blacks would have to stand at the back in case some whites might get aboard; and if the front seats happened to be occupied and more white people boarded the bus, black people seated in the rear were forced to get up and give them their seats. Furthermore – and I don't think northerners ever realized this – blacks had to pay their fares at the front of the bus, get off, and walk to the rear door to board again. Sometimes the bus would drive off without them after they had paid their fare. This would happen to elderly people or pregnant women, in bad weather or good, and was considered a

joke by the drivers. Frequently the white bus drivers abused their passengers calling them . . . black cows, or black apes. Imagine what it was like, for example, for a black man to get on a bus with his son and be subjected to such treatment. . . .

Source C: (Lee)

Lee, Harper. *To Kill A Mockingbird*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006. (1960)

Atticus: To begin with, this case should never have come to trial. The State has not produced one iota of medical evidence that the crime Tom Robinson is charged with ever took place. It has relied instead upon the testimony of two witnesses whose evidence has not only been called into serious question on cross examination, but has been flatly contradicted by the defendant. Now there is circumstantial evidence to indicate that Mayella Ewell was beaten savagely by someone who led, almost exclusively, with his left. And Tom Robinson now sits before you, having taken "The Oath" with the only good hand he possesses – his right.

I have nothing but pity in my heart for the Chief Witness for the State. She is the victim of cruel poverty and ignorance. But, my pity does not extend so far as to her putting a man's life at stake, which she has done in an effort to get rid of her own guilt. Now I say "guilt," gentlemen, because it was guilt that motivated her. She's committed no crime. She has merely broken a rigid and time-honoured code of our society, a code so severe that whoever breaks it is hounded from our midst as unfit to live with. She must destroy the evidence of her offense. But, what was the evidence of her offense? Tom Robinson, a human being. She must put Tom Robinson away from her. Tom Robinson was to her a daily reminder of what she did.

Now what did she do? She tempted a negro. She was white and she tempted a negro. She did something that in our society is unspeakable: She kissed a black man. Not an old uncle, but a strong, young negro man. No code mattered to her before she broke it, but it came crashing down on her afterwards.

The witnesses for the State, with the exception of the sheriff of Lincoln County, have presented themselves to you gentlemen – to this Court – in the cynical confidence that their testimony would not be doubted; confident that you gentlemen would go along with them on the assumption, the evil assumption, that all negroes lie; all negroes are basically immoral beings; all negro men are not to be trusted around our women, an assumption that one associates with minds of their caliber, and which is in itself, gentlemen, a lie – which I do not need to point out to you.

Now, gentlemen, in this country our courts are the great levelers. In our courts, all men are created equal. I'm no idealist to believe firmly in the integrity of our courts and of our jury system. That's no ideal to me. That is a living, working reality!

Now I am confident that you gentlemen will review without passion the evidence that you have heard, come to a decision, and restore this man to his family.

In the name of God, do your duty. In the name of God, believe Tom Robinson.