

Purpose:

The IB Topics summer assignment is meant to be a bridge between what you learned in HOA and our examination of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the fall. In preparation for our first unit on Rights and Protest, you will be asked to reflect upon the continued struggle for equal rights in our country by connecting events from the past with current events.

Estimated time of completion: This entirely depends on the student's investigative and reflective nature, but no more than 6 hours are expected to be spent on the assignment.

Due date and method of assessment: Students will submit a series of reflections the first week of school and take part in an in-class seminar discussion covering the material during the second week of school.

Instructions for Assignment: Watch the film(s), read the required article and book, and write a reflection for each. Each reflection's length can vary, but together you shouldn't have more than 4 pages total. The reflections should contain your thoughts/personal responses/impact on you/questions the reading or video raised for you. Some guiding questions are provided to help you process the material, though you can respond thoughtfully in any manner you see fit, and don't have to answer all of them in each reflection. These materials include powerful ideas and may require some time to process and reflect upon. You will need to be logged into your APS account to access the links below.

Summer Assignment:

Reflection 1: [The Murder of Emmett Till Video](#)(53 minutes)

How did white and African American citizens in the United States respond to the murder? How did these responses vary between the South and the rest of the country? Lynchings had occurred throughout the 20th century-why was this one a catalyst for change? How does the community response after Emmett Till's funeral compare and contrast with the reaction to the murder of George Floyd in 2020?

Reflection 2: The Killers' Confessions: [article link](#); [letters to editor link](#)

Read through this 1956 account of the murder, and be sure to look at all of the letters to the editor at the bottom. *What are your thoughts about what you are reading? Consider the origins and purpose of this article-what are the values and limits for a historian studying this event? What accounts for the similarities or differences of opinion in the letters to the editor? What comments do you find the most troubling? How do they compare to what was seen and heard in the film? In 2007, the accuser [admitted she had lied](#)-what is your reaction? Optional extensions: there are a variety of additional articles on the [PBS website for the film](#)*

Reflection 3: [James Baldwin Video Clip](#)

James Baldwin was an African American "essayist, novelist, and playwright whose eloquence and passion on the subject of race in America made him an important voice, particularly in the late 1950s and early 1960s, in the United States." (Britannica) *How does this video make you feel? Do you think his words still resonate today? Why or why not?*

Reflection 4: [James Baldwin Book, *The Fire Next Time* \(1963\)](#)

- What is the significance of the book's title, the titles of its two sections, and the epigraphs that precede the book itself and the second letter?
- Based on the section entitled *My Dungeon Shook*, what is his overall view of America and of the future? What does Baldwin mean at the end when he says "We cannot be free until they are free?"
- How does Baldwin personalize history and the issue of black oppression in the United States? Does this personalizing result in too narrow a focus or does it intensify his account's impact and our response?
- What is Baldwin's attitude toward the Nation of Islam and Elijah Muhammad?
- What are the links among sexual awakening, crime, religion, racial discrimination, and self-realization in *The Fire Next Time*? What are their personal and public implications?
- On page 101, Baldwin writes "Do I really *want* to be integrated into a burning house?" What is his opinion on the state of the Civil Rights Movement in 1963?

Recommended Civil Rights Documentaries:

Eyes on the Prize Series

John Lewis: Get in the Way

King In The Wilderness

Central Park Five

13th

Recommended Books and Movies: Here are a few titles to try out this summer if you want

Devil in the Grove by Gilbert King (true story of racism, murder, rape, and the law in the South in 1949)

March: Books 1, 2 & 3 by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell (graphic novels about Civil Rights)

Selma (2015 movie centered on Martin Luther King's role in the Selma march)

The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As told to Alex Haley

Why We Can't Wait by Martin Luther King, Jr. (a classic on the events & ideas of the Civil Rights movement)

Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community by Martin Luther King, Jr. (Post Civil Rights Act)

Mudbound (movie about race relations in post WWII Mississippi; on Netflix)

Long Walk to Freedom (2013 film based on Nelson Mandela's life)

Kaffir Boy by Mark Mathabane (autobiography of life under apartheid)

Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah (2016 book)

The Stalin Epigram by Robert Littell (fictional, but based on the experience of a famed Soviet dissident poet)

Mao Zedong: A Life by Jonathan Spence (brief biography)

Castro: A Graphic Novel by Reinhard Kleist

The Cold War: A New History by John Lewis Gaddis (very readable overview of the Cold War)

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email us. Enjoy your summer!