

Final Assessment

In this unit we have read several texts that address the justice system and/or different concepts connected to justice in America. This is a HUGE topic, with issues Americans debate daily and in great length. We're only begun to scratch the surface, and I do not intend for us to come to any conclusions or tie the unit up "in a next bow." I **do** want to read some of your thoughts regarding these issues after being exposed to ideas about justice in this class.

For your assignment, you will write a **brief response essay**. You are to **select one of the following claims** and either **agree with it or refute it** using examples from our readings:

CLAIMS (3-4+ pages):

1. The fact that justice is distributed unequally is not morally problematic. Competition is the engine of capitalism/our society; any inherent inequality spurs people to attain what they do not now have. Any disorder over perceived inequality is naive or sentimental.
2. The concept of justice conveys meaning if it is distributed without prejudice. The fact that income/ race/ gender dictates the availability of justice in America renders the very concept of justice meaningless.

In such a highly-charged topic, it is critical that **claims** are backed up by **evidence**. Therefore, I will be looking for **three pieces of evidence** and for you to **quote** from the following:

- "The Tipping Point" by Malcolm Gladwell
- "Black Men and Public Space" by Brent Staples
- "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by MLK

For those who have a particular interest in this topic, there are two additional texts (which I will provide on Google Classroom) you can read and use in your response. Feel free to talk to me or Mrs. Harple if you are interested in these for more specific details about their arguments:

- "The Lockdown" by Michelle Alexander (from *The New Jim Crow*)
- "Panopticism" by Michel Foucault (from *Discipline & Punish*)

If you have been drawn to the poetry we've used in class, you can also include examples from the following to support your argument. These can only be used IN ADDITION TO examples from the above sources:

- "I, Too" by Langston Hughes
- "I Lock You in an American Sonnet that is Part Prison" by Terrance Hayes
- "From 'I Citizen'" by Claudia Rankine
- "A New National Anthem" by Ada Limon