

Creative writing on readings

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Questions from Readings

1. It is justifiable to break the law under certain circumstances. First, the laws in question must go against the norms of human ethics. In “ A Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. writes to his white colleagues in the ministry in Birmingham, urging them to join him in the fight against racism in the city. This racism is a form of discrimination that keeps African American citizens from receiving the equal treatment they deserve. Second, people should try and change the laws peacefully before breaking them. The African American citizens of Birmingham have done this, though, and so Dr. King’s letter describes the detailed steps that the Southern Christian Leadership Conference has taken to get the protesters ready for civil disobedience. Recognizing (rightly) that violent protests would only backfire – not only would they feed the stereotypes that were already under circulation about the African American community throughout the South, but by breaking the laws with violence, the protesters would lose sympathy throughout the entire nation, and would be using wrong themselves – the leaders of this movement emphasized peaceful, nonviolent means of protest – sit-ins in restaurants that refused to serve them, sit-ins in the front parts of buses, in which African Americans were required to ride in the back. Third, if the laws of a region violate the laws of the country in which that region is located, it should be acceptable to break those laws. In the case of the United States, the very words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence emphasize the equality due to every person in the United States.

2. When it comes to matters of personal decisions, such as religious worship and private conduct, there is no reason for members of minorities compromise themselves to suit the majority's trends. First of all, in areas of religion, no one should have to compromise personal beliefs to suit other people. The right to freedom of religion is extremely important in American history. Second, though, sometimes it is necessary for minorities to make compromises in order to advance personally. For example, in Richard Wright's "The Library Card," the narrator wants to read the writings of H. L. Mencken, the famed writer who, from his desk in Baltimore, criticized the backward ways of the South. As an African American in the South, the narrator had no way to gain access to those readings, because African Americans who could read in the South were treated suspiciously, as knowledge could work as an escape route. The narrator in "The Library Card" borrows a card from his white friend, Mr. Falk, and checks out some of Mencken's books. He learns about the art of writing. Third, these advancements can help the cause of the minority later on. By learning how to write protest literature like Mencken does, Wright can develop his own voice of dissent. By compromising to borrow the library card and pretend to be illiterate with the librarian, the narrator is able to get what he wants – access to knowledge and to advancement.

3. It is important to learn about other cultures, and the importance of diversity. First of all, members of the dominant culture often only think about items that are important to them. With regard to African Americans, one issue that has long been in the news for the African American community is the wearing of "cornrows" by African American basketball players for high

school teams. Asking them to cut out their cornrows, in their minds, disrespects them and their culture. Second, awareness of diversity can lead to helpful dialogue. If coaches know why their players want to wear cornrows, then they might be able to come to some common ground, in which the players look and act like professionals in exchange for being able to keep their hair the way they would like. Third, though, these dialogues let members of the dominant culture know everything that is involved when making decisions about items like grooming. Reading Malcolm X's " My First Conk," though, shows the painful experience of making an African American's hair look more like the white ideal. While one's personal appearance is important to just about everybody, going through painful ordeals to fit someone else's idea of the way you ought to look is one thing, when it comes to the way to dress for a professional interview; however, there should be ways for everyone to prepare for the day without going through pain and personal humiliation just to meet the dominant culture's ideals.

Works Cited

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