

Course: Advanced Placement United States History

Grade Level: High School Sophomores

Class Size: 29

Unit: Period 8

Duration: 2 (or 3 with optional assessment) Days (Modified Block Schedule, 80 minutes/block).

Unit: The Civil Rights Movement

Lesson: *Three Paths for Civil Rights*

Materials:

- Student Handouts, *Interview Transcripts: Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and James Baldwin*.
- Video Clips, from PBS *The American Experience: Citizen King*

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to place the varied approaches of the Civil Rights Movement in context and describe and compare these approaches and evaluate their effectiveness.

[Day 1] Activities:

1. Review: Students, in trios, will review the following focus questions:

- What was the state of racial equality in the 1960s? What events illustrate your conclusions?

2. Introduction: Distribute the student handout, *Interview Transcripts*.

- Introduce Dr. Kenneth Clark, show his [Introduction](#) video Clip
- Have each trio select each of the research and analysis figures: Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and James Baldwin.

3. Sourcing Biography Research: Have each students research and examine a brief biography of each figure.

Students may use their texts, *Give Me Liberty!* for Malcolm X and Martin Luther King and *The Fire this Time: James Baldwin and the Civil Rights Movement* for James Baldwin. Student's should focus their research on the following focus questions:

- What does _____ see is the state of race relations in the United States?
- What does _____ see as the best way to move forward with the Civil Rights Movement and what role, if any, should State and the Federal Government play?

[Day 2] Activities:

1. **Video Interviews:** Each student should receive a copy of the notetaking transcripts (See below). Then each student will then view the interview of their CR leader with Dr. Kenneth Clark which can be accessed through Schoology, our Learner Management System. As they do, they should annotate their transcript and highlight key phrases and meaningful language that stand out.
 - [Malcolm X](#)
 - [Martin Luther King](#) (begin at 10:58)
 - [James Baldwin](#)

2. **Primary and Secondary Comparison:** Students should compare their notes to their preliminary research. They should focus on the following analysis questions:
 - How does the interview support the secondary research they initially gathered? What evidence does the interview provide that corroborates your initial research? What quotes support it?
 - Is there anything that seemed to contradict or conflict with your initial research? Is there anything that you would have expected to see in the interview that you did not? Why do you think that was?
 - What does the interview tell you about the year 1963, when the interviews took place?

3. **Student Reporting:** Each student will take their conclusions and create a short presentation to the rest of their trio. Students will exchange information through the presentations and question and answer periods.

[Transcript of Martin Luther King's Interview with Dr. Kenneth Clark \(begin at 10:58\)](#)

Martin Luther King (9:56)

Dr. Kenneth Clark: Malcolm X, one of the most articulate exponents of the Black Muslim philosophy, has said of your movement and your philosophy that it plays into the hands of the white oppressors. That they are happy to hear you talk about love for the oppressor because this disarms the Negro and fits in to the stereotype of the Negro as a meek, turning-the-other-cheek sort of creature. Would you care to comment on Mr. X's beliefs?

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr: Well, I don't think of love as, in this context, as emotional bosh. I don't think of it as a weak force. But I think of love as something strong, and that organizes itself into powerful direct action. This is what I try to teach in the struggle in the South. That we are not engaged in a struggle that means we sit down and do nothing.

There's a great deal of difference between non-resistance to evil and non-violent resistance. Non-resistance leaves you in a state of stagnant passivity and dead-end complacency. Wherein non-violent resistance means you do resist in a very strong and determined manner. And I think some of the criticisms of non-violence, or some of the critics, fail to realize that we are talking about something very strong, and they confuse non-resistance with non-violent resistance.

Clark: He goes beyond that, in some of the things I've heard him say, to say that this is deliberately – your philosophy of love of the oppressor, which he identifies completely with the non-violent movement – he says, this philosophy and this movement are actually encouraged by whites because it makes them comfortable, makes them believe that Negroes are meek, supine creatures.

King: Well, I don't think that's true. If anyone has ever lived with a non-violent movement in the South, [from Montgomery on](#) through the Freedom Rides and through the sit-in movement and the recent Birmingham movement, and seen the reactions of many of the extremists and reactionaries in the white community, he wouldn't say that this movement makes, this philosophy makes them comfortable. I think it arouses a sense of shame within them often, in many instances, I think it does something to touch the conscience and establish a sense of guilt. Now so often people respond to guilt by engaging more in the guilt-evoking act in an attempt to drown the sense of guilt. But this approach certainly doesn't make the white man feel comfortable. I think it does the other thing. It disturbs this conscience and it disturbs this sense of contentment he's had.

Clark: James Baldwin raises still another point of the whole non-violent position and approach. He does not reject it in the way that Malcolm X does, but he raises the question of whether it will be possible to contain the Negro people within this framework of non-violence if we continue to have more of the kinds of demonstrations that we had in Birmingham.

King: Well I think these brutal methods used by the Birmingham police force and other police forces will naturally arouse the ire of Negroes, and I think there is the danger that some will be so aroused that they will retaliate with violence.

I think though that we can be sure that the vast majority of Negroes who engage in the demonstrations and who understand the non-violent philosophy will be able to face dogs, and all of the other brutal methods that are used, without retaliating with violence, because they understand that one of the first principles of non-violence is a willingness to be the recipient of violence while never inflicting violence upon another. And none of the demonstrators in Birmingham engaged in aggressive or retaliatory violence. It was always someone on the sideline, who had never been in the demonstrations and probably not in the mass meetings, and had never been in a non-violent workshop. So I think it will depend on the extent to which we can extend the teaching of the philosophy of non-violence to the larger community, rather than those who are engaged in the demonstrations.

Clark: Well, how can you maintain this type of discipline, control, and dignity?

King: We do a great deal in terms of teaching both the theoretical aspects of non-violence as well as the practical application. We even have courses where we go through the experience of being roughed

up. And this kind of socio-drama has proved to be very helpful in preparing those who are engaged in demonstrations. The other thing is –

Clark: Does this even include the children?

King: Yes, it includes the children. In Birmingham, where we had several young – we had some as young as seven years old who participated in the demonstrations. And they were in the workshops. In fact, none of them went out for a march, or none of them engaged in any of the demonstrations before going through this kind of teaching session. So that, through this method, we're able to get the meaning of non-violence over. And I think there is a contagious quality in a movement like this. When everybody talks about non-violence, and being faithful to it, and being dignified in your resistance, it tends to get over to the larger group, because this becomes a part of the vocabulary of the movement.

Clark: What is the relationship between your movement and such organizations as the [NAACP](#), CORE [Congress of Racial Equality], and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee? They're separate organizations, but do you work together?

King: Yes, we do. As you say, they are – each of these organizations is autonomous, but we work together in many, many ways. Last year we started a voter registration drive, an intensified voter registration drive, and all of the organizations are working together. Sometimes two or three are working together in the same community. The same thing is true with our direct action programs. In Birmingham we had the support of SNCC and CORE and the NAACP. CORE sent some of its staff members in to assist us. And SNCC sent some of its staff members. Roy Wilkins came down to speak in one of the mass meetings, and to make it clear that even though the NAACP cannot operate in Alabama, we had the support of the NAACP. So that we are all working together on – in a very significant way, and we are doing even more in the days ahead to coordinate –

Clark: Is there any machinery, machinery for coordination, actually exists now?

King: Well, we have had a sort of coordinating council, where we get together as often as possible. Of course, we get involved in many of our programs in the various areas and can't make as many of these meetings as we would like. But we often come together, I mean the heads of all of these organizations, to try to coordinate our various efforts.

Clark: What about the federal government? Have you made any direct appeal?

King: I think [Mr. Kennedy](#) has done some significant things in [civil rights](#). But I do not feel that he has yet given the leadership that the enormity of the problem demands.

Clark: By Mr. Kennedy now, do you mean the president, or the attorney general?

King: Yes, I am speaking now of the president, mainly, and I would include the [attorney general](#). I think both of these men are men of genuine good will, but I think they must understand more about the depths and dimensions of the problem, and I think there is a necessity now to see the urgency of the moment. There isn't a lot of time. Time is running out. And the Negro is making it palpably clear that he wants all of his rights, that he wants them here, and that he wants them now.

Transcript of Malcolm X's Interview with Dr. Kenneth Clark

Malcolm X (8:04): Part 1

Malcolm X: [Responding to the question of what he would say to critics who deride his movement as black supremacist, anti-Semitic, and hatred-teaching.] No, this is done by those who are guilty of all those things that you just – the counterpart of all those things you just mentioned. The white people who are guilty of white supremacy try and hide their own guilt by accusing the Honorable Elijah Muhammad of teaching black supremacy when he tries to uplift the mentality, the social, mental, economic condition of black people in this country.

And Jews, who have been guilty of exploiting the black people in this country, economically, civically, and otherwise, hide behind – hide their guilt by accusing the Honorable Elijah Muhammad of teaching – of being anti-Semitic, simply because he teaches our people to go into business for ourselves, and try and take over the economic leadership in our own community.

And this other thing – white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and what was the other one?

Dr. Kenneth Clark: And hatred...

Malcolm X: And hatred... and since the white people collectively have practiced the worst form of hatred against Negroes in this country – and they know that they are guilty of it – now, when the Honorable Elijah Muhammad begins to – comes along and begins to list the historic deed, the historic attitude, the historic behavior of the white man in this country toward the black people in this country, again, the white people are so guilty, and they can't stop doing these things, to make Mr. Muhammad appear wrong, so they hide their wrong by saying that *he* is teaching hatred.

History is not hatred. Actually we are Muslims because we believe in the religion of Islam. We believe in one God. We believe in Muhammad as the apostle of God. We practice the principles of the religion of Islam, which mean prayer, charity, fasting, brotherhood. And the Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that since the Western society is deteriorating – it has become overrun with immorality – that God is going to judge it, and destroy it, and the only way black people who are in this society can be saved is to not integrate into this corrupt society but separate ourselves from it, reform ourselves, lift up our moral standards, and try and be godly, instead of trying... try and integrate with God, instead of trying to integrate with the white man, or try and imitate God, instead of trying to imitate the white man.

Clark: It has been suggested also that this movement preaches a gospel of violence, that –

Malcolm X: No, the black people in this country have been the victims of violence at the hands of the white man for 400 years. And following the ignorant Negro preachers, we have thought that it was godlike to turn the other cheek to the brute that was brutalizing us. And today, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad is showing black people in this country that just as the white man and every other person on this earth has god-given rights, natural rights, civil rights, any kind of rights that you can think of, when it comes to defending himself, black people should have – we should have the right to defend ourselves also. And, because the Honorable Elijah Muhammad makes black people brave enough, men enough, to defend ourselves no matter what the odds are, the white man runs around here with the philo–with the doctrine that we are – Mr. Muhammad is advocating violence when he's actually telling Negroes to defend themselves against violent people.

Clark: I see. Well, Reverend Martin Luther King preaches a doctrine of non-violent insistence upon the rights of the American Negro. What is your attitude toward this philosophy?

Malcolm X: The white man pays Reverend Martin Luther King, subsidizes Reverend Martin Luther King, so that Reverend Martin Luther King can continue to teach the Negroes to be defenseless. That's what you mean by non-violent: be defenseless. Be defenseless in the face of one of the most cruel beasts that has ever taken a people into captivity. That's this American white man. And they have proved it throughout the country by the police dogs and the police clubs.

A hundred years ago they used to put on a white sheet and use a bloodhound against Negroes. Today they've taken off the white sheet and put on police uniforms, they've traded in the bloodhounds for police dogs, and they're still doing the same thing. And just as Uncle Tom, back during slavery, used to keep the Negroes from resisting the bloodhound, or resisting the Ku Klux Klan, by teaching them to love their enemy, or pray for those who use them spitefully, today Martin Luther King is just a 20th century or modern Uncle Tom, or a religious Uncle Tom, who is doing the same thing today, to keep Negroes defenseless in the face of an attack, that Uncle Tom did on the plantation to keep *those* Negroes defenseless in the face of the attacks of the Klan in that day.

Clark: But the goal of Dr. King is full equality –

Malcolm X: No.

Clark: ... and full rights of citizenship for Negroes.

Malcolm X: The goal of Dr. Martin Luther King is to give Negroes a chance to sit in a segregated restaurant beside the same white man who had brutalized them for 400 years. The goal of Dr. Martin Luther King is to get Negroes to forgive the people who have brutalized them for 400 years by lulling them to sleep, and making them forgetting what those whites have done to them. But the masses of black people in America today don't go for what Martin Luther King is putting down. As you said in one of your articles, it's psychologically insecure, or something of that sort – I forget how you put it. But you didn't endorse what Martin Luther King was doing yourself.

Clark: I do not reject his goals, of full integration and full equality rights for American citizens. Do you reject these goals?

Malcolm X: If you don't think that he's walking on the right road, I'm quite sure that you don't agree that he'll get to the right place. And if you would classify his method as "psychologically unrealistic" – I think that if a man's method is psychologically unrealistic, which means that the road or the means or the method that he's using, I think that, as a psychologist, you'd be very doubtful that he would reach the right goals.

Clark: There is one correction, Mr. Malcolm, that I'd like to make here. In that same piece that you're quoting from, I said that he – his methods are effective. His philosophy, of love, of the oppressor, I thought was psychologically burdensome. But I would be more interested in *your* goals. What are the goals of the movement which you represent so effectively?

Malcolm X: Just as you said in the same article, see, we're trying to – Mr. Muhammad is trying to get us on God's side, so God will be on our side, and help us to fight our battles against the very vicious, deceitful, hypocritical enemy. And this is why Mr. Muhammad puts so much stress upon moral reformation. That when Negroes stop getting drunk, when Negroes stop fornicating and committing adultery, when Negroes stop being addicted to drugs, and these things that destroy the moral fiber and the morale of the Negro, then our people will be able to get together and unite in harmony and unity, and get our own problems solved.

Clark: Toward what end would you want our people united? What would you be –

Malcolm X: Toward being on God's side. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that God, now, is about to establish a kingdom on this earth, based upon brotherhood and peace. And the white man is against brotherhood, and the white man is against peace. His history on this earth has proved that. Nowhere in history has he been brotherly toward anyone. The only time that he's brotherly toward you is when he can use you, when he can exploit you, when he can oppress you, when you will submit to him. And since his own history makes him unqualified to be an inhabitant or a citizen in a kingdom of brotherhood, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that God is about to eliminate that particular race from this earth.

So, since they are due for elimination, we don't want to be with them. We're not trying to integrate with that which we know has come to the end of its rope. We're trying to separate from it and get with something that's more lasting, and we think that God is more lasting than the white man.

Clark: So in effect, Minister Malcolm, your movement does not share the integration goals of the NAACP, CORE [Congress of Racial Equality], Martin Luther King's movement, and the student non-violent movement?

Malcolm X: You don't integrate with a sinking ship. You don't do anything to further your stay on board a ship that you see is on its way down to the bottom of the ocean. Moses tried to separate his people from Pharaoh, and when he tried, the magicians tried to fool the people into staying with Pharaoh. And we look upon these other organizations that are trying to get Negroes to integrate with this doomed white man as nothing but modern-day magicians, and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad as the modern-day Moses who's trying to separate us from the modern-day Pharaoh.

Malcolm X (5:08): Part 2

Dr. Kenneth Clark: Well, do you feel that the Negroes who are attempting to influence the policies and actions of our federal government, the attorney general, the president of the United States, are going in the wrong dir-

Malcolm X: When James Baldwin recently had a conference with Robert Kennedy, he took Lena Horne, who's married to a white man, Lorraine Hansberry, who's married to a white man, [Harry] Belafonte, who's married to a white woman, Edwin Berry of the Urban League, who's married to a white woman, now...

And whenever you have a group of black people sitting down with the white man, supposed to represent the black masses, you can never get anybody who's involved in any intermarriage, in any kind of situation, who will be qualified to represent themselves as spokesmen for the black masses in this country. They were representing their own personal desires. They want to mix and mingle so that they can take their wife, they can go any of these places with their wife, they're involved in a mixed marriage.

But you can't find masses, sir, of black people who will accept any black man who's married to a white man [sic] as a spokesman for black people, or a black woman, who's married to a white man, as a spokesman or a representative of what black people feel and think.

Clark: What do you feel Negroes should do in respect to obtaining even more effective protection from our federal government?

Malcolm X: You never will get protection from the federal government. That's like, King is asking Kennedy to go to Alabama to stand in the doorway, put his body in the doorway. That's like asking the fox to protect you from the wolf.

And when black - now, the masses of black people can see this. And it is only the Negro leadership, the bourgeois, hand-picked handful of Negroes who think that they're going to get some kind of respect, recognition, or protection from the government.

The government is responsible for what is happening to black people in this country. The president has power; you notice he didn't send any troops into Birmingham to protect the Negroes when the dogs were biting the Negroes. The only time he sent troops into Birmingham was when the Negroes erupted, and then the president sent troops in there, not to protect the Negroes, but to protect them white people down there from those erupting Negroes.

Clark: Are not Negro Americans, citizens?

Malcolm X: If they were citizens, you would not have a race problem. If the Emancipation Proclamation was authentic, you wouldn't have a race problem. If the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution were authentic, you wouldn't have a race problem. If the Supreme court desegregation decision was authentic, you wouldn't have a race problem. All of this is hypocrisy. And it is this hypocrisy that has been practiced by the so called white, so called liberal for the past 400 years that compounds the problem and makes it more complicated instead of eliminating the problem.

Clark: Well Minister Malcolm, what do you see as the future of the Negro in America?

Malcolm X: If the...

Clark: Well Minister Malcolm, what do you see as the future of the Negro in America?

Malcolm X: Until the white man of America sits down with the honorable Elijah Muhammad, he won't even know what the race problem is... what makes the race problem what it is. And just like Pharaoh couldn't get a solution to his problem until he talked to Moses or Nebuchadnezzar or Belshazzar couldn't get a solution until he talked to Daniel, the white man in America will never understand the race problem or come anywhere near getting a solution to the race problem until he talks to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad... then Mr. Muhammad will give him God's analysis... not some political analysis or some psychologist's analysis or some kind of clergyman's analysis... but God's analysis. That's the analysis Moses gave Pharaoh, that Daniel gave Belshazzar and today we have a modern day Belshazzar and a modern Pharaoh sitting in Washington D.C.

Clark: What do you think is going to happen in Birmingham and Jackson, Mississippi... in Philadelphia... in Boston... in Englewood?

Malcolm X: Well, Dr. Clark, as you know these negro leaders have been telling the white man, "things are alright, everything is under control" and they've been telling the white man Mr. Muhammad is wrong, don't listen to him. But everything that Mr. Muhammad has been saying is going to come to pass and is now coming to pass and now the negro leaders are standing up saying we are about to have a racial explosion. You're going to have a racial explosion and a racial explosion is more dangerous than an atomic explosion. It's gonna explode because the black people are dissatisfied. They're dissatisfied not only with the white man, but they're dissatisfied with these negro leaders that have been sitting around posing as leaders and spokesmen for black people and actually making the problem worse instead of making the problem better.

Clark: What will be the consequence of this explosion?

Malcolm X: Anytime you put too many sparks around a powder keg... the thing is going to explode and if the thing that explodes is still inside the house, then the house will be destroyed. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad is telling the white man to get this powder keg out of your house. Let the black people of this country separate from you while there is time. And if the black man is allowed to separate and go on some land of his own, where he can solve his own problems, there won't be any explosion. And the negroes that want to stay with the white man, let them stay with the white man. But those who want to leave... let them go with the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

Clark: As I understand your position Malcolm, the only thing that can save us from a catastrophic explosion is complete separation.

Malcolm X: Complete separation is the only solution to the black and white problem in this country.

Transcript of James Baldwin's Interview with Dr. Kenneth Clark

James Baldwin (7:10): part 1

Dr. Kenneth Clark: Through a strange set of circumstances, we managed to record this conversation with James Baldwin immediately after both of us attended that now-famous meeting between a group of Mr. Baldwin's friends and Attorney General [Robert Kennedy](#). I believe much of the emotion of that [historic occasion](#) spilled over into our conversation. In an attempt to ease the tension, I started by asking him to dig back and tell us something about his childhood and his growing up.

James Baldwin: My mind is someplace else, really. But to think back on it – I was born in Harlem, Harlem Hospital, and we grew up – first house I remember was on Park Avenue – which is not the American Park Avenue, or maybe it is the American Park Avenue –

Clark: Uptown Park Avenue?

Baldwin: Uptown Park Avenue, where the railroad tracks are. We used to play on the roof and in the – I can't call it an alley – but near the river – it was a kind of dump, garbage dump. Those were the first scenes I remember. I remember my father had trouble keeping us alive – there were nine of us. I was the oldest so I took care of the kids and dealt with Daddy. I understand him much better now. Part of his problem was he couldn't feed his kids, but I was a kid and I didn't know that. He was very religious, very rigid. He kept us together, I must say, and when I look back on it – that was over 40 years ago that I was born – when I think back on my growing up and walk that same block today, because it's still there, and think of the kids on that block now, I'm aware that something terrible has happened which is very hard to describe.

I am, in all but technical legal fact, a Southerner. My father was born in the South – no, my mother was born in the South, and if they had waited two more seconds I might have been born in the South. But that means I was raised by families whose roots were essentially rural –

Clark: Southern rural...

Baldwin: Southern rural, and whose relation to the church was very direct, because it was the only means they had of expressing their pain and their despair. But 20 years later the moral authority which was present in the Negro Northern community when I was growing up has vanished, and people talk about progress, and I look at Harlem which I really know – I know it like I know my hand – and it is much worse there today than it was when I was growing up.

Clark: Would you say this is true of the schools too?

Baldwin: It is much worse in the schools.

Clark: What school did you go to?

Baldwin: I went to P.S. 24 and I went to P.S. 139. Frederick Douglass...

Clark: We are fellow alumni. I went to 139.

Baldwin: I didn't like a lot of my teachers, but I had a couple of teachers who were very nice to me – one was a Negro teacher. You ask me these questions and I'm trying to answer you. I remember coming home from school – you can guess how young I must have been – and my mother asked me if my teacher was colored or white, and I said she was a little bit colored and a little bit white. But she was about your color. As a matter of fact I was right.

That's part of the dilemma of being an American Negro; that one is a little bit colored and a little bit white, and not only in physical terms but in the head and in the heart, and there are days – this is one of them – when you wonder what your role is in this country and what your future is in it. How, precisely, are you going to reconcile yourself to your situation here and how you are going to communicate to the vast, heedless, unthinking, cruel, white majority, that you are here? And to be here means that you can't be anywhere else.

I'm terrified at the moral apathy – the death of the heart which is happening in my country. These people have deluded themselves for so long, that they really don't think I'm human. I base this on their conduct, not on what they say, and this means that they have become, in themselves, moral monsters. It's a terrible indictment – I mean every word I say.

Clark: Well, we are confronted with the racial confrontation in America today. I think the pictures of dogs in the hands of human beings attacking other human beings –

Baldwin: In a free country – in the middle of the 20th century.

Clark: In a free country. This Birmingham, clearly not restricted to Birmingham, as you so eloquently pointed out. What do you think can be done to change – to use your term – the moral fiber of America?

Baldwin: I think that one has got to find some way of putting the present administration of this country on the spot. One has got to force, somehow, from Washington, a moral commitment, not to the Negro people, but to the life of this country.

It doesn't matter any longer, and I'm speaking for myself, for Jimmy Baldwin, and I think I'm speaking for a great many Negroes too. It doesn't matter any longer what you do to me; you can put me in jail, you can kill me. By the time I was 17, you'd done everything that you could do to me. The problem now is, how are you going to save yourselves?

James Baldwin (6:29): part 2

James Baldwin: It was a great shock to me – I want to say this on the air – The attorney general did not know –

Dr. Kenneth Clark: You mean the attorney general of the United States?

Baldwin: Mr. [Robert Kennedy](#) – didn't know that I would have trouble convincing my nephew to go to [Cuba](#), for example, to liberate the Cubans in defense of a government which now says it is doing everything it can do, which cannot liberate me. Now, there are 20 million people in this country, and you can't put them all in jail. I know how my nephew feels, I know how I feel, I know how the cats in the barbershop feel.

A boy last week, he was sixteen, in San Francisco, told me on television – thank God we got him to talk – maybe somebody thought to listen. He said, "I've got no country. I've got no flag." Now, he's only 16 years old, and I couldn't say, "you do." I don't have any evidence to prove that he does. They were tearing down his house, because San Francisco is engaging – as most Northern cities now are engaged – in something called [urban renewal](#), which means moving the Negroes out. It means Negro removal, that is what it means. The federal government is an accomplice to this fact.

Now, we are talking about human beings, there's not such a thing as a monolithic wall or some abstraction called the Negro problem, these are Negro boys and girls, who at 16 and 17 don't believe the country means anything that it says and don't feel they have any place here, on the basis of the performance of the entire country.

Clark: But now, Jim –

Baldwin: Am I exaggerating?

Clark: No, I certainly cannot say that you are exaggerating, but there is this picture of a group of young Negro college students in the South, coming from colleges where the whole system seems to conspire to keep them from having courage, integrity, clarity, and the willingness to take the risks which they have been taking for these last three or four years. Could you react to the student non-violent movement which has made such an impact on America, which has affected both Negroes and whites, and seems to have jolted them out of the lethargy of tokenism and moderation? How do you account for this?

Baldwin: Well, of course, one of the things I think that happened, Ken, really, is that in the first place, the Negro has never been as docile as white Americans wanted to believe. That was a myth. We were not singing and dancing down on the levee – we were trying to keep alive; we were trying to survive. It was a very brutal system.

The Negro has never been happy in this place. What those kids first of all proved – first of all, they proved that. They come from a long line of fighters and what they also prove (I want to get to your point, really) is not that the Negro has changed, but that the country has arrived at a place where he can no longer contain the revolt, he can no longer, as he could do once –

Let's say I was a Negro college president, and I needed a new chemistry lab, so I was a Negro leader, I was a Negro leader because the white man said I was, and I came to get a new chemistry lab, "please suh," and the tacit price I paid for the chemistry lab was to control the people I represented. And now I can't do that.

When the boy said this afternoon – we were talking to a Negro student this afternoon who has been through it all, who's half dead and only about 25, Jerome Smith. That's an awful lot to ask a person to bear. The country sat back in admiration of all those kids for three or four or five years, and has not lifted a finger to help them.

Now, we all knew. I know you knew, and I knew too, that a moment was coming when we couldn't guarantee, that no one can guarantee, that he won't reach the breaking point, you know? You can only survive so many beatings, so much humiliation, so much despair, so many broken promises, before something gives. Human beings are not by nature non-violent. Those children had to pay a terrible price in discipline, in moral discipline – an interior effort of courage which the country cannot imagine, because it still thinks Gary Cooper, for example, was a man – I mean his image, I have nothing against him, you know, him.

Clark: You said something – that you cannot expect them to remain constantly non-violent?

Baldwin: No, you can't! And, furthermore, they were always, these students that we are talking about, a minority. The students we are talking about were not in Tallahassee. There were some students protesting, but there were many, many, many, many more students who had given up, who were desperate and who Malcolm X can reach, for example, much more easily than I can.

Clark: What do you mean?

Baldwin: What Malcolm tells them, in effect, is that they should be proud of being black, and God knows that they should be. That is a very important thing to hear in a country which assures you that you should be ashamed of it. Of course, in order to do this, what he does is destroy a truth and invent a history. What he does is say, "you're better because you're black." Well, of course that isn't true. That's the trouble.

[Day 3] Activities [Optional Application Assessment]:

- 1. Allies and Challengers:** For the final day, student groups act as consultants to Malcolm X, King and Baldwin and will use their text and other resources (essays, notes, and other materials) to find potential allies and obstructionists to each “client’s” cause. Students will create these two lists of at least 3 individuals per list and do the following for each identified individual *past or present*:
 - Identify the individual and which AP period (2-9) they belonged in.
 - Explain the rationale for their list placement.
 - Identify at least ONE piece of evidence to support the rationale for their placement.
- 2. [Time Permitting] Large Group Share Out and/or Debate:** As a class, the teacher can facilitate a whole class discussion of these lists. If there is disagreement, a “mini-debate” can be engaged to find the individual’s correct placement (which will be left to the rest of the class after hearing a very short statement from each group). These lists should be submitted by the end of the hour.