

SUMMER 2025 ASSIGNMENT IN RELIGION AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Dear Rising Juniors of the HT Class of 2027,

In Junior Year, you will be studying Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous **Letter from a Birmingham Jail** in both Religion and Social Studies – and in AP Government in Senior year. The letter is available in the link provided. The letter points to the meaning of faith and conscience, social justice, Church and society, law and morality, human dignity and the civil rights / anti-racism movement.

THIS SUMMER: Print and read **Letter from a Birmingham Jail**. As you read, highlight passages that you feel are meaningful and relevant for people today. ***Do not turn in your highlighted copy of the document, but bring it with you to class in September.***

***Some background:** 1963 was the height of the civil rights movement in America. Martin Luther King was leading anti-segregation protests in Birmingham, Alabama, and was criticized for his protests. He was arrested and put into jail for leading a peaceful demonstration. Many politicians and religious leaders urged him to "quiet down" and "wait" patiently for things to change in Birmingham, and in America.*

You may print the letter here:

https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Based on your reading you should be able to answer the following questions which will be asked in class on September 26th. It is recommended that you write out your answers prior to the start of classes.

1. Why did King write this document? To whom is the letter addressed? Why?
2. What are 3 reasons that MLK gives for his presence in Birmingham?
3. Explain the meaning of "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."
4. What are the four parts of a nonviolent campaign?
5. What is the purpose of nonviolent direct action?
6. Give 3 of the author's personal answers to the question: "Why can't you wait patiently for change to happen?"
7. How does MLK describe the difference between just and unjust laws?
8. According to King, what does segregation do to people?
9. How should one break an unjust law?
10. Describe King's feelings toward "moderates."
11. Record two of King's thoughts concerning "extremism." Who are the extremists cited in the letter? Please "look them up" if you don't already know them.

12. According to the document, what was King's greatest source of disappointment?
13. What once made the church "very powerful?" What will make it powerful again?
14. According to King, who are the real heroes of the movement?
15. At the end of the letter MLK asks for forgiveness. From whom? Why?

WRITTEN REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT DUE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Choose ONE passage from **Letter from a Birmingham Jail** that YOU THINK IS VERY MEANINGFUL OR IMPORTANT. (PLEASE WRITE ONE (1) WELL DEVELOPED TYPEWRITTEN PARAGRAPH EACH FOR # 2, 3 and 4) Make sure that each paragraph is written clearly and thoroughly.

1. Type out the passage (a passage can be as brief as one sentence or as long a few paragraphs).
2. Explain why you chose and liked that passage. (one full paragraph)
3. Explain what the passage means in the context of the letter. (one full paragraph)
4. Relate the meaning of the passage to the world in which we live today. (one full paragraph)

PLEASE PREPARE YOUR REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT ON A GOOGLE DOC. IN SEPTEMBER, YOUR RELIGION TEACHER WILL GIVE YOU INSTRUCTIONS FOR TURNING THE ASSIGNMENTS IN.