

Just Mercy Book Report
Due: **Thursday, 6/27, by 9:00 p.m. CT.**

Guidelines:

- **6-pages** double-spaced MINIMUM, 12 pt. font, standard margins
- Your paper must be in essay format (introduction, main paragraphs, conclusion—do not turn in a numbered list).
- ***Please answer the questions in order!*** This helps me quickly grade your paper and verify that all the parts are there!
- You must cite from the book (**including page numbers**) when you provide specific examples. This lets me know that *you actually read the book!*
- You may cite from other course materials. However, you must include a citation.

Answer the following **SIX** questions in full:

1. Stevenson wished he had been more assertive with the police while they were illegally searching his car.
 - a. What role do you think race played in his treatment?
 - b. How would you recommend someone respond in a similar situation?
2. Stevenson writes that four primary institutions shape the conversation around race and justice today: slavery, racial terror and the threat of violence against people of color, Jim Crow laws that legalized segregation, and mass incarceration.
 - a. How do you see these institutions affecting cases throughout the book?
 - b. What examples of racial discrimination within the legal system can you find within the text?
3. Walter McMillian was the 50th person exonerated from death row in the United States. Today, 146 people have been exonerated, many after serving decades in prison.
 - a. What challenges do formerly incarcerated people—whether deemed innocent or not—face when they reenter their community?
 - b. Was justice finally served to Walter? Or, was his case an example of a miscarriage of justice that was righted only years later?
4. Stevenson remembers his grandmother telling him throughout his childhood, “You can’t understand most of the important things from a distance, Bryan. You have to get close.”
 - a. How do we see the author getting close to issues of punishment and mass incarceration throughout the book? Do you think it was wise to do so?
 - b. As you work your way through your graduate studies (and beyond), how will you get close to the issues that are most important to you?

5. As a result of his extensive work with low income and incarcerated people, Stevenson concludes that “the opposite of poverty is not wealth; the opposite of poverty is justice.”
 - a. What does this statement mean?
 - b. Do you agree?
6. This book is generally hard for people to read.
 - a. What kind(s) of emotional state(s) did the book bring up in you?
 - b. Why do you think I had you read this book?

Grade Breakdown:

Name:

Q1A (3.5 points):

Q1B (3.5 points):

Q2A (3.5 points):

Q2B (3.5 points):

Q3A (3.5 points):

Q3B (3.5 points):

Q4A (3.5 points):

Q4B (3.5 points):

Q5A (3.5 points):

Q5B (3.5 points):

Q6A (3.5 points):

Q6B (3.5 points):

6-page minimum met (4 points):

Citations included throughout (4 points):

Grammar/Spelling issues (-.50 for large errors; -.25 for small errors)

Total: / 50

Notes: