

UNIT ONE ASSIGNMENTS

[Our Course Website](#) includes the [Schedule of Assignments](#) with our [packet of readings](#).

The password to access the readings is rights.

1/15: Introduction to the Course

Martin Luther King, Jr. is one of the most eloquent rhetoricians in US history as well as the most noted civil rights leader, so we will begin with the speech that is most identified with the upcoming holiday. We will use “I Have a Dream” as a historical reference point to begin to reflect upon the rights issues of our times.

1/22: African Americans’ Historic Efforts to Claim Their Rights

We will discuss this overview of African Americans’ struggle for basic rights: “Our democracy’s founding ideals were false when they were written. Black Americans have fought to make them true.” This article is in the course packet in the [Schedule of Assignments](#) page on our [Course Website](#). You will use the password **rights** to access our [course packet](#).

1/27: King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s

We will follow up on the historical overview in the last class to discuss these pieces from our [course packet](#): “A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement” and Martin Luther King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”

1/29: How Did the Civil Rights Movement Affect the Lives of African Americans?

To help you prepare to write your essay, we will discuss two personal reflections: Alice Walker’s “The Civil Rights Movement: What Good Was It?” and Luther Ivory’s “How Martin Luther King, Jr. Changed My Life.” We will also discuss two student essays that are similar to the ones you will write on pages 27-30 in our [course packet](#).

- **2/1: Your draft of Essay 1 is due by noon to our [Discussions page](#) in D2L by noon on Saturday.**

2/3: Draft Workshop

For class, you should post your responses to the drafts in your workshop group using our [Discussions](#) page. Please review the first sections on style and punctuation in [Basic Writing Skills](#). When you submit your responses to drafts, use the name of the writer in the name of your file along with your own, like this: *Jones response to Smith*.

2/5: Have We Made Progress with the Civil Rights of Racial and Ethnic Minorities?

To explore this question, we will review the statistics in this comparative study of the education and economic standing of African Americans in 1968 and 2018: “50 Years After the Kerner Commission,” and then we will use this report as a point of departure for considering racial prejudices in America: “The Gap in American Politics.” Both in our [course packet](#).

Essay 1: A Reflection on Coming of Age as

- **Your draft** is due by noon to our [Discussions page](#) in D2L by noon on Saturday, February 1st.
- **Your responses to drafts** are due to our Discussions page before our workshop in class on Monday, February 3rd.
- **Your revision** is due to our [Assignments page](#) in D2L by midnight on Friday, February 7th.

Your first essay is a reflection on a formative experience of coming of age within a cultural, social or demographic group. For example, you could write about a formative experience that is part of growing up in a religious or cultural group, growing up as an immigrant, coming out as a LGBTQ person, or even growing up in a small town or coming to identify as a libertarian or a social activist on behalf of a particular cause. You can focus on one of your own experiences coming of age, or you can take a less personal approach and describe an experience that is important in a group, institution, or community that you know well. As you think about your paper, you should take a look at the students samples in our course packet. As you read them, consider how the introductory paragraphs frame the narratives to set up the analysis, how the body paragraphs set the scene and provide narrative details, and how the author uses those specifics to show points rather than just telling readers what the experience meant. Showing without telling is a key part of an effective reflective essay, as you can see in the examples.

Some reflections on how race shapes our experiences--if you write about that:

- [A Conversation about Growing Up Black](#)
- [A Conversation with Latinos on Race](#)
- [The Struggles of Being an Asian American](#)
- [A Conversation with White People on Race](#)
- [Growing Up Undocumented in America](#)
- [A Conversation with Black Women on Race](#)
- [A Conversation with My Black Son](#)
- [“We are Still Here”: Growing up Native](#)