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Social Studies 6th grade

Sample writing prompt for Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) Social Studies

Reference:

<http://michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-28753---,00.html>

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MME_EDITED_version_rubric_for_web_9-29-06_174201_7.pdf

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/10-02_Core_democratic_Values_48832_7.pdf

<http://www.bobdylan.com/#/songs/death-emmett-till>

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_look.html

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_segregation.html

Chris Crowe.2003. Getting Away with Murder: the True Story of the Emmett Till Case. Dial Books for Young Readers. New York.

Following the study of the core democratic values, and instruction with the use of the above, the students will be given the following practice writing prompt to be scored as outlined by the state of Michigan rubric as found online.

You will read the following true case and be asked to take a position. You must give a clear statement, list at least one core democratic value of American Constitutional Democracy and include supporting information. Remember to use complete sentences. Explain how the core democratic value you use connects to your position. Write or print neatly on the lines provided in your ANSWER FOLDER. No additional sheets may be used.

Background information:

In August of 1955, Emmett Till, a 14 year old Negroe from Chicago, Illinois arrived in Money, Mississippi to visit relatives. On August 28, he entered the local store and whistled at a 21 one year old former beauty pageant queen, Mrs. Carolyn Bryant. Three days later, Emmett Till's body was found in the Tallahatchie River. Emmett's body was identified by the ring on his finger; the ring that had once belonged to his father. Fourteen year old Emmett had been tortured and shot. His mother, Mamie Till had his body shipped to Chicago, and ordered an open casket funeral so that all could see what had happened to her son.

Two men, Roy Bryant, the husband of Carolyn Bryant, and his half brother, J.W. Milam, were brought to trial for Emmett Till's murder. At this time, to be a juror, you were required to be a registered male voter, 29 years of age, and be able to read and write. Both Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam were acquitted for the murder by an all white male jury. Following this verdict, Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam sold their confession to Emmett Till's murder to Look magazine.

One month following the trial, Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Till told reporters:

"Two months ago I had a nice apartment in Chicago. I had a good job. I had a son. When something happened to the Negroes in the South I said, "That's their business, not mine." Now I know how wrong I was. The murder of my son has shown me that what happens to any of us, anywhere in the world had better be the business of us all."

Take a stand on the Emmet Till case. Whose business should this be? Consider all citizens of the state you live in, the state of Mississippi, Illinois, and any of the other states. Explain your stand in a letter to the editor of Look magazine. Be sure to review the requirements as outlined in your rubric.