Written Reflection

First Paragraph: Summary of the article including title, author (if known), explanation of the topic and its main points. No citations needed for this paragraph. You need at least 5 well-written sentences.

Second Paragraph: Your opinion on or reaction of the subject in the article (This is an opinion article, so you are only reading one side of the issue). How do you feel about what happened? What did you learn about it from the article? Did you find the article interesting and why? Cite textual evidence that supports or refutes your opinion about the topic. This should be at least 5 sentences long.
Emmett Till Revisited

Choose the best answer for each of the following questions. For the analysis section, refer to the article as needed.

CHECK COMPREHENSION

1. What is a lynching?
   a) any racially motivated killing
   b) a particularly violent murder that takes place in front of a crowd
   c) a killing in retaliation for an alleged offense, carried out without legal authority
   d) any unsolved murder from the Jim Crow era

2. Fourteen-year-old Mississippi lynching victim Emmett Till had been accused of
   a) running from a police officer.
   b) offensive a white woman.
   c) robbing a local grocery store.
   d) trespassing on a white person’s property.

3. In the years immediately following the Civil War, federal troops in the South
   a) carried out hundreds of lynchings.
   b) organized racial hate groups.
   c) enforced civil rights laws.
   d) enforced Jim Crow laws.

4. What ruling did the Supreme Court make in the 1956 case Plessy v. Ferguson?
   a) African-Americans deserved equal protection under the law.
   b) African-Americans had full voting rights.
   c) It was unconstitutional to keep African-Americans from sitting on juries.
   d) It was constitutional to have separate but equal facilities for black citizens and white citizens.

ANALYZE THE TEXT

5. Which sentence from the article demonstrates that there is a “renewed focus” on lynching?
   a) “In January, a police chief … issued a public apology for the 1940 lynching of a black teenager.”
   b) “…the Equal Justice Initiative … published the most detailed study to date on lynching…”
   c) “New evidence in the death of Emmett Till has his family seeking answers.”
   d) all of the above

6. You can infer from the article that perpetrators of lynchings were rarely convicted, in part because
   a) local officials were often complicit in the lynchings.
   b) lynchings were carried out in secret locations.
   c) lynchings were perfectly legal.
   d) none of the above

7. When the author writes that “Reconstruction collapsed” in 1877, you can infer she means that
   a) the 14th and 15th Amendments were repealed.
   b) the economies of Southern states failed.
   c) many Southern states stopped granting African-Americans their civil rights.
   d) the South gave up on rebuilding its infrastructure.

8. The author’s main purpose in the section “I’m Profoundly Sorry” is to explain why
   a) the federal government has apologized for lynchings.
   b) one small-town police chief has apologized for a 1940 lynching.
   c) a witness to the Emmett Till lynching lied about the case.
   d) none of the above

IN-DEPTH QUESTIONS  Please use the other side of this paper for your responses.

9. The author notes that in some communities where lynchings occurred, black community members still deal with “lingering trauma.” What do you think she means?

10. Should local governments do more to acknowledge lynchings that took place long ago? Explain.
Analyze the Photo
(For use with "Emmett Till Revisited" on p. 16 of the magazine)

1. What details do you notice about the coffin itself? What do you think the photos attached to the coffin lid show, and why might they be there?

2. How would you describe the expression on Emmett Till's mother's face? How does this image make you feel?

3. What effect did this photo—and others of Emmett Till's open casket that showed his body—have on the public at the time? Why do you think Emmett Till's mother wanted the world to see what her dead son looked like?
Get a Clue

Paying attention to context can help you infer the meanings of challenging words you encounter in texts. Use context clues in this excerpt from the article "Emmett Till Revisited" to figure out the meanings of the boldfaced words.

In the summer of 1955, a 14-year-old black boy named Emmett Till was abducted at gunpoint by white men in Money, Mississippi, then beaten, shot in the head, and thrown into the Tallahatchie River. Till, who lived in Chicago and was in Mississippi visiting relatives, was killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman in a store. At the murder trial, witnesses clearly identified the perpetrators, but an all-white jury in a deeply segregated South acquitted them, and the men walked free. Many experts say the brutal killing, as well as the gruesome photos that circulated of Till's mutilated body at his funeral in Chicago, helped galvanize the civil rights movement.

Now, more than 60 years later, Emmett Till's story has taken yet another disturbing twist: Carolyn Bryant Donham, the now 82-year-old woman who had accused Till of offending her in the store, has admitted that a crucial part of her courtroom testimony—that Emmett "grabbed her around the waist and uttered obscenities"—was a lie.

1. PART A
The word segregated most nearly means ___.
  a) suspicious  
  b) unified  
  c) divided along racial lines  
  d) well-educated

PART B
Which word or phrase from the article provides the best support for the answer to Part A?
  a) "all-white jury"  
  b) "brutal killing"  
  c) "civil rights movement"  
  d) "another disturbing twist"

2. PART A
The word acquitted most nearly means ___.
  a) supported the actions of someone  
  b) found someone guilty of a crime  
  c) correctly identified  
  d) found someone not guilty of a crime

PART B
Which word or phrase from the article provides the best support for the answer to Part A?
  a) "allegedly whistling"  
  b) "gruesome photos"  
  c) "walked free"  
  d) "deeply segregated"

3. PART A
The word gruesome most nearly means ___.
  a) inspiring horror and disgust  
  b) intensely complicated  
  c) bright and vivid  
  d) thought-provoking

PART B
Which word or phrase from the article provides the best support for the answer to Part A?
  a) "helped galvanize"  
  b) "mutilated body"  
  c) "witnesses clearly identified"  
  d) "crucial part of her courtroom testimony"

GOING FURTHER: Use context to explore these additional words from the article.

4. Infer the meaning of the word galvanize:

Who else, besides a civil rights activist, might have been galvanized by Till's murder?

5. Infer the meaning of the word perpetrators:

Now use that word in an original sentence:
Quiz

1. Which of these statements would be MOST important to include in an objective summary of the article?
   (A) Emmett Till was raised in the city of Chicago, far away and quite different from the small town in Mississippi where he was killed.
   (B) Emmett Till was kidnapped and murdered after he whistled at a white woman, who later admitted she lied about what happened.
   (C) The investigators who are examining the death of Emmett Till should also try to keep open the cases of Milton Lee Scott and Peter Francis.
   (D) The investigators should provide the family of Emmett Till with more information about the ongoing investigation and when it will conclude.

2. Finish the sentence below.
   The central idea of the article is developed by ___.
   (A) illustrating the role that Timothy B. Tyson’s research materials have played in the FBI’s solution to Emmett Till’s death
   (B) exploring how the all-white jury arrived at its decision to acquit Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam in Emmett Till’s death
   (C) providing background about the death of Emmett Till and the revelation that led to reopening the case
   (D) questioning the reasons why the Justice Department has been unable to make progress in Emmett Till’s case

3. Which answer choice BEST explains how Emmett Till’s case interacts with the other six cases in the Justice Department report?
   (A) Till’s case was the first to be officially investigated and reported as a racially motivated killing, and it also remains the only case that has not been solved by authorities.
   (B) Till’s case has long been credited with sparking interest in the civil rights movement, but the other six cases have received little attention in relation to civil rights and racism.
   (C) Till’s case motivated authorities to change the way they approach cold cases, and it changed the way that authorities selected juries for trials in the other cases.
   (D) Till’s case inspired the law that said authorities have to report on their investigations into racially motivated killings, but the other six were recently closed while Till’s remains open.

4. How are the Reverend Wheeler Parker’s and Deborah Watts’ opinions connected to each other?
   (A) Parker’s concerns that the Justice Department will close the investigation contrast with Watts’ enthusiasm about the potential to solve the case.
   (B) Parker’s memories about the night that Emmett Till was kidnapped and killed further clarify the memories of the incident that were shared by Watts.
   (C) Parker’s frustration that justice has not moved quickly enough in the case is supported by Watts’ opinion that only Carolyn Bryant Donham can reveal the truth.
   (D) Parker’s impatience with the speed of the investigation is contradicted by Watts’ opinion that learning the truth now will not do any good for Emmett Till’s family.