

"Glory"
John Legend and Common (2015)
(from *Selma* soundtrack)

[John Legend:]

One day when the glory comes
It will be ours, it will be ours
One day when the war is won
We will be sure, we will be sure
Oh glory

[Common:]

Hands to the Heavens, no man, no weapon
Formed against, yes glory is destined
Every day women and men become legends
Sins that go against our skin become blessings
The movement is a rhythm to us
Freedom is like religion to us
Justice is juxtapositionin' us
Justice for all just ain't specific enough
One son died, his spirit is revisitin' us
True and livin' livin' in us, resistance is us
That's why Rosa sat on the bus
That's why we walk through Ferguson with our
hands up
When it go down we woman and man up
They say, "Stay down", and we stand up
Shots, we on the ground, the camera panned up
King pointed to the mountain top and we ran up

[John Legend:]

One day when the glory comes
It will be ours, it will be ours
One day when the war is won
We will be sure, we will be sure
Oh glory

Now the war is not over, victory isn't won
And we'll fight on to the finish, then when it's all
done
We'll cry glory, oh glory
We'll cry glory, oh glory

[Common:]

Selma is now for every man, woman and child
Even Jesus got his crown in front of a crowd
They marched with the torch, we gon' run with it
now
Never look back, we done gone hundreds of
miles
From dark roads he rose, to become a hero
Facin' the league of justice, his power was the
people
Enemy is lethal, a king became regal
Saw the face of Jim Crow under a bald eagle
The biggest weapon is to stay peaceful
We sing, our music is the cuts that we bleed
through
Somewhere in the dream we had an epiphany
Now we right the wrongs in history
No one can win the war individually
It takes the wisdom of the elders and young
people's energy
Welcome to the story we call victory
The comin' of the Lord, my eyes have seen the
glory

[John Legend:]

One day when the glory comes
It will be ours, it will be ours
One day when the war is won
We will be sure, we will be sure
Oh glory

[John Legend:]

When the war is won, when it's all said and done
We'll cry glory, oh glory

Literary Essay Outline Example Mrs. K. Prescott

Question: In what ways does your text either reproduce or challenge a dominant established social narrative?

From Selma to Ferguson: Exploring American Racial Inequality in “Glory”

John Legend and Common’s 2015 Grammy Award winning song “Glory” considers the enduring legacy of civil rights injustices in the United States. Written for the film *Selma* (2015), the song’s lyrics consider both the roots of black oppression in the US, as well as the current, on-going protests over police brutality against black communities in America. The film explores a critical moment in the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights battle to secure voting rights for black citizens in Alabama, bolstered by the march from Selma to Montgomery across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The song’s narrative challenges the notion that America is a place of equal rights and freedoms for all citizens. By spotlighting the racial injustices that continue to exist in the United States, “Glory” demands a forward-looking call to action that emphasizes an opportunity for social change and anticipates the realization of equal rights for all individuals in America.

Colour Codes:

- Names the text, author, year, and general topic
- Literal summary of the plot (what the text is literally about)
- Setting the Argument – Transitioning from plot to thesis
- Thesis: Text + Verb + Argument (what, how, why it matters)

Ideas to consider for body paragraphs:

- 1) Connection to “I Have a Dream” Speech
- 2) Connections to faith and Christian gospel
- 3) Connections to police brutality and protests (past and present)
- 4) The persistence of racism embedded in society – contrasts with ‘justice’ and ‘freedom’
- 5) Claiming of victory – peace (art) as protest
- 6) Need to come together in unity

Research ideas:

- 1) Gospel and Hip Hop
- 2) Police Brutality in America
- 3) The effectiveness of protest
- 4) Michael Brown – Ferguson Protests
- 5) Rosa Parks
- 6) “I Have a Dream” Speech – Martin Luther King – Selma Bridge Walk
- 7) Institutionalized Racism