

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Part 3: Writing Prompts

MISSION US: "No Turning Back"

A NOTE TO THE EDUCATOR:

You will need to decide how best to share these writing prompts with your students. You might share them all and ask students to choose one for response. You might assign one or more to the entire group. You might make one or more of the topics the basis for in-class discussions. Make your decisions according to the needs of your group.

Since students vary in their degree of comfort and skill in writing, you should decide when students write and how much students should write. We do suggest, though, that since students need to share their writing with each other to make personal and historical connections, you encourage them to focus on content rather than on mechanical skills. Pieces can be revised and edited later if you decide they should be shared more formally (such as on a bulletin board or newsletter).

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Read through all the topics. Then choose one of them to write about. Write the title of the piece at the top of your page. Write in complete sentences. After you are finished, proofread your work for correctness.

FINDING INSPIRATION. Verna draws strength from singing "This Little Light of Mine" at church. Write about something that you do when you need a spark of strength and inspiration to face something that is difficult.

GROWING A MOVEMENT. Inspired by Fannie Lou Hamer's actions in Sunflower County, Verna goes to the Greenwood SNCC office to volunteer. The woman working the desk there asks Verna to help canvas for an upcoming citizenship class. What choices did Verna face as she canvassed for the class? If you were seeking volunteers and allies for a cause that is important to you in your life today, where would you go? Where *wouldn't* you go? Who would you ask, and how would you convince them to become involved? Who do you think would be easiest to convince to help? Who would be most helpful to your cause?

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS. How do the connections with others in the community that Verna made in Part One pay off when she is canvassing for SNCC? What kinds of connections do you have with people in your community (such as business owners, teachers, clergy, families, etc.)? Which would be most helpful and supportive to you in working for a cause you believe in? What can you do to make new community connections and strengthen your existing ones?

A VARIETY OF WAYS TO PARTICIPATE. In addition to SNCC and other civil rights leaders and activists (such as Medgar Evers, Sam Block, and Fannie Lou Hamer), many others in Greenwood find ways to contribute to the campaign for voting rights by the end of "No Turning Back." Choose one of the following people from the game and write about how they found big or small ways to contribute to the movement: Mr. Robinson, Miss Polly, the Gray Cab Company, Aunt Mabel, Uncle Curtis, Mr. Woodson, Reverend Aaron Johnson. What do the ways the people on this list contributed to the campaign for voting rights suggest to you about the variety of options you have to support causes that are important to you? Describe two or three actions you and others can take to support and strengthen your community?

CONNECTING TO TODAY. What feels *familiar* to you about the fight for voting rights in 1960s Greenwood in our world today? What feels *different*, and which differences seem most important? What can we learn from considering these similarities and differences that will help us be informed and active caretakers of our democracy today?