



Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____



Booker T. Washington vs. William Du Bois (10 points)

1. a. **In you own words**, describe how Booker T. Washington believed African Americans could improve their lives in American society.

1. b. List two specific quotes that led you to this description:

1.

2.

2 a. **In you own words**, describe how William Du Bois believed African Americans could improve their lives in American society.

2 b. List two specific quotes that led you to this description:

1.

2.

3. Who do you believe gave the best advice? Why?

dupe of the Republican party for all these long years, can be longer deceived by these loud quadrennial protestations of affectionate regard for him? . . .

While on this phase of the subject, Mr. Speaker, I desire to refer to the unsupported, bald declarations of gentlemen that negroes are not supplied with accommodations equal to those furnished to white people upon railroads in the South. Why gentlemen will persist in these statements I can not understand. Let me suggest something here that in all probability these gentlemen have never thought of. On our Florida railroads—and I presume it is the same in other Southern States—the cars furnished for negro passengers are just as good as those furnished for white passengers. I am free to admit, however, that they do not long remain as good, as comfortable, and as clean as do those set apart for white passengers. You will not have to search long for the reason of this change. The average negro is perfectly happy when he finds himself eating a watermelon or going on a railroad excursion. The railroad companies in the South cater to this weakness of the negro for riding on trains, and scarcely a week passes in the summer time that a negro excursion is not “pulled off” in every neighborhood. They flock to these excursion trains by thousands and of course the cars set apart for the negroes on the regular passenger trains are used for negro excursions.

Imagine a nice, new passenger coach, packed with dirty, greasy, filthy negroes, down South, in midsummer, and you can readily understand why that car does not long remain as good, as clean, and as desirable as a similar car occupied exclusively by white travelers. It is said of Sam Jones, the great Georgia revivalist, that on one occasion a certain Northern gentleman asked him if there was very much difference in the instincts of a “nigger” and a white man. Sam replied that he didn’t know as to that, but of one thing he was absolutely sure, and that was that there was a vast difference in the “*out stinks*” of the two.

For more than forty years, Mr. Chairman, the white people of the South have been taxing themselves to educate negro children, have been building churches for them, and in every conceivable way, with a patience and forbearance never excelled in any age, have struggled along with the stupendous task of elevating and fitting for the duties of citizenship this black mass of ignorant, vicious, and incapable freedmen. I am not wise enough to foretell the end of the problem confronting us. Mr. Lincoln said that this nation could not exist “half slave and half free.” I think it is equally true that this nation can not exist *half white and half black*. I am very sure that no country having within its borders two distinct races, alien to each other in every essential respect, can long exist with any degree of harmony between the two upon the beautiful theory of perfect equality of all before the law.

The position which we of the South occupy on this question is not one of hostility to the negro. It is one of patriotic love for our own race. We would not destroy the negro, but we would preserve the Caucasian. We will do the black man no harm, and we will not allow him to harm the white man. Members of Congress who are dependent upon a few negro votes in order to retain their seats in this body, a few long-haired negrophilists in various sections of the country, and a lot of short-haired white women who disgrace

both their race and sex, may rant of injustice and wrong to the end of time, but they had as well realize now as at any other time that, no matter what the cost or how great the sacrifice, we shall under any and all circumstances maintain the integrity of our race and preserve our civilization.

If God Almighty had intended these two races to be equal, He would have so created them. He made the Caucasian of handsome figure, straight hair, regular features, high brow, and superior intellect. He created the negro, giving him a black skin, kinky hair, thick lips, flat nose, low brow, low order of intelligence, and repulsive features. I do not believe that these differences were the result of either accident or mistake on the part of the Creator. I believe He knew what He was doing, and I believe He did just what He wanted to do.

We believe in God, and we are willing to accept His work just as it fell from His hands. But these people who profess to believe that “a white man may be as good as a negro if the white man behaves himself” are not satisfied with God’s work in this regard. They are quite sure that they can make a better job of it than did the Creator, hence we find them attempting to remove the black man from the menial sphere for which he was created, and where he may be useful, to a higher circle for which he is entirely unfitted and where he is perfectly useless. . . .

The gentleman from New York [Cong. Driscoll] says that we have been allowed to have our own way down South with this question for so long that we have grown “bold” enough to come on the floor of this House and make demands for this kind of legislation. The gentleman uses that word “bold” as though he thought we did not have the right to come here and make demands. We do demand, and we have the right to demand. The blood of the “heroes of the Revolution” flows through our veins; from the Revolution to the present day no foreign foe has ever engaged this Republic in battle that Southern blood has not consecrated every place of conflict; in all our history no foreign foe has ever threatened the flag that we did not rally to its defense. In these emergencies we volunteer, and do not have to be drafted. Yes; we have the right to demand. This is our country, as it was the country of our fathers. The country of the white man, not the home of the mongrel. It will always be the white man’s country. If the black man and the yellow man each desire to remain with us, occupying the sphere in life for which God Almighty intended each, let them do so. If not content with that, then let them go elsewhere. . . .

Booker T. Washington Advocates Self-Help, 1895

A ship lost at sea for many days suddenly sighted a friendly vessel. From the mast of the unfortunate vessel was seen a signal, “Water, water; we die of thirst!” The answer from the friendly vessel at once came back, “Cast down your bucket where you are.” A second time the signal, “Water, water; send us water!” ran up from the distressed vessel, and was answered, “Cast down your bucket where you are.” And a third and fourth signal for water was answered, “Cast down your bucket where you are.” The captain of the

distressed vessel, at last heeding the injunction, cast down his bucket, and it came up full of fresh, sparkling water from the mouth of the Amazon River. To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land or who underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the Southern white man, who is their next-door neighbour, I would say: "Cast down your bucket where you are"—cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom we are surrounded.

Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. And in this connection it is well to bear in mind that whatever other sins the South may be called to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world, and in nothing is this Exposition more eloquent than in emphasizing this chance. Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labour and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and the substantial, the ornamental gewgaws of life and the useful. No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities.

To those of the white race who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits for the prosperity of the South, were I permitted I would repeat what I say to my own race, "Cast down your bucket where you are." Cast it down among the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your firesides. Cast down your bucket among these people who have, without strikes and labour wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, builded your railroads and cities, and brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth, and helped make possible this magnificent representation of the progress of the South. Casting down your bucket among my people, helping and encouraging them as you are doing on these grounds, and to education of head, hand, and heart, you will find that they will buy your surplus land, make blossom the waste places in your fields, and run your factories. While doing this, you can be sure in the future, as in the past, that you and your families will be surrounded by the most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen. As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past, in nursing your children, watching by the sick-bed of your mothers and fathers, and often following them with tear-dimmed eyes to their graves, so in the future, in our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defence of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one. In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress. . . .

The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.

In conclusion, may I repeat that nothing in thirty years has given us more hope and encouragement, and drawn us so near to you of the white race, as this opportunity [to participate in] the Exposition; and here bending, as it were, over the altar that represents the results of the struggles of your race and mine, both starting practically empty-handed three decades ago, I pledge that in your effort to work out the great and intricate problem which God has laid at the doors of the South, you shall have at all times the patient, sympathetic help of my race; only let this be constantly in mind, that, while from representations in these buildings of the product of field, of forest, of mine, of factory, letters, and art, much good will come, yet far above and beyond material benefits will be that higher good, that, let us pray God, will come, in a blotting out of sectional differences and racial animosities and suspicions, in a determination to administer absolute justice, in a willing obedience among all classes to the mandates of law. This, this, coupled with our material prosperity, will bring into our beloved South a new heaven and a new earth. . . .

W. E. B. Du Bois Rejects Washington's Strategy of Accommodation, 1903

Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission; but adjustment at such a peculiar time as to make his programme unique. This is an age of unusual economic development, and Mr. Washington's programme naturally takes an economic cast, becoming a gospel of Work and Money to such an extent as apparently almost completely to overshadow the higher aims of life. Moreover, this is an age when the more advanced races are coming in closer contact with the less developed races, and the race-feeling is therefore intensified; and Mr. Washington's programme practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro races. Again, in our own land, the reaction from the sentiment of war time has given impetus to race-prejudice against Negroes, and Mr. Washington withdraws many of the high demands of Negroes as men and American citizens. In other periods of intensified prejudice all the Negro's tendency to self-assertion has been called forth; at this period a policy of submission is advocated. In the history of nearly all other races and peoples the doctrine preached at such crises has been that manly self-respect is worth more than lands and houses, and that a people who voluntarily surrender such respect, or cease striving for it, are not worth civilizing.

In answer to this, it has been claimed that the Negro can survive only through submission. Mr. Washington distinctly asks that black people give up, at least for the present, three things,—

First, political power,

Second, insistence on civil rights,

Third, higher education of Negro youth,—

and concentrate all their energies on industrial education, the accumulation of wealth, and the conciliation of the South. This policy has been courageously and insistently advocated for over fifteen years, and has been triumphant for perhaps ten years. As a result of this tender of the palm-branch, what has been the return? In these years there have occurred:

1. The disfranchisement of the Negro.
2. The legal creation of a distinct status of civil inferiority for the Negro.
3. The steady withdrawal of aid from institutions for the higher training of the Negro.

These movements are not, to be sure, direct results of Mr. Washington's teachings; but his propaganda has, without a shadow of doubt, helped their speedier accomplishment. The question then comes: Is it possible, and probable, that nine millions of men can make effective progress in economic lines if they are deprived of political rights, made a servile caste, and allowed only the most meagre chance for developing their exceptional men? If history and reason give any distinct answer to these questions, it is an emphatic *No*. And Mr. Washington thus faces the triple paradox of his career:

1. He is striving nobly to make Negro artisans business men and property-owners; but it is utterly impossible, under modern competitive methods, for workingmen and property-owners to defend their rights and exist without the right of suffrage.

2. He insists on thrift and self-respect, but at the same time counsels a silent submission to civic inferiority such as is bound to sap the manhood of any race in the long run.

3. He advocates common-school and industrial training, and depreciates institutions of higher learning; but neither the Negro common-schools, nor Tuskegee itself, could remain open a day were it not for teachers trained in Negro colleges, or trained by their graduates. . . .

[Critics of Washington] do not expect that the free right to vote, to enjoy civic rights, and to be educated, will come in a moment; they do not expect to see the bias and prejudices of years disappear at the blast of a trumpet; but they are absolutely certain that the way for a people to gain their reasonable rights is not by voluntarily throwing them away and insisting that they do not want them; that the way for a people to gain respect is not by continually belittling and ridiculing themselves; that, on the contrary, Negroes must insist continually, in season and out of season, that voting is necessary to modern manhood, that color discrimination is barbarism, and that black boys need education as well as white boys. . . .

. . . On the whole the distinct impression left by Mr. Washington's

propaganda is, first, that the South is justified in its present attitude toward the Negro because of the Negro's degradation; secondly, that the prime cause of the Negro's failure to rise more quickly is his wrong education in the past; and, thirdly, that his future rise depends primarily on his own efforts. Each of these propositions is a dangerous half-truth. The supplementary truths must never be lost sight of: first, slavery and race-prejudice are potent if not sufficient causes of the Negro's position; second, industrial and common-school training were necessarily slow in planting because they had to await the black teachers trained by higher institutions, . . . and, third, while it is a great truth to say that the Negro must strive and strive mightily to help himself, it is equally true that unless his striving be not simply seconded, but rather aroused and encouraged, by the initiative of the richer and wiser envioning group, he cannot hope for great success.

In his failure to realize and impress this last point, Mr. Washington is especially to be criticised. His doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical and rather pessimistic spectators; when in fact the burden belongs to the nation. . . .

The South ought to be led, by candid and honest criticism, to assert her better self and do her full duty to the race she has cruelly wronged and is still wronging. The North—her co-partner in guilt—cannot salve her conscience by plastering it with gold. We cannot settle this problem by diplomacy and suaveness, by "policy" alone. If worse come to worst, can the moral fibre of this country survive the slow throttling and murder of nine millions of men?

The black men of America have a duty to perform, a duty stern and delicate,—a forward movement to oppose a part of the work of their greatest leader. So far as Mr. Washington preaches Thrift, Patience, and Industrial Training for the masses, we must hold up his hands and strive with him, rejoicing in his honors and glorying in the strength of this Joshua called of God and of man to lead the headless host. But so far as Mr. Washington apologizes for injustice, North or South, does not rightly value the privilege and duty of voting, belittles the emasculating effects of caste distinctions, and opposes the higher training and ambition of our brighter minds,—so far as he, the South, or the Nation, does this,—we must unceasingly and firmly oppose them. By every civilized and peaceful method we must strive for the rights which the world accords to men, clinging unwaveringly to those great words which the sons of the Fathers would fain forget: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Mary Church Terrell on Racial Exclusion in Northern Academies, 1940

A young girl of whom I was very fond and with whose family I had been closely associated for years decided to prepare herself for college in a large fitting school in the West—quite near Chicago. to be exact. But there