

Questions for Excerpt from “What We Want”

1. What was Stokely Carmichael referencing when he said, “for too many years, black Americans marched and had their heads broken and got shot”?

Carmichael was referencing the previous tactics of the Civil Rights Movement, which he refutes in this article.

2. What “double reality” did Carmichael claim must be addressed in any attempts to end racism?

Carmichael said, “We should begin with the basic fact that black Americans have two problems: they are poor and they are black. All other problems arise from this two-sided reality: lack of education, the so-called apathy of black men.”

3. According to Carmichael, why was a black panther selected as the ballot symbol for the “freedom organizations” nominee?

The black panther represents the strength and dignity of the Black community and symbolically protects candidates from anything they will have to endure while attempting to win the election.

4. Even though SNCC embraced nonviolence, they acknowledged and supported the right to use firearms under what circumstances? What do you think this changing attitude towards the use of violence might have represented?

They supported the use of firearms in self-defense.

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence. Answers could point toward increasing violence against the black community.

Questions for “I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin’-To-Die-Rag”

1. Country Joe and the Fish sang about what U.S. policy?

They sang about the U.S. draft for the Vietnam War.

2. According to the song, what two groups supported the war? What were their respective reasons for supporting the war?

Generals and Wall Street supported the war.

Generals: Chance for fame and glory and to kill Communists

Wall Street: Money to be made

3. How does this song reflect growing disapproval toward the Vietnam War?

This song expresses a very negative take on the justification for and reasons behind the war as well as its consequences.

4. What is the tone of this song? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.

The song employs a fatalistic and sarcastic tone. Student can cite lines representing the seeming inevitability of the outcomes of the song, or show juxtapositions between traditionally patriotic phrasing and stated consequences.

Questions for “We Are Mired in Stalemate”

1. Cronkite asserted that his analysis “must be speculative, personal, subjective.” What did he mean by this statement, and why did he say it? Do you think it makes his conclusion more or less credible? Explain.

Cronkite was making clear that what he was saying was not traditional journalism. He was bringing in his own personal beliefs and offering speculations.

Student must make a claim and support their answer with evidence. Answers should relate to journalistic integrity and ethics.

2. According to Cronkite what was the only possible conclusion to draw about the reality of America’s involvement in Vietnam?

Cronkite noted that the only conclusion to draw was that “the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate.”

3. What is the tone of Cronkite’s report? Cite examples from the text to support your answer.

Student may cite Cronkite’s attempts to present a sober and reasoned (as opposed to overly dramatic or naively optimistic) assessment, using words such as “evidence,” “unreasonable,” “realistic,” and “rational.” Student may also cite Cronkite’s resigned tone when describing the realities of the situation in Vietnam.

4. Cronkite was highly respected and trusted by the American people. What effect do you think Cronkite’s observations and conclusions had on the viewing public, and why?

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence.

ELECTION OF 1968
ANSWER KEY

Questions for “National Guardsmen on Beale Street”

1. Identify the two groups that appear in this photograph. What are their respective purposes?

Soldiers/National Guardsmen: preventing a demonstration from turning violent, being a visible sign of “law and order.”

Protestors: demanding their rights as citizens, using protest to bring attention to an issue.

2. Many of the men in the picket line are holding signs that read “I Am a Man.” Why do you think they carried these signs?

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence. Answers should include concepts like equality, dignity, or respect, noting that the sign holders want to be treated the same as any other man regardless of the color of their skin.

3. Why do you think the white man marching with the protestors is *not* carrying a sign?

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence. Answers could point to his being an ally, rather than someone fighting for recognition himself.

4. This picture was taken in 1968, just months before the presidential primaries. Does this picture suggest that by 1968 the Civil Rights Movement and subsequent civil rights legislation had resolved the issue of race relations in the United States? Explain.

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence.

Questions for Acceptance Speech

1. Nixon's acceptance speech seemed to imply that there were two different Americas. What did he claim was the dividing line or distinguishing factor separating the two groups? Cite evidence to support your answer.

Student must make a claim and support it with evidence from the text. Answers should point to the distinction Nixon makes between loud Americans who he implies are shouting but not answering questions, and quiet Americans who work hard and don't cause problems. Evidence can include any of the descriptions that Nixon provides of these two groups.

2. According to Nixon, who constituted the "great majority" of forgotten Americans?

The great majority is made up of "non-shouters" and "non-demonstrators."

3. What is the tone of Nixon's message? Cite examples from the text to support your answer.

Nixon presents a dire tone regarding the current state of affairs in the country, offering himself as a solution to the complicated and wide-reaching issues he identifies within the nation. Student should cite examples of the way Nixon describes each issue, paying particular attention to his use of superlatives and counter-examples.

4. Besides those present at the Republican National Convention, who was Nixon *really* trying to appeal to with his speech? Cite evidence to support your answer.

Nixon is trying to appeal to voters who identify with the picture of the "silent majority" he describes. Student can cite a variety of elements from the speech, including his use of "we," his broad description of what the "silent majority" represents and the critical role it plays in the country, and his clear need to appeal to more than just the people at the convention if he wishes to win the election.