

Glenn Loury: An Independent Mind

Critical Thinking Questions – K – 8

K-2

Why do you enjoy learning? How is it helpful?

Has a parent's or teacher's advice ever helped you do a task better (making your bed, sweeping the floor, organizing your notebook)?

What makes you like one friend's idea more than another friend's idea?

Why is it important to listen to different ideas, even if you do not like them?

How should we respond when famous people (athletes, presidents, entertainers, the "Founding Fathers") make bad choices? Name ways some famous people have helped society, despite having made mistakes.

Why is it hard to admit when we do something wrong? Name a consequence that you received when you did something wrong. Think of someone who did you wrong. What did they do to help you trust them again?

What do you like about your neighborhood and community? What changes do you want to see in your neighborhood and greater community?

In what ways does the world make us not feel safe? What can you do when you get older to make a safe school and community?

3-5

What is constructive criticism?

What makes people uncomfortable when a differing view is presented?

What issue do you hold an opinion about that is different from a friend or family member?

How might Loury's early years have encouraged him to challenge popular ideas about the reasons for racial inequality?

How has critical thinking helped you understand different sides of serious issues? Why do some people not like debate? What are key aspects of a respectable debate?

How do our choices reflect what is most important to us? How do our present choices affect our future success? What choices are you making to help you be successful in life?

How should we respond when famous people (athletes, presidents, entertainers, the “Founding Fathers”) make bad choices? What contributions have famous people made to society, although they have made mistakes?

Why is it difficult to admit wrongdoing? What type of consequence have you received when you did something wrong? How has someone who has wronged you regained your trust?

In his elder years, why is Lorde sad about the “lost world of his youth in urban, middle-class Chicago”? Compare the community you live in with the vibrant community that he experienced when he was your age. What do you like about your neighborhood and community? What changes do you want to see in your neighborhood and greater community?

How has racism, financial challenges and/or community violence affected your family? How might it affect your future? How can you make your school, neighborhood, and community a better place for everyone?

6-8

What is constructive criticism?

Why did Lorde challenge popular ideas around economic inequality?

How has critical thinking helped you understand different sides of serious issues? Why do some people not like debate? What are key aspects of a respectable debate?

What issue do you hold an opinion about that is different from a friend or family member? What makes people uncomfortable when a differing view is presented?

What choices did Lorde make that showed that he was responsible, hard-working and cared about his family? How do our choices reflect what is most important to us? How do our present choices affect our future success? What choices are you making to help you be successful in life?

The full story of Loury's life includes his weaknesses. How should we respond when famous people (athletes, presidents, entertainers, the "Founding Fathers") make bad choices? What contributions have famous people made to society, although they have made mistakes?

How can actions of redemption—the attempt to make amends or acknowledge wrongdoing—help the public regain trust in the individual? Have you ever made amends for something that you did wrong? How has someone who has wronged you regained your trust?

What made Loury melancholy when he thought of the "lost world of his youth in urban, middle-class Chicago"? Compare the community you live in with the vibrant community that he experienced when he was your age. What do you like about your neighborhood and community? What changes do you want to see in your neighborhood and greater community?

How do civil unrest and community violence affect you now? How might it affect your future? What can you do to make your school, neighborhood, and community a better place for everyone?