One Book Baltimore | Reader’s Guide

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

“Powerful, wrenching.”  
—John Green

“Raw and gripping.”  
—Jason Reynolds

“A must-read!”  
—Angie Thomas

Dear Martin
a novel

NIC STONE
One Book Baltimore is honored to partner with Nic Stone to engage Baltimore City Schools’ students and their communities in the shared experience of reading Dear Martin and in the rich conversations about peace and anti-violence that this work invites.

Dear Martin was selected with help and input from students, teachers, and other Baltimore community members, and representatives from these groups will lead the conversations around this work. In this first year of what we hope will become an annual initiative, One Book Baltimore’s broad group of local community-oriented organizations will connect students and community members to increased discourse and actions toward peace and anti-violence through schools, libraries and other community spaces, with the dual goals of promoting literacy and enriching community.

This initiative is made possible through the efforts and contributions of Baltimore City Schools, Baltimore Ceasefire 365, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Humanities, the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, and the T. Rowe Price Foundation. These efforts are further supported and amplified by partnerships with First Book, the Maryland Book Bank, CityLit Project, and others.

Additionally, if you are the owner of a copy of Dear Martin with the One Book Baltimore logo on the cover, the Maryland Book Bank generously invites you to bring this copy to the Book Bank upon finishing it, where you can trade it in for up to three other books of your choice, free of charge.

We thank you for picking up this book and invite you to join us in the shared experience of reading Dear Martin. We hope you will also join us in ongoing conversations about peace and anti-violence in our communities.

Sincerely,
The One Book Baltimore Planning Team

The content and resources of this guide were created and compiled by Paige J. Schweitzer in consultation with educators from Baltimore City Public Schools. Portions of this guide reprinted with permission from Penguin Random House.
Resource for Teachers and Parents
All 7th and 8th grade students in participating Baltimore City Public Schools were provided with copies of Dear Martin by Nic Stone. If you are interested in reading the book yourself, copies are available at all Enoch Pratt Free Library branches. Though this book is appropriate for many 7th- and 8th-grade students, it includes violence, expressions of anger and grief, profanity, some discussion of sex, and scenes of underage drinking. If you are reading this book with students, or your child, please be aware of these topics and be prepared to discuss them using this Readers’ Guide.

Talking to Kids about Race and Police Violence
Prior to reading and discussing this novel, teachers and parents can watch this YouTube video for assistance with teaching sensitive topics such as race and police violence:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOaC8w00iCI.

General Themes
Search for identity; independence; coming of age; culture; the importance/role of family; forgiveness; trust; hope; determination; acceptance; prejudice; racism; compassion; empathy; peace and nonviolence.

About the Book
Justyce McAllister is top of his class, captain of the debate team, and set for the Ivy League next year—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. He is eventually released without charges (or an apology), but the incident has Justyce spooked. Despite leaving his rough neighborhood, he can’t seem to escape the scorn of his former peers or the attitude of his prep-school classmates. The only exception: Sarah Jane, Justyce’s gorgeous—and white—debate partner he wishes he didn’t have a thing for. Struggling to cope with it all, Justyce starts a journal to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. But do Dr. King’s teachings hold up in the modern world? Justyce isn’t so sure. Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up. Way up. Much to the fury of the white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. And Justyce and Manny get caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it’s Justyce who is under attack. Some would kill to know the truth of what happened—Justyce is dying to forget.

About the Author
Nic Stone is a native of Atlanta and a Spelman College graduate. After working extensively in teen mentoring and living in Israel for a few years, she returned to the United States to write full-time. Dear Martin, her first novel, is loosely based on a series of true events involving the shooting deaths of unarmed African American teenagers. Shaken by the various responses to these incidents—and to the projustice movement that sprang up as a result—Stone began the project in an attempt to examine current affairs through the lens of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s teachings. You can find her fangirling over her husband and sons on Twitter and Instagram at @getnicced or on her website at nicstone.info.
“You can’t change how other people think and act, but you’re in full control of you. When it comes down to it, the only question that matters is this: If nothing in the world ever changes, what type of man are you gonna be?”

**Character Chart for *Dear Martin***

**Justyce McAllister**—17-year-old black protagonist of novel. He was born and raised in a non-affluent, majority-black neighborhood of Atlanta, GA, that he refers to as “the ghetto;” attends Braselton Preparatory Academy on a scholarship awarded for his high academic achievement

**“Mama” McAllister**—Justyce’s mother who is from a non-affluent, majority-black neighborhood of Atlanta, GA; does not want Justyce to date a white person

**Melo Taylor**—Justyce’s on-again-off-again girlfriend who is wealthy, popular, and biracial; her black father is an NFL Hall of Fame linebacker and her white mother is from Norway

**Emmanuel “Manny” Rivers**—Justyce’s black best friend who is the basketball captain at Braselton Prep; Manny’s family is extremely wealthy, his father is a VP at a major financial corporation

**Dr. Jarius “Doc” Dray**—Debate team advisor and Justyce’s favorite teacher at Braselton Prep; “Doc” is the only biracial person Justyce knows who has his PhD

**Jared Christensen**—Wealthy white student in Justyce’s debate class who has been one of Manny’s best friends since kindergarten

**Sarah-Jane “SJ” Friedman**—Justyce’s debate partner and captain of the lacrosse team; “SJ” is a white, Jewish student at Braselton Prep

**Mr. Julian Rivers**—Manny’s wealthy father who teaches the boys an important life lesson about facing people’s negative attitudes

**Dr. Tiffany Rivers**—Manny’s mother; psychologist; treats Justyce like her own son

**Quan Banks**—Manny’s cousin who confesses to killing a white police officer; grew up in the same neighborhood as Justyce

**Trey**—Black man who lives in Justyce's mother's neighborhood; part of the Black Jihad gang

**Martel Montgomery**—“Crazy” older black man who is the head of the Black Jihad gang who lives in Justyce's mother’s neighborhood

**Blake Benson**—Wealthy, white student at Braselton Prep who is close friends with Jared and Manny; dresses in a KKK costume for Halloween

**Kyle Berkeley**—Wealthy, white student at Braselton Prep who is close friends with Jared and Manny; dresses as a “redneck” for Halloween

**Tyler Clepp**—Wealthy, white student at Braselton Prep who is close friends with Jared and Manny; dresses as a “surfer dude” for Halloween
1. Discuss the definition of the following terms:
   - stressor (an activity, event, or thing that adds stress)
   - trauma (a deeply distressing or disturbing experience)
   - intergenerational trauma (when untreated trauma gets passed down by parents to their children)
   - race-based trauma (when the experience of a racial encounter impacts someone mentally and emotionally)
   - post traumatic slave syndrome (the traumatic experience of going through slavery changed the DNA within African Americans leading to higher potential rates of depression and anxiety)
   - civil disobedience (the refusal to comply with certain laws or to pay taxes and fines as a peaceful form of political protest)

   Discuss how the terms relate to various historical events to reinforce the differences.
   - Slavery, Imperialism/Colonialism: stressor
   - The Los Angeles Riots after the police beating of Rodney King in 1992: trauma
   - The Jews who experienced the Holocaust: intergenerational trauma
   - The violent colonization and assimilation of Native Americans: race-based trauma
   - Antebellum slavery and Portuguese slave trade: post traumatic slave syndrome
   - Martin Luther King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” and his other forms of protests: civil disobedience

2. How can one’s race, social, and economic status affect the way one views and lives one’s life? Elaborate on your response with examples.

3. What people in your life have had the most influence on the person you are? Explain how their influence has shaped who you are today.


5. Have you ever felt silenced, invisible, or judged due to your race, gender, or social standing? Discuss the incident and explain how you reacted to the incident.

Los Angeles, California, April 29, 1992, LAPD officers advance along Temple Street, downtown, during the first day of the Rodney King riots.
Before Reading Activities

Possible Resources

NOTE: Some of these articles include videos with violence and mature content. Educators and parents should preview before presenting them to students.


https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/when-the-media-treats-white-suspects-and-killers-better-than-black-victims_us_59c14adbe4b0f22c4a8cf212


https://www.albany.edu/scj/jcjc/vol10is2/dowler.html


https://theintercept.com/2018/03/03/baltimore-police-brutality-lawsuits-accountability/


Activity 1: What does it mean to be biased against someone or something? What does it mean to be villainized? Research how victims of police brutality are portrayed in the media and often villainized. Create a chart that compares how each victim is portrayed. Then take a closer look at how these types of biases lead to stereotypes about the behaviors of certain groups of people. How do these biases impact the lives of people of color? Why is this significant?

Extension of Activity: Discuss the terms and have students/community discussion participants apply these definitions to Activity 1.

- racial bias
- implicit/unconscious bias (the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner)
- explicit bias (attitudes or beliefs individuals have about a person or group on a conscious level)

Activity 2: Create a list of responsibilities for police officers. Then create a list of responsibilities for community members (in relation to public safety). Based on your list, do you think police officers believe in and follow all the practices for which they are responsible? Do they need to improve, and if so, in what areas? Based on your list, do community members abide by their responsibilities? Do they need to improve, and if so, in what areas?

Activity 3: Create an “identity web” where you place your name in the middle and then add specific pieces of your identity surrounding it. Write a few sentences about why each piece of identity is important to who you are. After completing your web, answer the following question: What aspects of our society help shape how we understand ourselves and how we understand others?

Extension of Activity: Create a smaller identity web that you think a friend would make about you, or create a smaller identity web that you think a stranger might make about you.
Activity 4: Without any resources, define the terms covert and overt racism. Then complete the following activity that exemplifies/explains covert and overt racism.

Understanding Covert and Overt Racism
Tragically, the cases of Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin, Troy Davis, and others have brought the issue of 20th-century racism to the surface. In order to discuss various forms of racism in American society today, we must be able to identify the existing forms. First, we must have a clear understanding of the term racism, which is an instance when a racial group asserts some form of domination over another racial group. Several forms exist, and two forms are overt and covert racism.

Overt Racism
This is the most widely understood form of racism because it is direct and intentional. Acts of overt racism are typically obvious, and the motivations are normally malicious and reflect unequal treatment to an individual or group based on race. Actions that are overtly racist deny an individual's rights or excludes that person from the privileges of society.

Covert Racism
Covert racism is more difficult to identify because it is subtle and may be unintentional. Covert racism is not on the surface, but rather integrated into an individual's value system or beliefs. It can involve both verbal and behavioral actions and is not always noticed because it follows the social norms of some individuals. Among the common indicators of covert racism are the denial of one's white privilege and the invisibility of race (i.e. “I don't see a person's race/color.”).

Identifying Covert and Overt Racism
On the line provided, write a C or an O to indicate whether the example is covert or overt racism.

- A law that directly discriminates against a particular minority group, such as the 19th century Jim Crow Laws for racial segregation.

- An organization hires a few non-white workers as “tokens” to show that they don't discriminate.

- A University that makes subtle changes in their admission criteria to exclude some groups from admission. These changes seem rational, or ethnically neutral, to avoid any outrage.

- A hate crime in which individuals of a certain race are physically assaulted.

- An African American woman is verbally assaulted by her male coworkers at the workplace.

- A group of Puerto Rican employees are not promoted, even though they have the right qualifications, but they are given rational and satisfactory reasons for such actions.

- An act of vandalism where personal property belonging to certain ethnic group is damaged.

Discussion
Have you or a family member ever experienced covert racism? Explain. How did it make you or your relative feel? Why is it important to be aware of covert racism in society? What can we do about it?

Source: https://opinionfront.com/covert-overt-discrimination; http://www.infobarrel.com/Overt_and_Covert_Racism
Activity 5: Discuss the historical facts of the Freddie Gray case. If you do not have enough background on this case, research it prior to your discussion (or share links to read over before a discussion). Then, generate a list of underlying causes for the unrest in Baltimore after Freddie Gray's death. (Possible answers include: lack of opportunity, poverty, police brutality, level of education, unemployment, poor housing, etc.)

After creating your list, choose one underlying cause from the list. Locate 1–3 current articles (at parent/teacher’s discretion) related to your underlying cause. Summarize each article you find in paragraph form.

A possible wrap-up for this activity is to discuss solutions to police brutality, or wait until the end of the novel to revisit these underlying causes and possible solutions.

Chapter Questions

Chapter 1 Questions (Pages 3–13)

1. Reread Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s opening quotation on the page before Part One: “I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality.” —Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
   
   What does this quotation mean to you? Why do you think the author selected this quotation to open the book? Do you agree with MLK’s words? Do you think truth and love will always win over the negative that occurs in society?

2. Reread the scene where Officer Castillo brutalizes Justyce (7–9). What biases does Officer Castillo have against Justyce? Why might Officer Castillo have these biases? How do these biases directly impact Justyce?

3. Make a list of Justyce’s character traits based only on this first scene in the novel. What type of person is he? Do you see any of your own personal traits in Justyce? If so, what are they?

4. After “The Incident,” Justyce writes letters to Martin (Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) to make sense of his feelings. He discusses what happened to Shemar Carson in Nevada and realizes that his good character does not make him “exempt from the stuff THOSE black guys deal with” (12). How has “The Incident” changed the way Justyce thinks about his life? About society?

5. After reading Chapter 1 and the letter Justyce writes to Dr. Martin Luther King, choose a person to whom you would like to write letters. The person can be famous or unknown, can be alive or dead, but should be someone you aspire to be like. You should respect this person’s values, morals, and actions throughout his/her life. Keep a journal similar to Justyce’s throughout the reading of the book based on your daily life experiences and reflections.

   Extension of Activity: Conduct a short research project on various civil rights leaders before writing letters.

Chapter 2 Questions (Pages 14–18)

1. What is the point of view in the letter to Martin? How does it change in Chapter 2? Why is this change in the point of view significant to understanding the novel?

2. While in Manny’s basement Justyce looks at his badly bruised wrists and thinks “they’ll never fade” (16). What is symbolic about this image the author creates?

3. From what is Manny trying to protect Justyce? What is Justyce’s reaction to Manny’s advice? What does Manny’s advice tell the reader about what kind of person he is?

Chapter 3 Questions (Pages 19–29)

1. Who is Quan Banks and what is his indirect connection to Justyce? Why do you think the author creates this connection between these two characters from two different lifestyles?

2. What does it mean to be indicted in the US legal system? What is Justyce’s reaction when he finds out that the officer who killed Shemar Carson was not indicted? (19–20).

3. Justyce and Manny’s debate teacher puts the words “all men are created equal” on the board (21). After reading the students’ discussion about the quotation from the Declaration of Independence, do you think this “declaration” is respected in today’s 20th-century America? Has its meaning changed, and if so, how?

4. After learning that Shemar Carson was previously arrested, Jared states: “You don’t get arrested if you’re not doing anything wrong. Bottom line, he was a criminal” (27). Do you agree with this statement? Research if there has ever been anyone in Baltimore (or the surrounding areas) who was unjustly arrested. Record your results for discussion.

5. Explain Sarah-Jane’s statement: “We’ll never be seen as criminals before we’re seen as people” (29). Do you agree with the point she is trying to make?
Chapter 4 Questions (Pages 30–38)

1. What is ironic about Jared quoting Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech when he states “Right here, right now, on these red hills of Georgia, a son of former slaves and sons of former slave owners are sitting down at the table of brotherhood, dude. The Dream has been realized!” (32)?

2. After reading this chapter, what is your opinion of Manny? Have you ever had a moral or personal dilemma like his? If so, how did you deal with it?

3. In Justyce’s letter to Martin, he mentions something his mother says that reflects a life lesson. What is Justyce’s mother trying to teach him? What does she mean by “You ever consider that maybe you not supposed to ‘fit?’ People who make history rarely do” (36)?

4. What realizations does Justyce express as he processes what is going on in his life?

“I don’t really have an alternative but to keep going, do I?”

Chapter 5 Questions (Pages 39–51)

1. Define the term “jihad.” Does the definition align with what the “Black Jihads” seem to represent?

2. One of the Black Jihads, Trey, says the following about Justyce and Manny: “They ‘goin places’ and shit. Gotta stay connected to the white man for the ride to the top…” (44). Explain what you think Trey meant by that statement. Is there any truth to it?

3. What is ironic about the name “Equality Brigade” for Justyce and the group dressed as stereotypes for Halloween? Would you ever wear a costume to prove a point to others? Do you think their costumes were effective in proving their point? Why or why not?

4. Do you think Justyce’s guilt for liking SJ is justified? Do you think he should respect his mother’s wishes to never “bring home a white girl” (51)?

5. Research what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. taught about “intergroup and interpersonal living” (51). Do we see this type of true human integration in our society today?

Chapter 6 Questions (Pages 52–57)

1. Are Justyce’s behaviors with SJ and Melo in the dining hall surprising to you? Why or why not? Have you ever been in a situation where you were torn between two people who meant something to you?

Chapter 7 Questions (Pages 58–67)

1. Define the term “affirmative action.” After reading the entire class debate on the topic, state whether Jared or SJ has the better argument regarding affirmative action.

2. Explain what Trey means when he says “You’ll be back [from Yale], smart guy. Once you see them white folks don’t want yo black ass at they table. They not down with you bein’ their equal, dawg. We’ll see you soon” (65).

3. Is there validity in Justyce’s statement “And then Trey…WHY does this guy insist on trying to keep me down? On the real, he’s just as bad as Jared!” (66).

Chapter 8 Questions (Pages 68–74)

1. What is Manny’s argument as to why SJ is different from other white girls? What does he say about his own black female cousins? Is Manny guilty of stereotyping people, or is he just speaking the truth?
Chapter 9 Questions (Pages 75–84)

1. Reread SJ's explanation of “The Myth of the Superpredator” (78-79). After doing some research using the links provided, write a few sentences about whether you believe racial profiling is a problem in Baltimore City and its surrounding counties.

https://thinkprogress.org/the-criminalization-of-baltimore-students-explained-48cbc4942ac0/
https://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/maryland/Maryland-02.htm
https://eji.org/news/superpredator-myth-20-years-later

2. Why do you suppose SJ acted the way she did toward Justyce after he tried to kiss her? Predict what might happen between SJ and Justyce in the future.

Chapter 10 Questions (Pages 85–96)

1. One of the first things mentioned in Chapter 10 is the killing of Tavarrius Jenkins by police. In the following link, the author Nic Stone explains why she made up the names of the victims in the novel rather than using actual victims’ names (see the first question she is asked). Explain what Nic Stone means when she says “Which says a lot about the world we live in” when she responds to the type of names she chose.


2. Why would seeing posters from “William H. West's Big Minstrel Jubilee” anger Justyce to the point of violence? What other incidents might have provoked Justyce's actions? If necessary, research who William H. West was and some of the artwork associated with his minstrel shows.

https://tvaraj.com/2014/05/28/blackface-and-the-minstrel-show/
https://www.loc.gov/item/2014637064/
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2014637067/

3. In his letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Justyce writes “There was some white dude on TV after the Tavarrius Jenkins thing broke talking about how cases like his and Shemar Carson’s ‘deflect from the issue of black-on-black crime,’ but how are black people supposed to know how to treat each other with respect when since we were brought over here, we've been told we're not respectable?” (95). In a brief letter to Justyce, respond to his question.

Chapter 11 Questions (Pages 97–105)

1. How does Justyce show his maturity during his conversation with Doc? What lesson does Doc want Justyce to learn?

Chapter 12 Questions (Pages 106–114)

1. For what does Manny thank Justyce? What does Manny mean when he says: “Didn't like what I saw, so I wanted to shut em' again...” (109)? Why is this significant to the story at this point?

2. What lessons does Mr. Julian teach the boys? What is Justyce starting to realize about black men in society? What is he starting to realize about himself?
Chapter 13 Questions (Pages 115–119)

1. Why is Manny so upset when Justyce gets in his car? What difficult lesson has he learned from the Christensens?

2. Defend Mr. Julian’s statement: “People often learn more from getting an undeserved pass than they would from being punished” (113).

3. In this final scene of Part I, the reader sees a different Justyce from the beginning of the story. How do Justyce’s thoughts and actions reflect his personal growth? What might have contributed to the way he chooses to act during this situation in Manny’s car?

Chapter 14 Questions (Page 120)

1. What is the effect of using three words for this chapter?

“Transcript from Evening News, January 26” Questions (Page 123)

1. After reading the transcript from the shooting incident with Manny and Justyce, conduct some online research about police-involved shootings in Baltimore City (or your surrounding county). Take some notes on the data that you find, and then write a specific, proposed topic that you would like to debate if you were on Justyce’s debate team. Remember to include a brief explanation about how you would begin to solve the problem you have proposed and include a list of your resources. (Possible proposed topics could include: relationship between curfew and crime; impact of weather/time of year on crime; frequency of race and gender crimes; frequent locations of hate/bias crimes; number of people killed with a firearm in 2017; etc.)

Chapter 15 Questions (Pages 125–131)

1. What is the “predicament” Justyce feels he is in at Manny’s funeral? How does the conversation with his mother add to his “predicament?”

2. Read the newspaper article “Tison Indictment: Step Forward for Justice or Grand Jury Blunder?” and then look up the term “race-baiting” (131). Define the term and then discuss how race-baiting could impact your community.

“Dear Martin” Entry (Page 125)

1. How has Justyce’s tone in his letters to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. changed from Part One? Why is this significant?

Chapter 16 Questions (Pages 132–137)

1. When Justyce is invited to dinner at the Rivers’ house to “memorialize the indictment” of Manny’s murderer (135), Mr. Julian says that the indictment is “something to commemorate.” Why do you think the Rivers family thinks this since the officer has not been convicted yet?

2. Describe Justyce’s feelings about being in Manny’s house without him. What is the significance of the gift the Rivers family gives Justyce?

Chapter 17 Questions (Pages 138–146)

1. Create a list of images that the author uses to describe Justyce’s experience as he enters the Fulton Regional Detention Center. What do the images have in common? What mood do they create?

2. Why does Quan ask, “Why try to do right if people will always look at me and assume wrong?” (144). How would Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. respond to Quan’s question?

Chapter 18 Questions (Pages 147–155)

1. What assumptions are made by the media to depict Justyce? Where have you previously seen similar stereotypes in the media?

2. Explain Doc’s reasoning as to why the “idiot pundit” (151) would believe the false information about Manny and Justyce over the truth. What advice does Doc give Justyce?

3. How does the reason for Mr. Rivers’ job loss add to the issue of whites misunderstanding the struggle of blacks?
**Chapter 19 Questions (Pages 156–164)**

1. Research the definition of “civil disobedience” (157). Discuss ways that leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were “civilly disobedient.”

2. Throughout the novel, the author incorporates a fictional rap artist named Deuce Diggs whose lyrics inspire Justyce and Manny (157-158). Diggs addresses social and racial issues in his lyrics that try to promote a positive change. Find a rap artist or vocalist whose inspirational lyrics deal with social and/or racial issues and promote a positive change. If you don't know such an an artist, find one. Write down the lyrics of the song and discuss why they are important to you.

3. When Justyce goes to visit Martel, leader of the Black Jihad, he is searching for answers about his identity. Reread Martel's speech starting with “People across the diaspora” to “This country belongs to you” (161). First, define the following vocabulary terms: diaspora, habituated, transatlantic, semblance, persevering, legacy. Then, in your own words, explain what Martel is trying to teach Justyce.

4. Why does Justyce leave Martel’s in a hurry?

**Chapter 20 Questions (Pages 165–174)**

1. When Justyce is sitting on SJ's bed, he recounts the stories about visiting Quan and the meeting with Martel. At one point he begins to cry and says he would “normally be embarrassed…. But he's not because it's the best he's felt since…well, since before he can remember” (169). What are possible reasons he feels this way?

2. Who might have set fire to Officer Tison's house?

**Chapter 21 Questions (Pages 175–183)**

1. Why was Justyce questioned by detectives at his graduation? What pieces of information shocked Justyce's mother as he spoke to the detectives? In this scene, is Justyce behaving as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would have?

2. Why do you believe Justyce's mother has the feelings she does about him dating someone who is white?

**Chapter 22 Questions (Pages 184–193)**

1. In the courtroom scene, Justyce is being cross-examined by the defense attorney (185–192). Did the defense attorney create doubt? Did she justify Manny's murder?

2. The article “Garrett Tison: Murderer?” states Tison's convictions. Do you think these are fair convictions? Why or why not? Predict whether you think Tison will be found guilty of murder when he is retried.

**Chapter 23 Questions (Pages 194–202)**

1. While SJ and Justyce watch a National Geographic show on monarch butterflies, SJ asks “Why can't we all get along like butterflies?” (195). What is significant about Justyce's thought that follows: “Jus wonders if she [SJ] notices that all those butterflies look exactly alike” (196)?

2. Predict who you think killed Officer Tison in prison.

3. After reading Justyce's last letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., how do you think he has benefitted from writing to King? What lessons has he learned about himself through this activity?

**Four Months Later Questions (Pages 203–208)**

1. How has Jared changed since Manny's death? Can you envision Jared and Justyce becoming friendly in the future?

“It’s like I’m trying to climb a mountain, but I’ve got one fool trying to shove me down so I won’t be on his level, and another fool tugging at my leg, trying to pull me to the ground he refuses to leave.”
Activity 1: Locate a quotation from the novel that you found extremely powerful. Write it down and cite the page number. Why is the quotation important? How does it relate to you and your life, community, and/or school?

Activity 2: Create a list of themes you have learned from this book. Which theme should be addressed in Baltimore now to make the city better? Use examples from the book and statistics or articles from current events to support your theme choice.

Activity 3: Read at least three different individual stories found in The Baltimore Sun series: “Undue Force.” Briefly summarize each story, remembering to list the title of each story. Then scroll down to the last article titled “Reforms in Progress” and come up with a list of solutions to eliminate police brutality from our society. “Undue Force” (The Sun)

Although this news series is somewhat dated (2014), it is very useful in telling the stories of people who have been victims of police brutality. You can read individual stories or the entire article to gain a full appreciation of how many residents feel about the police. The article concludes with proposed reforms that can be used to help students come up with their solutions.

Activity 4: Read Colleen J. McElroy’s poem “Foul Line—1987” about a black woman who carefully analyzes her interaction with a white waitress.

Answer the following questions based on the poem:

- What is the setting for this poem? How can you tell?
- What indirect insults are taking place in the poem? Have you ever experienced indirect insults from someone?
- McElroy writes the exchange that occurred was “all within legal/if not civil, limits.” What does she mean? Why is this significant?
- How do the poem’s themes relate to themes in Dear Martin?

Extension of Activity: Research protest poems of similar length and structure. Look up poets who are known to be civilly disobedient such as Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, George Moses Horton, William Stafford, Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni, etc. Do the following with at least two protest poems:

- Write summaries for each poem
- Share and discuss the significance of your poems

Activity 5: Look at the comics based on police violence. Then create your own comic that illustrates an issue from your community, Baltimore city, our nation, or from Dear Martin. These issues can be related to police brutality or can be some other issue you find important to society. (After opening the link, scroll to the second to last paragraph and download the PDF that is highlighted to see all of the comics.)
One Book Baltimore is a collaboration between: