

## Rosa Parks' Reflections

### Primary Source Analysis

"I had been pushed around all my life and felt at this moment that I couldn't take it anymore. When I asked the policeman why we had to be pushed around? He said he didn't know. 'The law is the law. You are under arrest.' I didn't resist.

I want to feel the nearness of something secure. It is such a lonely, lost feeling that I am cut off from life. I am nothing. I belong nowhere and to no one.

There is just so much hurt, disappointment, and oppression one can take. The bubble of life grows larger. The line between reason and madness grows thinner. The reopening of old wounds are unbearably painful.

Time begins the healing process of wounds cut deeply by oppression. We soothe ourselves with the salve of attempted indifference, accepting the false pattern set up by the horrible restrictions of Jim Crow laws. Let us look at Jim Crow for the criminal he is and what he had done to one life multiplied millions of times over these United States and the world. He walks us on a tight rope from birth to the end of lifes [sic] span whether it be long or of brief duration. Little children are so conditioned early to learn their places in the segregated pattern as they take their first toddling steps and are weaned from their mothers [sic] breast."

**Rosa Parks. *Reflections on her arrest for refusing to surrender her seat to a white passenger*, December 1, 1955. Rosa Parks Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (029.00.01). Retrieved from: <https://www.loc.gov/static/classroom-materials/rosa-parks/documents/reflections.pdf>**

1. Author: What do you know about the author? What is the author's point of view? What is the author attempting to convey?

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2. Place and time: Where and when was this document written? How might this document affect the meaning of the historical event?

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3. Prior knowledge: Beyond information about the author and the context of its creation, what do you know that would help you further understand the document? For example, do you recognize any historical terms and recall what they represent?

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4. Audience: For whom was the document created and how might this affect the reliability of the document?

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5. Reason: Why was this document produced, and how might this affect the reliability of the document?

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6. Significance: Why is this document important?

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7. Reflection: What thoughts or feelings surfaced when you read Rosa Parks' reflection of her life?

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