

Eyes on the Prize: Episode #1 -Awakenings (DvD)

1. What was the immediate impact of the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision?
2. What happened to Emmett Till? Why did it happen?
3. Who was Mose Wright? What did he say?
4. What were the circumstances that led to Till's murder?
5. Why did Mamie Till insist on an open casket funeral? What impact did the funeral have on American society?
6. Who was arrested for Till's murder?

7. Who, according to the Sheriff, is responsible for the "trouble" surrounding the trial?

8. What happened to Congressman Diggs at the trial? What conclusion about Southern society can you draw from his experience?

9. What argument did the defense make at the trial? What instructions did they give to the jury?

10. Why was Mose Wright's testimony so critical at this trial? What did he say?

11. What was the verdict?

12. What did Milam and Bryant say in *Look Magazine*? Why do you think they sold their story in the first place?

13. What impact did Till's murder have on other African Americans?

Reactions to Till Murder in *Look Magazine*
Review letters B, E, G and N and classify them
using the table on the next page

	Horrified by Murder Horrified by South Horrified by Injustice	Blames Media Blames NAACP Defends Society Defends Killers	Point of View Unclear
State:			

The Death of Emmett Till
By Bob Dylan (1963)

'Twas down in Mississippi not so long ago,
 When a young boy from Chicago town walked in a Southern door.
 This boy's dreadful tragedy you should all remember well,
 The color of his skin was black and his name was Emmett Till.

Some men they dragged him to a barn and there they beat him up.
 They said they had a reason, but I can't remember what.
 They tortured him and did some things too evil to repeat.
 There was screaming sounds inside the barn, there was laughing sounds out on the street.

Then they rolled his body down a gulf amidst a blood red rain
 And they threw him in the waters wide to cease his screaming pain.
 The reason that they killed him there, and I'm sure it ain't no lie,

He was a black skinned boy so he was born to die.

And then to stop the United States of yelling for a trial,
Two brothers they confessed that they had killed poor Emmett Till.
But on the jury there were men who helped the brothers commit this awful crime,
And so this trial was a mockery, but nobody seemed to mind.

I saw the morning papers but I could not bear to see
The smiling brothers walkin' down the courthouse stairs.
For the jury found them innocent and the brothers they went free,
While Emmett's body still floats the foam of a Jim Crow southern sea.

If you can't speak out against this kind of thing, a crime that's so unjust,
Your eyes are filled with dead men's dirt, your mind is filled with dust.
Your arms and legs they must be in shackles and chains, and your blood it must
cease to flow,
For you to let this human race fall down so God-awful low!

This song is just a reminder to remind your fellow man
That this kind of thing still lives today in that ghost-robed Ku Klux Klan.
But if all us folks that thinks alike, if we give all we could give,
We could make this great land of ours a greater place to live.

Reflection Question:

1. Till's uncle, Mose Wright, would not go to the police. In a democracy, what institutions are responsible for protecting the vulnerable? What options do individuals and groups have when these institutions cannot be trusted?