

My Witness Listening Guide

Episode 7: “Passing on the Lessons of Civil Rights Activism”

Interviewer: Danny Harp (Big Picture High School)

Interviewee: Howard Gentry (Criminal Court Clerk and former Vice Mayor of Nashville, whose family has been involved in Civil Rights activities and in politics)

- 1.) Howard Gentry talks about having to overcome a lot of anger when dealing with racism. Can you relate to this emotional journey in your own life when dealing with injustice?

- 2.) Talk about the conversation Howard Gentry had in the workplace with the white employee who struggled being under the leadership of a black man. Practice putting yourself in each person’s shoes and role play the conversation with a partner.

- 3.) When talking about his work with poverty, homelessness, and youth violence, Howard Gentry states that these issues all stem from events and issues that occurred decades ago. Do you think we have made improvement on addressing these issues over time? If so, how?

- 4.) Talk about sports and race relations. How does racism play out in sports today? Do you see athletics as a unifier for race and social justice as Howard Gentry experienced? If so, how?

- 5.) Howard Gentry mentions several sites in Nashville during this interview. Talk about race relations in various locations around the city. Are there certain areas in Nashville where you might feel more welcome if you are of a certain race? Do you think this will ever change?

- 6.) Howard Gentry states that Nashville really stepped up during the Civil Rights Movement as a leader in making strides in race relations, but that we still have a lot of work to do. Do you agree? What do you think it will take for Nashville to make progress and address these issues in a positive way?