

12th Grade

Reading:

[“Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Spaces”](#) by Brent Staples

Response:

1. What does Staples mean by his final sentence: “It is my equivalent of the cowbell that hikers wear when they know they are in bear country.”
2. Staples argues that black males are perceived as threatening public space. Is gender the main variable? In other words, is a man-of any race-likely to be perceived as a threat when he is in a public space, such as a street or mall? Can you identify any current events to support your position?
3. Write a letter to Staples in which you challenge him for making stereotypical assumptions about women’s reactions similar to those assumptions he accuses women of making about his intentions.