

Discussion Guide



Directions: Discuss the following questions with your partner(s).

1. How did Elizabeth Eckford's actions illustrate **courage** as a civic virtue?
2. The federal district court ordered Governor Faubus to withdraw the National Guard, which he did. The Little Rock Nine students tried again three weeks later, this time escorted by city police. Protesters soon forced their way into the building, and police escorted the African-American students out for their own safety. How do Eckford's actions illustrate the virtue of **perseverance**?
3. The woman pictured screaming racial epithets at Eckford is Hazel Bryan. What virtues are absent in Bryan at that moment?
 - There is more to the story about Hazel Bryan and Elizabeth Eckford. If you have time, research it. What other civic virtues were—or were not—a part of this “sequel” to Eckford's and Bryan's story?
 - One moment in time was captured in this photograph, and may or may not have reflected the full dimension of each of the depicted students' character. Yet the people in the photograph must live with what they did on that day. What similar “moment in time” scenarios may exist in your life today? In what situations is it possible that you could do or say something that you can't take back — and that people may never forget?
4. What virtue appears to be absent among the many bystanders in this photograph?
5. How might this photograph have been different—and how might history have been different—if one of the bystanders had acted in defense of Eckford and the other African- American students? (*Optional extension: Write a vivid, moment-by-moment description of how this scene could have been different.*)
6. Respect is a virtue, but does that mean everyone and everything deserves your respect? For example, does Bryan deserve your respect as she hurls racial epithets at Eckford? Why or why not?
7. In response to the crisis, President Eisenhower federalized the Arkansas National Guard. Troops from the 101st Airborne Division assisted in the integration of the high school. In his address to the nation on September 24, 1957, the president said that “mob rule cannot be allowed to override the decisions of our courts.” What kinds of respect are lacking when there is “mob rule”? Respect for the law? Respect for the rights of other people? What others? (*Optional extension: Find primary sources that provide additional information about these events. Report back to the class on what you found, including a citation of the source or sources that you found.*)
8. Describe the relationship between respect and civil discourse and explain the importance of respect in a society built on individual freedoms, including free speech.