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“As Martin Luther King Jr. said, “The ultimate measure of a [person] is not where he/she stands in moments of comfort but where he/she stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Based on what you know about the Holocaust how would you respond to current issues of injustice and inequality occurring today?”

Martin Luther King Jr. was advocating for the idea that the true definition of someone’s character is whether or not they will be an upstander, or a bystander in a time of injustice; the act of standing up for somebody in a time when they are unable to stand up for themselves is the true representation of who somebody is—people’s identities and true character has been revealed time and time again throughout the decades of injustice that this country has faced. During the Holocaust, thousands of people—people who weren’t directly contributing to Hitler’s cause, but also weren’t actively condemning it—stayed silent. Their choice to watch all the blood be shed was their way of contributing to the genocide.

In a society, there will always be a group of people who are oppressed, and there will always be a group of people who are oppressors. In today’s society—women, minorities, and people part of the LGBTQ+ community all experience a form of oppression. People are treated differently based on their gender, sexuality, and color of their skin. I think that the main thing that we can take away from the Holocaust, is the idea that staying silently makes you just as complicit as

actively discriminating against someone—in fact, often times, silence is even worse. If people stand by and watch the oppression from the sidelines, they are actively choosing not to create change. If we want to change the way minorities are treated in America, or the way that women are treated compared to men, we have to speak out on what is going on—regardless if we are part of the oppressed or not. Choosing to stay silent, is the same thing as choosing to partake in the discrimination. This was evident in the Holocaust—too many people stayed silent, and as a result, over six million people died. I think that if we want to change the current issues of injustice and inequality that are occurring today, we have to speak up. We have to actively choose to defend those who are unable to defend themselves—because only then, will change occur. Hate will ruin a world; the only way to fight it, is through love and compassion.