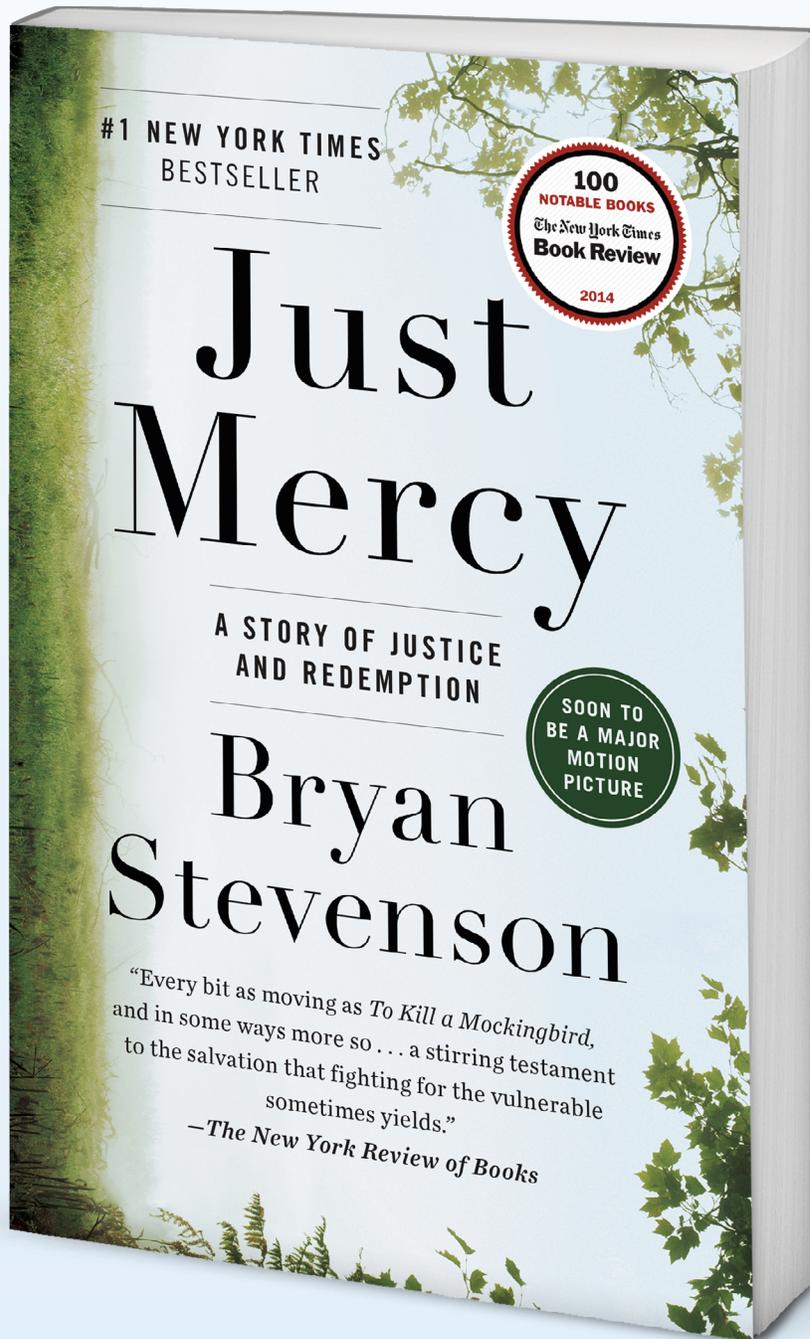


# DISCUSSION GUIDE



1. Why do you think Bryan Stevenson chose Walter McMillian's story to be the backbone of the book?
2. After reading *Just Mercy*, what does the title mean to you?
3. What are some of the groundbreaking achievements, listed in the revised postscript, which Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative have accomplished since *Just Mercy*'s original publication in 2014?
4. How did Stevenson's background prepare him for law school?
5. Does your state have Stand Your Ground laws? Do you support them?
6. Describe the 1989 Supreme Court ruling related to death penalty appeals. What impact did that have across the country?
7. Stevenson describes several physical actions he takes during the trial. What are they and are they effective?
8. If you were the prison warden where Avery Jenkins was held, would you allow your staff to proactively declare their political opinions?
9. Did your state play a role in the massive deinstitutionalization rates of the 1990s? What impact do those actions have on today's society?
10. What does Stevenson mean when he uses the phrase "mitigation" in court?
11. In what ways are female inmates more at risk than male inmates?
12. Should wrongfully imprisoned people receive financial restitution from the state? If so, how should the amount be determined?
13. In your opinion, are there ever reasonable situations where minors should be charged as adults?
14. What effect did the events of September 11, 2001 have on the fight to appeal the death penalty?
15. According to Stevenson, what are the four institutions in American history that have shaped our approach to race and justice? Do you agree?
16. What specifically do you think the EJI's reentry program should include? What allowances would you make for people of different ages?
17. Why are wrongful convictions and illegal trials involving young children very common?