

Letters to a President

Runner-up Year 11 – Ben M

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington DC

20500

Dear President Biden,

I must firstly say I am indefinitely grateful for the time you have taken to read my letter, as the newest president in America I appreciate the changes you have already made for your citizens, and I anticipate the future plans of the 46th president.

My name is Benjamin, I am 15 and I am currently finishing my final year at high school in Bury, England. The US differs a lot from the U.K, and with this outlines many differences in behavior, discipline and ideas. The aim of my letter is to help you see my perspective: that of a young black teenager.

As a young black teen, I have endured multiple different racially-motivated experiences that have both positively and negatively impacted me, all varying on levels of severity. Many people who don't understand me have a negative perception of who I am. Some people assume that black teens are violent criminals, but if we are living a somewhat luxurious life, we have done something illegal to achieve that lifestyle.

My experiences range from looks of disapproval from my fellow Britons; being followed around shops as if I'm going to steal something; being alienated from society because people have not taken the time to talk to me; to vile racial name calling; insults directed towards me about slavery; and the casual everyday microaggressions.

Throughout high school I have learnt that people in the majority don't feel it necessary to educate themselves on ethnic minorities. As time goes on, if these barriers are not broken, people can become hateful. This can be passed down from generation to generation and this is what some people are experiencing in America.

Black people in America face trials and tribulations daily. Something as simple as a traffic stop can cause the heart rate of an African American citizen to skyrocket. This is because of hateful, racist people being admitted into the police force. Now they hold the power of a police officer, reality can be whatever they make it, innocent black men like Elijah McClain are being slaughtered everyday by the same police that are supposed to be protecting them. It's painful and exhausting. When BLM protests took the streets of every country, we started to think things were getting better - until the unlawful murder of Dante Wrights. Mr. President, we need your help in creating a safer world and a safer America.

In my opinion, I would like to see improved background checks for police officers. The police can decide whether you live or die, so they need to be vetted thoroughly. I would also like to see an even higher rate of representation in the police force for African Americans.

I hope my words have impacted you and that you continue the work to improve the world we live in. I appreciate you taking the time to hear my views. I hope to possibly hear from you one day.

Yours sincerely,

Ben