



## Field Study Reflection & Film Roundtable Prep Worksheet

Film Subject: Elvis Presley



### PART 1: Field Study Insights

1. What moment or place on the field study impacted you the most? Why?  
(e.g., Emmett Till Interpretive Center, MLK Memorial in Memphis, Civil Rights Room in Nashville)

The moment that really shifted my perspective was when we heard the testimonies of the Civil Rights Protesters in the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum. It was the first time I realized just how much history alive all around me. When you're researching about people you've never met, in far away places, from a time you've never lived in, they can feel distant — but I didn't realize just *how* distant until I heard those testimonies. Suddenly, I'm not telling the stories of names on a webpage or a textbook, these stories are *real*. I'm standing in a place where history happened — breathing the same air, seeing the same things — and suddenly, history didn't seem so far away.

2. Identify a story of courage or resilience you encountered that was not specifically about your film's subject. How did it challenge or reinforce your understanding of social justice? How did it make you feel?

I was really impacted by the story of the Mayor at the Emmett Till Interpretive Center — not just by his words, but by being able to see the same things he was describing. I could understand what a 'food desert' was, because I saw it on the way there. I could understand how different Glendora was from North Vancouver, because I could see it all around me. I was specifically impacted by one moment — when the mayor was signing my book and asked me for my name, he said that his granddaughter shared the same name as me. Because of this, I was able to see what it meant to overcome these struggles, and see the progress we need to go further.

3. What connections do you see between the music you encountered and the fight for social justice? How does the musical heritage of the regions visited reflect the struggles and triumphs of the communities?

Music is a reflection of the culture, life, and soul of the place it comes from. As quoted by Anne Moody — on the wall of the Mississippi Civil Rights museum — “Listening to those old Negroes sing freedom songs was like listening to music from heaven. They sang them as though they were singing away the chains of slavery.” The fight for Social Justice is not just a movement or a protest, but a deep and intertwined part of identity — which is reflected in the soul and music of these regions.

4. What connections do you see between a place you encountered and the fight for social justice that was NOT in your plan?

One thing that shocked me, especially as we were driving through Mississippi and Tennessee, was seeing the connection between race and poverty first hand. Although I expected to see this, it was so impactful seeing it first hand. I can't understand how people can deny systematic racism, when it's out there so plain to see.



## **PART 2: Your Story**

5. What message do you hope the audience takes from your film?

The message I want people to take from my film is that when consuming media, like Elvis' music, it's important to recognize the stories, places, and people behind it. Not only because of the social context surrounding his music in particular, but, because knowing these roots enriches the content and allows viewers to appreciate it even more.

6. What brave choices can \*you\* and others make in your own community to stand up for something you believe in?

I believe the best thing everyone can do for change is to approach it with empathy and sympathy. In the words of Maya Angelou, “It takes courage to be kind.”

7. What do you still want to work on with your film?

The biggest thing I want to succeed with in my film, is respecting everyone that is apart of it. I want to be able keep the audience's respect and love for Elvis' work, while appreciating and respecting the work of others.

### **PART 3: Connecting to YOU**

8. How has this field study and project influenced your perspective on activism and community engagement?

The biggest way that this field study influenced me in terms of my perspective on activism, is that even though I live in North Vancouver, in a completely different country than these events that took place, I still have a role to uphold in the fight for equality. My friend Faith shared with me a quote from her person, Ruby Bridges, that stuck with me: "We may not all be equally guilty. But we are all equally responsible for building a decent and just society."

9. Reflect on a moment during the field study that inspired you to consider your role in promoting social change.

I don't think there's a specific moment that inspired me to consider this. I have always kept social change in mind, but it was this trip that made me realize that I'm not fighting just for myself, but for everyone.

10. Share a quote, lyric, or moment from the field study or your research that continues to inspire you. Explain its significance.

Although it's not often cited as one of Elvis' more popular/well known songs, I find the song, "If I Can Dream" to be one of his most powerful. Even though he wasn't the one to write it, it was created with him in mind. It references to Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech and thus, conveys Elvis' hope for a better future, while keeping in mind his roots growing up in Mississippi and Tennessee.

## PART 4: Roundtable Ready

A connection between your film's subject and a site visited:

My subject is Elvis Presley, so he was connected to many sites that we visited. One thing I noticed in particular was how much impact he had on Tennessee and even Mississippi. Just stepping off the plane, there was a mural with his face on it right outside the gate. His house was a major tourist destination and brought people to Memphis, just for him. The street where his house was on was named after him! Every detail of his life is studied and admired — even going as far as knowing how he makes his grilled cheese sandwiches! It was crazy to see how much influence he still has all these years later.

An unexpected insight gained from creating your film:

From facing my fears and going up to complete strangers to interview them, I realized just how capable I am. Just the other day, inspired by my interviews in Tennessee, I complemented an old lady in Salvation Army for her bandana. I then had a long conversation about her life as a nurse. It's incredible how many stories walk past us everyday, just waiting to be told.

Ways in which your film's subject's story can inspire current and future generations:

Elvis continues to inspire generations old and new — however, with my video, I want to inspire them from a new angle. I want to bring to light how Elvis' legacy can be an opportunity to learn about other artists — like Big Mama Thornton — and that in order to truly appreciate Elvis' work, we should learn about these other artists as well.

A key message you wish to convey during the roundtable discussion:

Although its cliché, I do want to spread the message of the importance of self driven education — as Leonardo Da Vinci says, "Learning is the only thing the mind never exhausts, never fears, and never regrets."

