



## PRIVILEGE · APTITUDE · TEST

Privileges are benefits enjoyed by an elite group. For example, driving is a privilege but voting is a right. In the United States, there has been a history where people have been privileged to exercise all of their rights while others have not. So what happens to people who do not have privileges because of their race, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability or veteran status?

The following exercise invites you to try to contemplate as to how our lives are different from the lives of others due to the privileges with which we live or privileges we have not. Each of these questions are relevant to your race, class, creed, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.

Directions: First, check all of the descriptions in the box below that applies to your identity. Next, answer yes, or no to each question. Finally tally your score at the end of the exercise.

**Part One:** Answer the following questions answering yes or no. If you answer yes, place the number 1 on the line, if you answer no, place a 0.

**Answer Key: Yes = 1; No = 0**

1. When I go to the store, people do not look at me and think I may steal something.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. As a boy I can play with dolls or as a girl I can play with trucks without anyone questioning my choice.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. I am not taught to fear walking alone after dark in average public spaces.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. When I am told about our national heritage or about contributions made I am sure I will see and hear stories about people who look like me.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. When I contact my representatives in legislative offices, they most likely will look like me.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

6. My school does not have a lot of security and plenty of books in the library, computers for students and resources for teachers.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

7. I will not be teased because of my last name.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

8. I am encouraged to excel in every subject in school.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

9. When a question about my race is asked, I am not the only one targeted to answer or speak my opinion.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

10. When I watch television, there are a lot of people in positive roles that look like me.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

11. My intelligence is not questioned because of the way I speak.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

12. Using public bathrooms and going from floor to floor in public spaces are not difficult for me.

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Now that you completed this section tally up the score from items 1-12.**

**Total Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **About the Privilege Aptitude Test**

The goal of the Privilege Aptitude Test is to make youth aware that many people because of their race, gender, class etc. are not able to fully participate and receive their rights. That was a major goal of the Civil Rights Movement.

### **How did I do on this test?**

This test was not created to grade but to serve as an aid in understanding the topic of rights and privileges. The US Constitution and the Bill of Rights grant US citizens the abilities to participate in a democratic society. Answering yes is a symbol of the types of rights and privileges you are able to exercise. Answering no is a symbol that some rights are not as easily accessible. Although an individual may not experience prejudice or discrimination does not mean that on a larger scale certain populations experience discrimination.

### **Things to keep in mind after taking this test:**

- ✓ You will not be graded. This is an activity to help you begin to think about privileges and rights in the US.
- ✓ Although you may not experience incidents in your life when you have felt like a right was taken from you, the Federal Government recognizes that some groups have been treated unfairly. This was one of the main reasons the Civil Rights Movement exists and persists to this day.
- ✓ The groups that the Federal Government protects are called “Protected Class Status”. In 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed a Civil Rights Act. In this act, President Johnson specifically targets groups who were underrepresented and mistreated in the United States.

### **These groups include:**

- Persons of color
- Girls and Women
- Those with economic disadvantages
- Persons with disabilities whether:
  - Physical
  - Mental
  - Emotional
- Persons who are not heterosexual
- U.S. Veterans

✓ If you do not have the ability to exercise certain rights or if you feel you are a part of a group that has been discriminated against, don't get mad but get **active**. If you do have the ability to exercise your rights with more ease than others do not feel guilty but **give back**. Think about ways you can help others enjoy the same opportunities you experience. Here are some ways to get involved:

- Speak out against injustice no matter how big or small.
- Take advantage of opportunities that you have such as education. Go to school get good grades and find a way to make your experience a benefit to others.
- **Read, Read, Read**. Know the issues that affect your community. Knowledge is power.

Click this link to get suggested readings to help activate your Activism:

**Thank you for visiting the National Civil Rights Museum webpage. We hope you had fun as well as learned something new.**