

## For or Against

This activity accompanies chapter 10 from *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* by James Weldon Johnson, record number 1760.

**Activity Title:** For or Against

**Description:** The students will argue for or against the decision of the main character to “neither disclaim the black race nor claim the white race.”

**Subject:** Reading/Language Arts

**Skill:** Literary Analysis, Writing, and Communication

**Behavioral Objective:**

- The student will write a persuasive paper arguing for or against the main character’s decision to “neither disclaim the black race nor claim the white race.”

**Materials:**

- *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* chapter 10, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencil

**Procedures:**

Read the chapter with the class, or have the students read it on their own. Discuss with the students the quote at the end of the chapter (listed above) about the main character deciding to “let the world take [him] for what it would.” Explain to the students that they are to use what they know about the Reconstruction period, and the evidence from the text, to defend their argument.

Once the students have completed their arguments arrange them into small groups with two students who argued for his decision and two students who argued against it (make the groups as even as possible, depending on what the students have written). Have the students discuss why they argued the point they did, and what evidence they used.

