**Short Paper 1**

Civil Disobedience

In an essay of about 4 single spaced pages in length, answer the following question: What is the most effective means of protesting an unjust law? Your answer to this question should serve as your thesis for the paper and should be stated clearly in you introductory paragraph.

There ought to be two basic sections to your essay. The first part should provide a critical review of the three different position developed in Plato’s *Crito*, Dr. Martin Luther King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” and Malcolm X’s “The Ballot or the Bullet.” Not only do you need to state what position each of these thinkers hold, but also why. Make sure to indicate or quote passages where necessary.

The second section of your paper should focus on defending the position you find to be the most effective. In this section, you should entertain and respond to possible objections to your position. The central purpose of this section is to show why you hold the position that you do.

Sample Outline

1. Introduction
   1. Thesis statement [answer to the question: which is the most effective means of protesting an unjust law?]
   2. Brief outline of the structure of the paper, e.g., In the first part of the paper, I review three different positions regarding civil disobedience. Then, in the second part of the paper, I show that persuasion (or non-violence, or any means necessary) to be the most effective means of protest. Persuasion is the most effective means of protest because it is the only means that introduces a true change of character.
2. Critical Review of Possible Positions
   1. Socrates and persuasion

i. Why does Socrates believe persuasion to be the most effective means of protest?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

3. Reason 3

ii. Why does he believe any form of direction action, i.e., breaking the law to be ineffective?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

* 1. Dr. King and non-violence direct action

i. Why does Dr. King believe non-violent direct action to be the most effective means of protest?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

3. Reason 3

ii. Why does King believe mere persuasion to be ineffective?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

iii. Why does King believe violence to be an ineffective means?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

* 1. Malcolm X

i. Why does Malcolm X believe that “any means necessary” is the most effective means of protest?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

3. Reason 3

ii. Why does Malcolm X believe mere persuasion to be ineffective?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

iii. Why does Malcolm X believe non-violent direct action to be ineffective?

1. Reason 1

2. Reason 2

1. Argument defending thesis
   1. Why is the chosen position the most effective means of protest?

i. Reason 1

ii. Reason 2

iii. Reason 3

* 1. What are possible objections to chosen position?

i. Objection 1

ii. Objection 2

* 1. Response to objections

i. Response to objection 1

ii. Response to objection 2

1. Concluding Remarks

The most important aspect of the paper is your defense of the different positions and the defense of your own position. This means you should focus on why the different thinkers hold the positions that they do and why you hold the position that you do. Hence, stating what these thinkers wrote is inadequate.

Finally, make sure to cite all material properly. Use MLA Format