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Document-Based Question

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Choices can determine the rest of your life, and can change history. Good choices can bring good consequences, and bad decisions can affect your life for the worst forever.

Martin Luther King, Jr., made a decision that he would fight against segregation and the oppression of African Americans. Because of his historical actions, people were inspired to fight non-violently. First to a small extent, then to a large extent, this brought equal rights to all Americans. The decision of the American colonists to break political ties with England brought a similar consequence: we are now a free country, because of their good decision.

Not only the good decisions influence your life. When the stock market crashed in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many people went bankrupt and lost everything they had. This was because they chose, without much thinking beforehand, to buy too much stock with money they didn't have. The market fell, the debtors lost, and only a few came out with money. There is much literature that speaks of peoples' bad choices. In *A Light in August*, Joe Christmas chooses that he will not conform with any part of society. He fights his step-parents, runs away, and breaks all the laws. He is unhappy and miserable to the end of his life, and he chose to be so. In Alexander Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo*, the main character is betrayed and sent to jail. He wallows in misery for years, and when he escapes he decides that he will use all his resources for the purpose of

revenge. His hatred and revenge consumes him, and he shows no mercy. His hatred makes him miserable until he can find and make the others miserable.

Thus we see that choices make life-altering and history-altering consequences. Good choices create peace and happiness, prosperity and freedom. Bad choices create havoc and discontentment, misery and disaster. This is proven through the world's history and literature. Choices are eternal.