

# JCSCORE

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## GOD BLESS AMERICA: YOU GOT TO TAKE YOUR KNEE OFF MY NECK

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## God Bless America: You Got To Take Your Knee Off My Neck

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In the midst of two pandemics during 2020—COVID-19 and social injustice, this poem was inspired by an African-American professor at a historically Black college, specifically during the death of Mr. George Floyd. She wanted to demonstrate not only to her students in a Counseling Diverse Populations class but to the world the historical social unrest in America through the use of poetry. The poem profoundly illustrates the many facets in which America has its knees on the necks of the African-American community causing them to suffocate, being unable to breathe and become productive citizens due to discrimination and racism.

Greetings my brothers and sisters,

What's going on?

Power to the people!

Say it loud- I am young, Black, gifted, and proud.

Oh, hear my cry! My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, oh thee I sing.  
God Bless America- You got to take your knee off my neck.

Oh, how many ways do you have your knee on my neck?

Over and over and over and over again.

I have requested higher pay.

I am a minimum wage worker.

Now, because of COVID-19, I am called an "Essential Worker," which means I go to work each and every day in harm's way.

I am so "essential!" Several of you refuse to wear your masks and stay six feet away.

However, many of you do and I thank God for you!  
God Bless America - You got to take your knee off my neck.

I have requested for better housing and better schools for my neighborhood. Yet, you  
turned your head and looked the other way.

God Bless America - You got to take your knee off my neck.

Better higher education programs and equally funded HBCU's. Just in case you don't  
know what "HBCU's" are- Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

When it comes to wealth distribution, you say you ain't got none. However, somehow,  
someday, the Big Ten are able to get tons of funds.

God Bless America- You got to take your knee off my neck.

I am Economically disenfranchised  
Educationally deprived  
Disproportionally discriminated against

Racism is real!

God Bless America- You got to take your knee off my neck.

People in the streets, protesting, trying to take a stand, and wanting their voices to be  
heard for equal justice and equal rights.

Carrying signs: "I can't breathe" and "Hands up, Don't shoot." But yet, you shoot us  
anyway.

America, we will breathe!

God Bless America- You will take your knee off my neck.

We have written poems and poetry in the back alley and in the cotton fields. Written  
books with no lights.

We have danced  
We have sung  
We have cried  
We have marched

James Baldwin wrote- The Fire Next Time  
Billy Holiday- Strange Fruit

We shall overcome. We will overcome, not someday, but today.

God Bless America- You will take your knee off my neck.