# **Text-Dependent Questions for CH. 2 “The Lockdown”**

1. Alexander argues that the War on Drugs is the necessary lens for understanding mass incarceration. Cite where in the excerpt she makes this point most directly.
2. Far more people are arrested for possessing drugs than for selling them. Cite the statistical evidence that Alexander provides to substantiate this claim. What is your opinion on this approach of the War on Drugs?
3. The Fourth Amendment protects the right to privacy. Alexander argues that the War on Drugs has undermined this right and other civil liberties. List three of the police practices she gives as examples of a violation of these rights.
4. A highway patrol officer is quoted saying, “It’s sheer numbers. ... You’ve got to kiss a lot of frogs before you ﬁnd a prince.” What policing technique is he describing? Who are the “frogs” and who is the “prince”? What are the benefits of this approach to law enforcement? What are its problems for civilians?
5. Alexander describes consent searches, pretext stops, the “volume” approach and the use of “drug-courier proﬁles.” What concerns does she raise in terms of the potential of these practices leading to widespread racial discrimination?
6. Alexander raises the question of why police who are responsible for solving violent crimes, such as murder and rape, would invest so much of their time focusing on nonviolent low-level drug arrests instead. What answers does she give?
7. What is the “prison label”? Alexander writes, “*Reducing* *the amount of time people spend behind bars—by eliminating harsh mandatory minimums—will alleviate some of the unnecessary suffering caused by this system, but it will not disturb the closed circuit*.” What is her point?
8. In Ch.2, we learn that law enforcement agencies can keep, for their own use, the vast majority of cash and assets seized in drug arrests. How might this authority lead to corruption of power? Can you think of other people in positions of authority—possibly with power over you—who have similar freedoms? Who? Does the same risk for corruption exist?