

AP English Literature and Composition Analysis Activities for *Poisonwood Bible*

Directions:

No quotations this time! For each element (character, setting, conflict, theme, style), complete each activity as a way to **creatively** analyze the novel. Make sure to ground your ideas in the text and to support your ideas with examples and details when necessary. Organize your final product clearly and proofread meticulously before submission.

Character

1. Design an award for each major character in the novel. Create the awards in the style of senior superlatives and provide an explanation about why the character deserves the award.
2. Choose one character, and begin this activity by making a list of objects and images associated with the character. Using Sandra Cisneros's "Abuelito Who" as your model, write a poem that conveys the character's most essential traits.

Setting

1. Write a newspaper advertisement offering to rent a location in the novel. Capture the atmosphere and mood of the setting in your ad, and be succinct.
2. In the style of David Letterman, comic host of CBS's *Late Show*, create a top-ten list about the ways that the novel's setting affects the plot. Consider how the location, time period, cultural environment, social situation, class structure, and religious beliefs determine the character's actions.

Conflict

1. Choose a scene of intense conflict in the novel and identify it through a brief summary as well as page numbers. Then, rewrite the scene as drama, including appropriate dialogue, stage directions, gestures, and facial expressions.
2. Write five newspaper headlines that describe conflicts (their causes and effects) in the novel. Be sure to use a vivid verb in each headline to clearly capture the action. Here's an example to describe conflict in *Song of Solomon*: "Privileged son arrested; outcast aunt humiliates herself for him at jail."

Style

1. Write an epitaph in the form of a heroic couplet for two of the characters. What words could appear on this character's tombstone to accurately describe his or her life and its growth or change?
2. Reveal the growth and development of one character by writing a description of the character's transformation using at least two kinds of figurative language (*metaphor, simile, hyperbole, understatement, synecdoche, metonymy, paradox, allusion*).

Theme

1. First, write a statement that expresses the theme for the novel. Then, choose a song that accurately expresses this theme. Include the lyrics as well as the names of the writer and original performer; then, compose a paragraph-length explanation of how the song you have chosen parallels the theme.
2. Choose fifteen to twenty exact lines from the novel, copying them exactly and citing act and page numbers. Then, transform the words from these lines into a poem (formal or informal, structured or unstructured, rhymed or unrhymed, free verse or blank verse)—one whose theme mirrors the theme of the novel. Be creative and stretch yourself!

Abuelito Who

Sandra Cisneros

Abuelito who throws coins like rain
and asks who loves him
who is dough and feathers
who is a watch and glass of water
whose hair is made of fur
is too sad to come downstairs today
who tells me in Spanish you are my diamond
who tells me in English you are my sky
whose little eyes are string
can't come out to play
sleeps in his little room all night and day
who used to laugh and like the letter k
is sick
is a doorknob tied to a sour stick
is tired shut the door
doesn't live here anymore
is hiding underneath the bed
who talks to me inside my head
is blankets and spoons and big brown shoes
who snores up and down up and down up and down again
is the rain on the room that falls like coins
asking who loves him
who loves him who?