

Turn Me Loose: The Unghosting of Medgar Evers

Journals

Select ONE journal prompt from each section as the focus of a written response. For each journal, compose a 1 ½ to 2-page response, typed and double-spaced in MLA format. Organize your ideas into paragraphs (do not write one long paragraph), and be sure to answer the entire question. Use quotes and details from the poems in the collection to support your ideas. Proofread and edit carefully.

Part I

- After reading a brief summary of the confederate flag for your reading guide, consider your own point of view on the topic. Do some further research and reading if you need more information on the topic, being careful to select credible sources. Do you believe the confederate flag should be flown freely or not? What do you think it represents? What makes you think so?
- How do you feel about use of “the n-word?” Should anyone be able to use it? Why or why not? What makes you think so?
- What is your personal reaction to the song “Strange Fruit?” What effect did the song have on you? Why? Use details from the song to explain your response.

Part II

- Research some of the names of entertainers and television shows Walker includes in the poem, “Music, Niggers & Jews.” Then, explain what De La Beckwith is saying about music and television. Use language from the poem to support your explanation.
- After reading the handout on the unwritten codes of the Jim Crow South, think about your own life and the lives of your friends. Do you think unwritten codes or rules, especially for minorities, still exist in America? Why or why not? What makes you think so? Explain with details or examples.

Part III

- Select any poem from this section and explain the theme or big idea of the poem, and what it contributes to the whole collection. That is, ask yourself what the author’s intentions are for this poem alone, and in the context of the whole collection. Use specific language and details from the poem to support your analysis.
- Why would Walker title this section, “Look Away, Look Away . . .”? What does he mean by this title? To what is it referring? Who is “looking away?” Looking away from what? Use details and specific language from at least two poems in this section to support your analysis.

Part IV

- Irony is a literary technique wherein the author uses language or images that are purposefully opposite of their true meaning. Select two of the words below and explain how the author is using the words ironically in the poem “Bighearted.” Terms: generosity, compassion, courtesy, dignity

- Irony is a literary technique wherein the author uses language or images that are purposefully opposite of their true meaning. What is ironic about the title of this section, “Gallant South?” Use specific language from at least two poems in this section to support your explanation of the irony of “Gallant South.”

Part V

- Now that you have finished reading the collection of poems, think about how the poems are organized to tell a complete, coherent story. How does Walker create a sense of closure at the end of the collection of poems? Use specific language and details from at least two of the poems in the final section to support your analysis.
- This about how Walker ends the collection and creates closure for the reader. Think about the themes and big ideas he explores throughout the collection, but especially in this final section. Then, write a poem that would fit into this final section of the collection of poems. Along with your titled poem, include a reflection of your thought process, and explanation of the theme or big idea of the poem, and a rationale that explores how or why your poem “fits” into the final section of the collection.