Synthesis Essay: Identity in *Mexican Whiteboy* and *I Am Joaquin*

Instructions: Respond to the prompt below in a complete 4-paragraph essay (introduction, 2 body paragraphs with 2 pieces of evidence in each, and conclusion). We will work on this essay in class, but you will need to spend some time working on it outside of class as well, especially to proofread and revise.

We will have writing workshops in class this week. The final **typed and printed** assignment is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, May 1.**

Prompt:

What role does racial identity play in *Mexican Whiteboy* and *I Am Joaquin*? Think about the ways in which Danny and Uno struggle with racial identity. Think about the way others use race in conversation with both Uno and Danny. In contrast, discuss the ways the speaker in *I Am Joaquin* deals with similar issues of identity. How do these things complicate the issues they have in dealing with their communities and their own racial identity?

Details:

- You will write an introductory paragraph with a hook, context, and a strong thesis statement.

- You will write two T-C-E-C-C-E-C-C paragraphs, integrating evidence from both texts.

- You will write a concluding paragraph.

- Your goal is to thoroughly analyze the ways in which racial identity shapes the experiences of characters in both texts.

- See rubric for more details.

Important Dates:

- **Essay assigned and Evidence Collection:** Monday, April 23
- **Essay Outlining:** Wednesday and Thursday, April 25 and 26
- **Rough Draft Work:** Friday, April 27
- **Peer and individual editing workshop (Rough Draft Due):** Monday, April 30
- **Final PRINTED paper due: Tuesday, May 1**

Brainstorming

What is the prompt asking me to consider?

Considering the prompt what claim can I make? (What is my opinion or stance on the question? Aka my thesis statement):

What subclaims can I make about the thesis? (What specific points do I want to focus on in my two body paragraphs?)

    1.

    2.

What evidence do I have for each subclaim? (Two pieces of evidence for each paragraph, from both texts)

Identity Essay Outline

I. Introductory Paragraph

Hook/Introductory Sentence: Create a statement that captures your audience's attention while introducing the theme of your essay.

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Context: Brief summary of the theme and texts (typically a 3-4 sentence summary of the issue (racial identity) and texts (*Mexican Whiteboy* and *I Am Joaquin*).

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Thesis Statement: the claim or declaration that responds directly to the prompt. It should be the final sentence in your introductory paragraph, and it is supported by both of the body paragraphs in the essay.

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II. Body Paragraph #1

Topic Sentence: a specific point to support your thesis statement

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Context: the "who/what/when/where" for your evidence.

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Evidence: a direct quote from the text. Do not forget to introduce the quote properly (who says it? See context above) and cite it in MLA format.

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Commentary: How does your evidence prove your thesis statement? Make a connection between your evidence and racial identity, the evidence and the topic sentence, and between the evidence and your thesis statement.

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Context: the "who/what/when/where" for your evidence.

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Evidence: a direct quote from the text. Do not forget to introduce the quote properly (who says it? See context above) and cite it in MLA format.

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Commentary: How does your evidence prove your thesis statement? Make a connection between your evidence and racial identity, the evidence and the topic sentence, and between the evidence and your thesis statement.

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Concluding Statement: restate your topic sentence in a manner that is varied from the original topic sentence and adds an additional layer of depth to your analysis.

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III. Body Paragraph #2

Topic Sentence: a specific point to support your thesis statement, including a transition

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Context: the "who/what/when/where" for your evidence.

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Evidence: a direct quote from the text. Do not forget to introduce the quote properly (who says it? See context above) and cite it in MLA format.

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Commentary: How does your evidence prove your thesis statement? Make a connection between your evidence and racial identity, the evidence and the topic sentence, and between the evidence and your thesis statement.

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Context: the "who/what/when/where" for your evidence.

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Evidence: a direct quote from the text. Do not forget to introduce the quote properly (who says it? See context above) and cite it in MLA format.

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Commentary: How does your evidence prove your thesis statement? Make a connection between your evidence and racial identity, the evidence and the topic sentence, and between the evidence and your thesis statement.

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Concluding Statement: restate your topic sentence in a manner that is varied from the original topic sentence and adds an additional layer of depth to your analysis.

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IV. Conclusion Paragraph

Main Claim: What was the overall message of your essay?

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Context: Without reiterating your topic sentences or summarizing each body paragraph, how was your message developed? What did you want your audience to learn?

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Concluding Statement(s): In a <u>universal statement</u>, that is not a call to action or advice to the reader, what is the final thought you want your audience to have on your topic? (The "mic-drop" or final "so what?")

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Identity Synthesis Essay Rubric

Learning Target	Exceptional (A)	Meets Standard (B)	Needs Attention (C)	Absence of Evidence (D/F)
ANALYSIS				
Intro and Thesis Statement	–Intro has hook, context, and thesis. Transitions are smooth. - Is one clear sentence that restates the prompt and lists all three theme statements the author will analyze in the order that the body paragraphs follow	- Intro has hook, context, and thesis. –Is one sentence that restates the prompt and lists all three theme statements that the author will analyze	- Intro may have hook, context, and thesis. - May not list all theme statements and/or does not outline the essay properly	–Intro is incomplete –Thesis statement is missing or off-topic
Topic Sentences	- Clearly outline the main idea of the paragraph - Uses varied word choice and sentence structure so as to avoid exact repetition of the chosen theme statement	- Outline the main idea of the paragraph - Responds directly to the prompt by re-stating the theme statement as the topic sentence	- May not appropriately outline the main idea of the prompt (e.g. too narrow or too broad) - Theme statement may be unclear	- Topic sentence is missing, does not respond to the prompt, or does not state the main idea of the paragraph - Topic sentence does not address the theme
Context	- Gives relevant background to set up the evidence provided in the paragraph - Is concise yet thorough; the reader is not left with any questions relating to the evidence (e.g. who is speaking, what is happening around the selected passage in the novel)	- Gives adequate background to set up the evidence provided in the paragraph	- Some important background may be missing from context, resulting in a choppy or unclear transition from topic sentence to evidence	- Context is missing; does not set up the evidence effectively
Evidence	- Is a direct quote (dialogue or narration) that directly supports the claim in the topic sentence - Only the essential parts of the quote are included –Two pieces of evidence in each paragraph	- Is a direct quote (dialogue or narration) that supports the claim in the topic sentence –Two pieces of evidence in each paragraph	- Connection to topic sentence may not be evident - Evidence may be paraphrased when a direct quote was required --One piece of evidence in each paragraph	- Evidence is missing or irrelevant to the claim in the paragraph
Commentary	- Clearly connects the evidence to the topic sentence by breaking down specific parts of the evidence and explaining how it proves that the theme statement does (or does not) apply to the novel - Goes beyond what was stated in class discussions	- Connects the evidence to the topic sentence and explains how the evidence relates to the theme statement	- Needs to more explicitly link the evidence to the topic sentence in the paragraph –Lets the evidence "speak for itself"	- Commentary Part I is missing or does not at all address how the evidence relates to the theme statement in the topic sentence
Concluding Statements	–Concluding Statements restate the paragraph's claim using new language.	–Concluding Statements restate the paragraph's claim.	–Concluding Statements are marginally related to claim.	–Concluding Statements are missing.
Conclusion	- Concluding paragraph restates the thesis statement in new language, summarizes the argument in a well-organized way, and universalizes the argument, showing its relevance and importance beyond the text	- Concluding paragraph restates the thesis statement, summarizes the argument in a well-organized way, and universalizes the argument, showing its relevance and importance beyond the text	- Concluding paragraph restates the thesis statement, and attempts to universalize the argument, showing its relevance and importance beyond the text	- Conclusion is incomplete or missing

MECHANICS				
Sentence Structure	All sentences are complete and structure is varied; author does not use "I"	Sentences are complete and author does not use "I"	May contain sentence fragments or run-ons; author uses "I"	Sentence structure lacks proofreading; "I" is used throughout
Spelling/ Grammar	Demonstrates thorough proofreading, as there are no spelling or grammar errors	Essay contains two or fewer spelling or grammar errors	Essay contains three to five spelling or grammar errors; mistakes distract from the author's analysis	Essay contains more than five spelling or grammar errors; mistakes are distracting
Verb Tense	Essay is written in the literary present. No helping verbs.	Essay is written in the literary present. Minimal use of helping verbs.	Essay may be written in the past tense and numerous errors that distract the reader.	Essay is written in the past tense or has inconsistencies with verb tense
MLA Format	Correct MLA heading is used without error (text double-spaced, margins 1", creative title in standard font, last name + page number in upper right-hand corner of each page, evidence is formatted properly, title of the novels is *italicized)*	Correct MLA heading is used with no more than two errors (see description of proper formatting in the previous column)	Correct MLA heading is used with three to five errors (see description of proper formatting in the first column)	Essay contains more than five errors in MLA formatting (see descriptions of proper formatting in the first column)
Works Cited Page	Works Cited page is formatted correctly: sources are in MLA format, in alphabetical order, on separate page.	Works Cited page is formatted mostly correctly: sources are in MLA format, in alphabetical order, on separate page.	Works Cited page is formatted somewhat correctly: sources are in MLA format, in alphabetical order, on separate page.	Works Cited page is not formatted correctly or is missing.

Essay notes: