

Novel Choice Activity Three

Step One:

- Find the source packet for your novel on the web-site.
- Make sure you are choosing "Source Packet Three – Magical Realism."

Step Two:

- Read through the material. It will be approximately ten pages.
- The readings will be a mixture of sources specifically about your novel and more general reading about the society in which the novel is set.

Step Three:

- Identify one big idea from the readings.
- You should have two or three from which to choose.
- If you think there are more, go broader. You are focusing on a detail.
- In a sentence or two, put this big idea in your own words.
- If you are formatting like my example, place it on the left side of a chart.

Step Four:

- Sub-divide the big idea into two aspects.
- For each of these two aspects, include three to five facts that develops this idea.
- You should obviously be getting these facts from the source packet.
- Include parenthetical citations for the facts. Failure to do this correctly will lead to a loss of three points. Failure to do it at all will lead to a loss of five points.

- If you are formatting like my example, place this in the middle column of a chart.

Step Five:

- Keeping in mind what you have done so far, discuss the implications in terms of character, setting, and conflict.
- The format for doing this is with an overview statement, and two paraphrased details (with rudimentary analysis) that support that overview statement.
- See my model for the level of detail I am expecting here.
- If you are formatting like my example, place this on the right side of a chart.

Step Six:

- Include a Works Cited for the sources you used for the middle column.
- Failure to do this correctly will lead to a loss of three points.
- Failure to do it at all will lead to a loss of five points.

Due Date

- This is due Tuesday 4/23.
- If you turn it in early, you will receive an extra three points.
- If you turn it less than eight hours late, you will lose three points.
- If you turn it in after eight hours late, but before the next class period, you will lose ten points.
- After that point there will be a flat twenty point deduction.
- If you turn in the activity late but do not want to lose points: do the activity twice with **two** big ideas (along with different aspects and implications for each of the two big ideas)

Magical Realism Novels

BIG IDEA

Early 20th century Spanish society favored men over women.

DETAILS

(w/ parenthetical citations)

Education

(1) Most Spanish women were not educated. During the first decades of the 20th century, about 50% of women were illiterate (Carbayo-Abengózar 112). There were unequal opportunities in education (Nash 15), as males learned practical business skills, while women learned domestic skills like needlepoint (Nash 17; Muñoz and Pérez 500).

Culture

(2) Society was organized around the principle of segregated sexes with different roles within society. Women occupied the domestic sphere (Nash 7), with the cultural ideal being *angeles del hogar* (angels of the hearth) (Nash 10). The Catholic Church opposed modernization on all fronts, seeing liberalism as the devil's work (Holguín 19). Particularly in rural Spain, the Church, custom, and tradition held sway; most Spanish women did not desire fundamental changes in conservative gender roles (Carbayo-Abengózar 114).

IMPLICATIONS

(w/ paraphrased detail and analysis)

Character

Overview: Yerma's self-identity is bound up in her acceptance of her domestic role as mother. **Details:** (a) Yerma idealizes the pains and inconveniences of motherhood, interpreting Dolores' story of a new mother "soaked with [the] blood" of childbirth as a divinely sanctioned event (37). (b) When Yerma claims that she has "killed [her] son" by strangling Juan, it is a recognition that she will never fulfill the role for which society has prepared her. She recognizes that she is "barren" and "alone"-- alienated from the only kind of feminine role that she can conceive (53).

Setting (time, place, or society)

Overview: Women in the play are conditioned to not question their domestic role within society. **Details:** (a) The Second Girl summarizes the domestic role of Spanish women in the early 20th century as restricted to the domestic sphere of motherhood, cooking, and cleaning. Though she rebels against this limited view of femininity, she has no alternative but to submit (14). (b) The washerwomen conceive of the failure to embody gender norms as a moral failing. Those who are not mothers are (in their eyes) either unnatural (like the two step-sisters) or wanton (like Yerma, who they suggest has illicit desires for Victor) (19-20).

Conflict (internal, external, or societal)

Overview: Yerma cannot conceive of sexuality outside of its culturally prescribed role as procreative. This causes her to repress and displace feelings that do not meet these standards.

Details: (a) Yerma displaces sexual desire completely into a socially acceptable desire for a child (super-ego). Though acknowledging her eagerness to lose her virginity on her wedding night, Yerma conceives of this only in terms of her desire for motherhood (3). (b) Yerma suggests that she is "disgusted" by carnal pleasure, but she wishes she were a "mountain of fire" to melt Juan's coldness, a conflict between id (unbridled passion) and super-ego (unlimited denial) (38).

Works Cited

- Carbayo-Abengózar, Mercedes. "Feminism in Spain: A History of Love and Hate." *Women in Contemporary Culture: Roles and Identities in France and Spain*, edited by Lesley K. Twomey, Bristol: Intellect, 2003, pp. 111-126.
- Holguín, Sandie. *Creating Spaniards: Culture and National Identity in Republican Spain*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.
- Muñoz, Lina Gálvez and Pérez, Paloma Fernández. "Female Entrepreneurship in Spain during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." *The Business History Review*, vol. 81, no. 3, 2007, pp. 495-515.
- Nash, Mary. *Defying Male Civilization: Women in the Spanish Civil War*. Arden, 1995.