Sidell 12th grade Multicultural Lit Crash Final Activity Sheet

150 points total minor assessment grade.

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

“I DON’T THINK I’M BIASED” LEARNING PACKET FOR: CRASH film.

Directions: You will be required to answer all questions in this guide. You may answer on line and send it electronically, or answer on the paper; all work must be completed by the end of film unit. For the assessment section, you may choose one written assessment and one project (project choices to come).

Description:  This film interweaves incidents of prejudice based on race and ethnicity during 36 hours in modern-day Los Angeles. The actions of the characters careen between the base and degraded to the admirable and heroic, painting a picture of the complexity of race and ethnic relations in America. Irony pervades many of the stories.

Crash illuminates the concept that prejudice is not limited to the ignorant and the cruel and that racists are often the victims of racism. It shows the multi-level nature of prejudice. It shows that those who see themselves as free of prejudice can be cruel or violent in a given moment based on racial or ethnic bias. The film will be a platform for ongoing discussions of prejudice based on race or ethnicity.

Through discussion, reflection, and writing assignments, you will explore your own attitudes as well as those of society as a whole. You will analyze irony as a tool to communicate theme.

**PART I: Journal Entry-Choose One, write a full page and be prepared to discuss (30 point journal)**

1. Other than in the media (including the news), where have you seen racism? Consider experiences in your school or among people you know in your family or community. Describe in detail.
2. Which groups of people, not necessarily which races, do you feel are most affected by bigoted comments or actions in our current culture? Use evidence that you’ve seen.
3. Where did you or someone you know learn to disdain or otherwise be repulsed by character traits of any cultural group? Explain in detail.
4. Briefly narrate a time in which you held onto a bigoted notion and then released it because of some mind opening experience, whether in your life, in film, through literature or other learning opportunity.

Sticks and Stones:

Read the following poem by Countee Cullen (Harlem Renaissance poet) and *pay close attention* to incidents or episodes in the film that may be as impactful to the individuals experiencing them as this one in Cullen's poem is to the eight-year-old child.

Incident

By Countee Cullen

Once riding in old Baltimore,

Heart-filled, head-filled with glee;

I saw a Baltimorean

Keep looking straight at me.

Now I was eight and very small,

And he was no whit bigger,

And so I smiled, but he poked out

His tongue, and called me, "N---er."

I saw the whole of Baltimore

From May until December;

Of all the things that happened there

That's all that I remember.

**Questions 1 and 2: 5 points each**

1. "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Briefly write what this old saying means in terms of what the eight year old boy in Baltimore experienced. Share about some experience you had of “sticks and stones…” Did words ever hurt you? Explain.

Double Consciousness:

Double consciousness occurs when there is a marked difference between the way a person views himself and the way he is viewed by the larger society. As formulated by W.E.B. DuBois in his 1908 book, *The Souls of Black Folk,* DuBois writes:

*It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.*

Real-world examples of double consciousness:

* Teenage girls may see themselves as good students who are shopping for mascara, whereas clerks at the high-end make up counter see the girls as probable shoplifters.
* Black students at elite colleges may see themselves as scholars, while some on the campus will see them as having been enrolled because of Affirmative Action and therefore less qualified than others.
* An unwed mother abandoned by the father of her child may see herself as a parent striving to provide a good home for her child, while another person may see her as an irresponsible and loose woman who is mooching off the welfare system.
* An immigrant working off the books may be striving to be an honorable father helping his family survive, while citizens may see him as an alien unwanted presence and a potential drain on the welfare system. It doesn't matter whether any set of perceptions are true or whether there is truth in both. Once an individual understands that other people perceive him in a way that is different from his self-perception, double consciousness can ensue.

1. What can you contribute to this list? Please share any experience where you were misunderstood or you misunderstood someone else (double consciousness).

**PART II: WATCHING THE FILM**

***FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, TAKE RELEVANT NOTES WHILE WATCHING THE FILM.***

**Film Discussion Questions: answer in-depth with examples and explanations. Ten points each.**

1. Which racial incident in the film do you feel may be as impactful as the one told in the poem?

Notes:

2. Which character in the film best illustrates through action or dialogue the problem of Double Consciousness?

Notes:

3. What does the story line of Officer Hansen tell the audience about racism? Where is the irony in this incident*?*

Notes:

4. In this film, which attempts at redemption (making up for bad behavior) are most ironic and what do they show about racism?

Notes:

5. Describe an incident of irony in the movie (other than what has been previously discussed in class) which shows the multi-layered nature of how humans react to different situations; for example, they act badly in some situations but very well in others.

Notes:

6. Who or what is the protagonist in this film and who or what is the antagonist in this film? Explain with logic, examples, and detail.

Notes:

7. What examples of racism can you find in the film that are used to *advance a political agenda*? Explain.

Notes:

8. Is any character purged of his or her racism through actions that he takes in this story? Is any character fully redeemed? Explain your answer using evidence from the film.

Notes:

9.   Explain the relationship between Detective Waters and his mother and her influence on his decisions.

Notes:

10.  Is there any major character in this film who isn't prejudiced in some way? Explain your answer with evidence from the film.

Notes:

**Part V Written Assessment Choices-Choose one. Your response should have at least three well-thought-out paragraphs or 500 words, as well as evidence from the film. 40 points.**

1. Write a summary of one of the story lines woven through Crash, then describe whether the characters have learned anything; for example, have they learned not to be prejudiced?

2. DuBois wrote of the black individual in America saying, "He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face." Write an analysis of how the character of Cameron Thayer shows the conflict between how a man sees himself and how others see him.

3. Using Countee Cullen's poem "Incident" as a hook, write an essay about the concept of "hate speech" that details the history of the concept as well as the conflicts that have arisen with the First Amendment. Research will be necessary for you to find examples of specific cases that have become known to the public and any policies that have been developed to deal with the problem. Give incidents of hate speech that you have seen for yourself at school or in other places.

4. Crash contains several examples of "profiling." Research information about how profiling comes into play in social interactions. Write an essay in which you show how profiling is a central problem in Crash. Give examples from the film and be sure to include groups other than African Americans in your choices. Conclude your essay with suggestions about how to mitigate (fix) the problems associated with profiling.

5. Write a personal narrative about an experience that centered on prejudice either in your town or your school that was especially ironic in outcome. Look carefully to what may have been intended by the participants in the event and what resulted. For example, on the first day in a new class, you may have sought to find a seat far away from a fellow student who appeared Middle Eastern or Goth or Gay and then later became good friends with the individual. You may have avoided a particular restaurant in your community because of the clientele and then later discovered its charms. Show in your narrative what you learned as you indicate the irony of expectation and outcome.

In your narrative describe action (including dialogue), reveal thoughts (including internal monologues), describe observations by the characters, use descriptive language (including images of people, places and things), and compare one thing to another.