

Chapter 9: Focused Reading

1. What is the process of assimilation Nyasha describes?

Nyasha believes that to assimilate means to forget where you came from and who you are. Assimilation seems appealing because the majority group opens only a few spots so assimilation becomes competitive and special. Nyasha sees assimilation as a trap.

2. Trace the different characters' opinions on whether or not Tambu should go to the Sacred Heart School.

| Character | Quote | Implied Meanings |
|------------|---|---|
| Nyasha | “It would be a marvelous opportunity, she said, to forget. To forget who you were, what you were and why you were that” (182). | <p>*Nyasha’s sarcasm might indicate jealousy.</p> <p>*Nyasha might just want Tambu to stay with her.</p> <p>*Nyasha to protect her.</p> <p>*Nyasha will give Tambu a better education.</p> |
| Nyasha | “You’ll fall for their tricks, she said, pointing out that I would obtain a much more useful education at the mission” (182). | <p>*Nyasha doesn’t want Tambu to go because she’ll miss her.</p> <p>*Nyasha has more experience with the nuns and she is aware of the games they play.</p> <p>*Nyasha sees herself as responsible for Tambu’s education.</p> |
| Babamukuru | “I have observed from my own daughter’s behavior that it is not a good thing for a young girl to associate too much with these white people” (183). | <p>*White people are trouble, they can be a bad influence.</p> <p>*He is disappointed in his daughter, and he thinks Tambu will be influenced.</p> <p>*as headmaster, he is insulted that Tambu wants enough gratitude.</p> <p>*Educated girl doesn’t make a good wife.</p> |
| Babamukuru | “I have observed from my own daughter’s behavior that it is not a good thing for a young girl to associate too much with these white people...I have seen that girls who do that do not develop into decent women” (183). | <p>*Tambu is just like Nyasha</p> <p>*educating males is more important than educating females</p> <p>*educated women don’t make good wives.</p> |
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Reading Guide: Nervous Conditions, Chapters 9

Chapter 9:

- 1.How does Tambu finally manage to be sent to the Young Ladies College of the Sacred Heart?
- 2.Describe how Nyasha’s health is deteriorating?
- 3.In your opinion, why has Nyasha become bulimic? (symbolic?)