

AMERICA - STANZA BREAKDOWN

Directions: With the person next to you break down the poem, stanza by stanza, by both summarizing its content and analyzing its language. The following assignment will let you practice differentiating between understanding what the author has literally written and understanding the text's significance.

Please make sure you type your responses in the following boxes. An introductory paragraph has been provided for you below to give you some guidance as to what you should look for when you're breaking the poem down.

PROMPT		
In the following poem by Claude McKay (1921), the speaker addresses his relationship and history with America. Read the poem carefully. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze the poetic elements and techniques McKay uses to convey the speaker's complex attitude toward America.		
INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH		
In Claude McKay's poem "America" published in 1921, the speaker discusses his complex relationship with America. McKay utilizes poetic elements and techniques to convey the speaker's attitude toward America as one of animosity as well as admiration as he is grateful for the hard lessons that America has taught him.		
SUMMARY OF STANZA *(ONE+ SENTENCES)	STANZA 1	ANALYSIS OF STANZA *DISCUSS HOW THE TEXT ILLUSTRATES THE THEME IN THE THESIS *(ONE SENTENCE PER BULLET)
	America Although she feeds me bread of bitterness, And sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth, Stealing my breath of life, I will confess I love this cultured hell that tests my youth.	• •

SUMMARY OF STANZA *(ONE+ SENTENCES)	STANZA 2	ANALYSIS OF STANZA *DISCUSS HOW THE TEXT ILLUSTRATES THE THEME IN THE THESIS *(ONE SENTENCE PER BULLET)
	Her vigor flows like tides into my blood, Giving me strength erect against her hate, Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood. Yet, as a rebel fronts a king in state,	• •

SUMMARY OF STANZA *(ONE+ SENTENCES)	STANZA 3	ANALYSIS OF STANZA *DISCUSS HOW THE TEXT ILLUSTRATES THE THEME IN THE THESIS *(ONE SENTENCE PER BULLET)
	I stand within her walls with not a shred Of terror, malice, not a word of jeer. Darkly I gaze into the days ahead, And see her might and granite wonders there,	• •

SUMMARY OF STANZA *(ONE+ SENTENCES)	STANZA 4	ANALYSIS OF STANZA *DISCUSS HOW THE TEXT ILLUSTRATES THE THEME IN THE THESIS *(ONE SENTENCE PER BULLET)
	Beneath the touch of Time's unerring hand, Like priceless treasures sinking in the sand.	• •