

## Sherman Alexie Analysis

### Terms you should know:

- [Postcolonial theory](#)
- Colonialism- the practice by which a powerful country directly controls less powerful countries and uses their resources to increase its own power and wealth
- Oppression- the cruel or unfair treatment of a group of people.
- Assimilation-

### Forms of Oppression:

- Economic
- Religious
- Legal
- Social

### Issues associated with forms of oppression:

- Institutionalized racism (the dominant culture isn't fully aware of its privilege or impact; marginalized cultures have limited power and access compared to the dominant culture)
- Eurocentrism/ cultural bias (the attitude that the western narrative is THE narrative; westerners assume control of marginalized people's narrative)
- Civil rights violations (access to quality education, resources, shelter; unjust legal standards or cultural biases that infiltrate legal standards or practices)
- Identity Crisis (Hybridity and double consciousness- who am I? Where do I fit if I'm more than one thing?)
- Otherness (dominant culture's refusal to accept aspects of marginalized cultures, especially those that do not match its own tenants)
- Internalized oppression (when a group believes in negative stereotypes of itself or self-hatred and rejection of its native culture that leads to overcompensation and hyper-assimilation)

**Objective:** Learn and exercise the principals and layers of Poco criticism

**Task:** Read the poem, "[How to Write the Great American Indian Novel](#)."

Use the poem to answer the following question: How does the poem, "How to Write the Great American Indian Novel," explore the problems of postcolonial identity, including the

relationship between personal and cultural identity, which includes and such issues as double consciousness<sup>1</sup> and hybridity<sup>2</sup>? Construct your response in the form of a vlog post (video)

**Unpack the question:**

1. What techniques does Alexie use and how do they function?
2. What specific aspect of postcolonial identity do the techniques represent?
3. How do the techniques represent a specific aspect of postcolonial identity?
4. What problems do the aspects of postcolonial identity reveal?
5. Why are the problems of postcolonial identity significant?

**Review effective use of source material**

Click [here](#)

**Requirements:**

1. Make a single, coherent, well-supported claim
2. Focus on at least 2 techniques (their narrative function and their implications) to develop a response to the question.
3. Identify and explore at least 2 distinct aspects of colonial oppression
4. Quotes and verbally cites at least 3 specific details from the poem
5. Be at least two minutes long
6. Speak clearly and confidently and demonstrate self-editing.
7. Embed your video in a Google Slide (click insert→ video→ Google Drive→ click on video→ click select→ situate the clip on the slide)

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<sup>1</sup> The mixing of cultures; ex. double consciousness – one goes to an American University and gets educated then returns to native land only to find that he/she cannot identify with the culture anymore

<sup>2</sup> [...] the integration (or, mingling) of cultural signs and practices from the colonizing and the colonized cultures ("integration" may be too orderly a word to represent the variety of stratagems, desperate or cunning or good-willed, by which people adapt themselves to the necessities and the opportunities of more or less oppressive or invasive cultural impositions, live into alien cultural patterns through their own structures of understanding, thus producing something familiar but new.

**Rubric:****10/ 10- 9/ 10:**

1. Explores all 5 “unpacked” items
2. Explores 2 techniques along with their narrative functions and implications
3. Explores at least 2 aspects of postcolonial identity
4. Gets to the business of exploring the significance of passages rather than commenting passages are significant
  - a. Avoids phrases that suggest reader reactions or personal reactions
  - b. Simply states and supports the significance
5. Begins with a clear, debatable thesis statement
6. Roots claims in source material with at least 3 cited paraphrases
7. Each quote demonstrates the effective integration of information
  - a. Anchor (speaker + context)
  - b. Lead (**strong verb+ original** idea)
  - c. Paraphrase & citation
  - d. Implications of paraphrased material
  - e. Revelation paraphrased material imparts
  - f. The relevance of revelation to your overall point
8. Demonstrates sentence variety
  - a. Varies styles
  - b. Varies syntax

**8/10**

Abides the criteria detailed above with one or more of the following exceptions:

1. The thesis is clear but lacks depth and insight
2. Addresses 4 of the 5 “unpacked” items
3. Short one quote
4. Neglects one or more components from 7a-7f for only one quote
5. Uses language that suggests personal or reader reactions
6. Varies either sentence style or syntax, but fails to vary both
7. Minor mechanical and grammatical issues

**7/10**

Abides criteria detailed above with one or more of the following exceptions:

1. The thesis is indecisive and/or unclear
2. Addresses fewer than 4 of the “unpacked items
3. Short two quotes
4. Neglects one or more components from 7a- 7f for more than one of the quotes
5. Varies either sentence style or syntax, but fails to vary both

**Students who do not explore 2 distinct techniques along with their narrative functions and implications will receive a zero.**