Thesis: Waniek offers the Century Quilt as a metaphor for the ability of family to blend generations and races while still maintaining their each generation's and each race's individual beauty.

1st body paragraph: Waniek forms the stitches of the quilt, or the blending aspect of family, through her use of sound devices. "Meema," "Mama," and the unspoken "me" connect to each other through alliteration, suggesting that the Century Quilt's the complex relationships between the speaker, her grandmother, and her mother are innate; each possesses a central quality of the other. The assonance of "Meema," the father's "army *green,*" "Mama's *cheeks,*" the speaker's "good *dreams*," the speaker's son "unconceived," and the quilt's "pattern of *leaves*" furthers the ability of family to transcend generational gaps, as euphonious long "e" sound weaves together the speaker's childhood memories, her present dreams, and the possibilities of her future as though all exist on the same plane--all sleep peacefully under the Century Quilt.

2nd body paragraph: Waniek's imagery, however, suggests that each generation and race, though intimately connected, still holds onto its own individuality, just as each square on a quilt maintains its own identity. The "Six Van Dyke brown squares, / two white ones, and one square / the yellowbrown of Mama's cheeks" reflect the "grandfather's white family" versus Meema's "yellow sisters." Each racial group possesses its own rich culture, and the differences between these cultures add to the beauty and complexity of the Century Quilt. Sewing these squares and races together allow for the "father's burnt umber pride" and the "mother's ochre gentleness"; by juxtaposing a specific shade of color with a distinct personality trait, Waniek illuminates the importance of diverse identities with a family and how this diversity emerges only when each square, each generation, each race, each individual member, is allowed its own space and color. Even though the speaker's generations of past, present and future, and of brown, white, and yellow, are tightly knitted together under the Century Quilt, no family member has to sacrifice his or her individual identity.