

Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test - Excerpt Analysis
Focus: “Hippie Philosophies and Expressions”

Day 1: Review of “Summer of Love” Documentary

1. “Cosmic Oneness” (Interconnectedness of All Living Creatures; Harmony w/ Humanity and Universe)
2. Because of #1, they felt strongly connected to nature and the environment and believed you should live in balance or harmony with the natural world.
3. Because of #1, Love, Altruism, Compassion, Sympathy, Empathy
4. Because of #1-3, Nonviolence and Peace
5. Community-Building (“communes”; “communal living”; “communism”)
6. Spirituality, Mysticism
7. Joy, Positivity, Enthusiasm
8. Gentle, Simple Life
9. Anti-materialism, anti-money: What if it’s FREE?! (What would you do if you did not need money to live? How would you choose to spend your life, your time?)
10. “Tune in, turn on, drop out”: This was a literal call to drop out of mainstream society, to live “off the grid,” in a separate (but self-sustainable) reality/world of your own making.

Alternate Day 1: Review of “Hippie” Article from *Time Magazine*

1. Altruism (to be compassionate, unselfish, kind, communal)
2. Nonviolence, Love
3. Joy, Pleasure
4. Honesty
5. “Total withdrawal from the economy”; “scorn of money” and property/possessions.
6. “Quest for individual identity”
7. Mysticism: After their drug experiences, hippies often felt that they could see things that others could not see. Examples from *Kool-Aid*: “Everything in everybody’s life is ... significant. And everybody is alert, watching for the meanings. And the vibrations. There is no end of vibrations” (18). And, “Everyone is picking up on the most minute incidents as if they are metaphors for life” (19). The *Time Magazine* article also mentions the desire for hippies to achieve “oneness with physical and psychic nature.”
8. Games: Society has turned life into a game, and people are its pawns; hippies find this game dehumanizing (people are pieces under someone else’s control).

Focus Questions

1. Comic book superheroes, especially Captain Marvel, are referenced many times in the opening chapters of *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (30, 39, 41, 51). Why? What influence do comic books or superheroes have on hippies (the hippie generation)?
2. Aldous Huxley's book *The Doors of Perception* is referenced twice (44, 52) in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. What purpose does this allusion serve?
3. Randall McMurphy, Chief Broom, and Hank Stamper (characters from Ken Kesey's novels) are referenced near the end of Chapter 4 (47-49, 50-51). What do these characters represent or symbolize for hippies?
4. An important component of hippiedom was to be "out front." This is discussed on p. 52, 73, 75, and 80. What does it mean to be "out front"? Why was it important to hippies? Other expressions are "go with the flow" and "wail with it". Look at p. 84, for example. What do these expressions mean and how do they relate to being "out front"? **To what extent are these important values for you?**
5. There are moments in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* where the word "synch" is used to convey a hippie mentality. Look at p. 80 and 97. Another famous saying is, "You're either on the bus or off the bus." Look at p. 83 and 88, for example. What does this saying mean? How does it relate to "synch" or "synchronicity" (p. 140)?