

Cycle 3 Reflective Journal Prompts

Borderlands Journal 1

Journal and *journey* have the same root word. In your reflective journals for this course, you have an opportunity to relate the works we're discussing in class with your own life and experiences to document how you're moving on your journey through the course, through Mexican American Studies, and through your education and on to your career. These journals are confidential, which means it's a one-on-one dialogue between you and me. Feel free to share as much or as little as you wish, knowing that you can always come back to the journal to reflect on how far you've come in this course.

Much of the first four chapters of Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* addresses her feelings of being an outsider, struggling through crisis, and, ultimately, finding a sense of balance and mental health through the Coatlicue state. For Anzaldúa, arriving at mental and spiritual health means acknowledging her own history and that of her community, indeed, defining community for herself. For this journal, use the questions below to guide your reflections on how you balance self care with community care and the role that history and identity play in your own mental and spiritual well-being.

- What does balance mean to you? How does it relate to your sense of mental and spiritual well-being? How do you work toward achieving balance?
- What struggles have you overcome with achieving mental and spiritual wellness in yourself, your family, your community/culture, or your education? How did you overcome them?
- What is the relationship between self-care and community care to you? What roles do history and identity play in these? How have you enacted self care or community care, and what role does each of these play in shaping your identity?
- In "*La Herencia de Coatlicue / The Coatlicue State*" Anzaldúa describes a process of letting go of our habits, addictions, and routines that keep us stuck in abusive and unhealthy situations and mindsets in order to be reborn into a new identity. This process is difficult, and most people avoid it for fear of what's on the other side. What has your version of the Coatlicue state been? What did you have to let go of, what support did you have (or not have), and what has been your experience since then? If you haven't gone through a Coatlicue state, what would you like to let go of in your current lifestyle, and what do you think the other side might look like?

Borderlands Journal 2

Journal and *journey* have the same root word. In your reflective journals for this course, you have an opportunity to relate the works we're discussing in class with your own life and experiences to document how you're moving on your journey through the course, through Mexican American Studies, and through your education and on to your career. These journals are confidential, which means it's a one-on-one dialogue between you and me. Feel free to share as much or as little as you wish, knowing that you can always come back to the journal to reflect on how far you've come in this course.

For this journal, consider Anzaldúa's weaving of her own intersecting social and personal identities--as a Chicana, a lesbian, a feminist, a writer, an indigenous woman--with the history of Chicanos, analysis of language, and theory of art and spirituality that she provides in *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Answer the following questions to consider the identities that you inhabit that are most important to you and how you might weave them with research of your own related to your research topic for the course.

- What social and personal identities are most important to you? Which come up the most for you in different spaces you inhabit? Why are these identities important to you?
- Thinking of your research topic for the course, what connections can you draw between these identities and that topic or its history? Explain what makes that topic really meaningful and/or personal for you.
- If you were to select a work of art that bears witness to one of your identities, what would it be? (Include a link or copy of the image, if possible)
- If you were to select a work of art that bears witness to your research topic, what would it be? (Include a link or copy of the image, if possible)