

Formative Reading Assessment 2014

My First Conk

Malcolm X

Answer all four questions. You should not write any longer than one paragraph (max. 150 words) for each question. Make sure you include specific details from the story to support your responses.

1. What can we tell about Malcolm X as a young man?

As a young man I can tell that Malcolm X was a confident man. Such as in the situation when he was buying the ingredients, "Going to lay on that first conk?" the drugstore man asked me. I proudly told him, grinning, "Right!" "And when Shorty says, "So you know its going to burn when I comb it - it burns bad. But the longer you can stand it, the straighter the hair." In both situations he is proud to do both. When he was buying the ingredients he was proudly grinning to the man and saying yes. Also when Shorty told him what would happen if he conked he still did it anyway. So, this tells me that he is confident in anything he does even if it involves pain. ✓

2. Four words have been bolded. Why did Malcolm X add quotation marks to

these words?

I think that Malcolm X bolded the words because these are words that describe people in the times of segregation. For example, in the quote "...who are brainwashing into believing that the black people are **"inferior"** - and white people are **"superior"**, that they will even violate and mutilate their God-created bodies to try to look **"pretty"** by white people standards." This tells me that these words were used by white and black people during the 1950's-1960's to describe themselves such as white people being superior and black people being inferior. This was also the time where black people were being discriminated for their skin so these words were used a lot to describe them. ✓

3. Who do you think is Malcolm X's intended audience? Why do you think

this? What effect does he want to have on his readers?

I think the intended audience for Malcolm X are the people being discriminated because in this autobiography he is talking about not being brainwashed to be "pretty". "I admire any Negro man who has never had himself conked, who has the sense to get rid of it - as I finally did." So he telling people whom are being discriminated to be proud of who you are. Instead of wanting to be "pretty". I think he did this because he was discriminated himself and wanted to be "pretty". For example, he says "Stupid enough to stand there simply lost in admiration of my hair now looking "white", reflected in the mirror of Shorty's room." So he thinks that conks look stupid and he should have never done it. So he would