

YOUR NAME _____
ENGLISH, CLASS _____

September 19, 2024
SAMUELS

Do Now: Please copy poem into notebooks

Objective: To note-take on structure, mood, tone, and message for the poem below.

"Identity"

BY [ANGELA C. TRUDELL VASQUEZ](#)

White-Mexican looks like a Latina,
not my label
a question
from a Guatemalan student
who's come undone
in my ESL class,
doesn't get my kind
I try to describe
how I grew up
in Caucasian corn country
surrounded by houses
on cul-de-sacs
that all looked the same,
how we were alone
in a town of 5000,
one black family,
one Indian family,
one Asian family,
and one household of Mexicans,
no two, us and the Renterias
to whom we were related by marriage
before and after my divorce,
and they were mixed;
still, it was a good living,
happy in our cocooness,
our oneness,
separated by money
one direction
color on the other:
classes, classes, classes,
day and night
we took lessons:
piano, jazz, tap, ballet,
the dance team, trumpet,
trombone, tennis, Finishing School,

and one awful summer golf;
 Christened, Confirmed, Catechismized;
 it all cut me in several places,
 molding of head and heart
 making me ultrasensitive,
 then and now,
 an observer of the outside,
 an outsider among my own kind,
 my very shade,
 mysterious aloof
 black haired beauty
 who can't speak Spanish,
 living among blue eyed dyed blond bombshells,
 who held up her head higher
 because she's shy not stuck-up,
 understood, undenied, sacrificed to at any price
 by my beloved little brown parents
 who taught me well
 gave up so much
 so their daughters could shine
 and they'd swell with pride
 at the life they had given us,
 on Sundays we basked
 in mutual admiration after mass
 singing our church songs while making breakfast,
 according to the unspoken doctrine in our house of:
 fast first eat later after communion,
 we intruded with our Mexican music
 bellowing out the open windows
 the smell of bacon frying,
 pancakes baking, coffee
 and eggs scrambled to order
 it wafted out on beautiful summer mornings
 out of our house in Pleasant Hill, Iowa,
 perched on the highest spot
 one could reach on the East Side of the street
 for first and second generation immigrants.

Describe Poem's Tone (What author thinks, feels, believes)	Describe Poem's Mood (The feeling writer creates for the reader)	What is the poem about? (Message)

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