

Chapter 1 (13 pages)

esteem	n/v	approval and respect often blended with great liking or fondness because of worthy qualities; such approval, respect, or liking held generally	s: regard; fame, renown
--------	-----	--	-------------------------

"The move lowered my father in the esteem of his compadres, the other vaqueros of the llano who clung tenaciously to their way of life and freedom" (2).

tenaciously	adv	persistently maintaining or adhering to something	
tenacious	adj	valued or habitual	

"The move lowered my father in the esteem of his compadres, the other vaqueros of the llano who clung tenaciously to their way of life and freedom" (2).

solemnly	adv	marked by seriousness and free from casualness or	s: sober
solemn	adj	lightheartedness	
solemnity	n		

"'The war sucks everything dry,' my father said solemnly, 'it takes the young boys overseas...'" (3).

exuberant	adj	extremely or excessively high-spirited and	s: riotous
exuberantly	adv	uninhibited	
exuberance	n		

"*They were an exuberant, restless people. Wandering across the ocean of the plain*" (6).

blasphemy	n	irreverence toward something considered sacred or	s: impious
blasphemous	adj	held in high regard	
blasphemously	adv		

"*It is blasphemy to scatter a man's blood on unholy ground, the farmers chanted*" (6).

Reading Questions

1. Describe the narrator.
2. What motivates Antonio's mother to bring Ultima to their home?
3. Describe Ultima and the conflict that revolves around her.
4. What effect does Ultima have on Antonio? What is significant about this?
5. What role(s) does Antonio's dreams play in the exposition of this novel.
6. Explain the animal symbols in the chapter.

Response Journal

"*Only I will know his destiny*" (6) Ultima says of Antonio. What is your understanding of the concept of destiny? Define the term in your own words and then discuss your beliefs about it.



Chapter 2 (13 pages)

interminable interminably interminableness	adj adv n	having no end in time or existence	s: boundless
--	-----------------	------------------------------------	--------------

“... and they had more time to spend in the attic and cut out an interminable train of paper dolls which they dressed, gave names to, and most miraculously, made talk” (14).

rave	v/n	to speak wildly, passionately, or boisterously; to move or advance with violence or in wild agitation	s: storm, rage
------	-----	---	----------------

“He often got drunk on Saturday afternoons and then he would rave against old age” (14).

composure compose	n v	calmness or repose especially in frame of mind or in bearing or appearance	
----------------------	--------	--	--

“Chavez regained part of his composure. ‘Get your rifle, we must go to the bridge—’” (16).

commotion	n	noisy, unruly, or violent disturbance of order	s: tumult
-----------	---	--	-----------

“Even from this distance I could hear the commotion on the bridge” (17).

transfix	v	to fasten or hold motionless with an absorbing emotion or interest	
----------	---	--	--

“He stood transfixed, looking down at the mad man waving the pistol in the air” (18).

Reading Questions

1. Explain the relationship between Antonio and Ultima.
2. How does the historical time period in which the novel is set contribute to the action in chapter two?
3. What motivates Antonio to follow his father?
4. How are Antonio’s father and Narciso different from the other men on the bridge? What might account for this difference?
5. Explain Lupito’s internal conflict.
6. How does Lupito’s death affect Antonio?
7. Explain the conflicts that surface in Antonio’s dream.

Response Journal

“The ways of men are strange, and hard to learn” (25), Ultima tells Antonio. Do you agree with her? Going beyond the text, what is your perception of the “ways of men” in our contemporary world? Is there a difference between the ways of men and the ways of women? Explore your thoughts on this topic.



Chapters 3&4 (18 pages)

curtly curt curtness	adv	marked by such shortness of speech, writing, or manner as to suggest discourtesy or displeasure	s: terse
	adj		
	n		

“‘Never mind!’ my mother said curtly, ‘just pray for the dearly departed souls—’” (30).

cursory cursorily cursorness	adj	rapidly often superficially performed with little attention to detail	s: hasty
	adv		

“My mother took one last cursory glance at her brood then led the way up the goat path...” (33).

admonish	v	to express warning or disapproval to about negligence or error	s: reprove

“Also, my mother admonished us to bow our heads when we passed in front of the house” (34).

labyrinth labyrinthine	n	a structure full of intricate passageways that make it difficult to find the way from the interior to the entrance or from the entrance to the center; something often bewilderingly involved or winding in structure, arrangement, or character	s: maze
	adj		

“Then her voice would trail off and my thoughts would be lost in the labyrinth of a time and history I did not know” (40).

teeming teem	adj	overflowing (usually used with <i>with</i>)	s: abundant
	v		

“I was a very important part of the teeming life of the llano and the river” (40).

Reading Questions

1. What do Antonio’s reflections on Lupito’s final fate reveal about Antonio?
2. Explain the conflict between Antonio’s parents.
3. Why is Catholicism such a large part of Antonio’s life at this point?
4. What is the significance to the novel as a whole of Antonio’s interaction with Horse?
5. Explain Ultima’s belief system.
6. Explain the symbolism of the juxtaposed settings of the llano and the town.
7. Describe Antonio’s attitude toward the Virgin of Guadalupe.
8. Interpret Antonio’s dream.

Response Journal

“‘But I want to know, there are so many things I want to know’” (33), Antonio tells Ultima. Make a list of all the things you want to know; after each one, explain why you want such knowledge.



Chapters 5-7 (18 pages)

clamor	v/n	to make utter loud, mixed, and confused outcries or sounds	s: tumult, din
--------	-----	--	----------------

“‘Vamos! Vamos!’ my uncle called and we clamored aboard” (47).

furrow	n/v	a long and narrow indentation; a trench in the earth made by a plow	s: groove; score
--------	-----	---	------------------

“She was soon lost in the furrow of dust the truck raised” (47).

trek	v/n	to make an difficult or complex journey	
------	-----	---	--

“Today I would take the goat path and trek into town for years and years of schooling” (51).

resolution	n	the outcome of decision making; a firm determination to pursue a specific course of action	
resolve	v		
resolute	adj		

“For a long time I was held hypnotized by the thundering herd, then with a cry of resolution exploding from my throat I rushed into the melee” (57).

melee	n	a fight or contest between individuals mingled in a confused mass	s: brawl
-------	---	---	----------

“For a long time I was held hypnotized by the thundering herd, then with a cry of resolution exploding from my throat I rushed into the melee” (57).

intercession	n	a prayer, petition, or request in favor of another; the act of intervening between two parties in a dispute	s: mediation
intercede	v		

“‘Blessed Virgen de Guadalupe, thank you for your intercession!’” (60).

Reading Questions

1. What does the trip to El Puerto represent for Antonio’s mother?
2. Contrast the environment and lifestyle of El Puerto with those of Las Pasturas.
3. What does Antonio’s education mean to Antonio’s mother? To Antonio?
4. What destiny does Ultima reveal for Antonio? What is her reaction to this and why?
5. Describe Antonio’s reactions to the first day of school.
6. Describe the homecoming of Antonio’s brothers. What does Antonio’s dream mean?

Response Journal

“‘You are to bring honor to your family,’ my mother cautioned. ‘Do nothing that will bring disrespect on our good name’” (53), Antonio’s mother instructs him. In this context, *honor* refers to public esteem, the outward respect or admiration of others. The term is also used to refer to ethical conduct, to an adherence to high standards of justice and responsibility. What does honor mean to you?



Chapters 8-9 (18 pages)

turgid turgidity	adj n	abnormally distended especially by fluids or gas	s: swollen
---------------------	----------	--	------------

“They were like turgid animals who did things mechanically” (65).

audacity audacious audaciously	n adj adv	daring boldness with assurance, presumption, or open scorning of restraint	s: termity
--------------------------------------	-----------------	---	------------

“Andrew and Leon were looking at their brother intently. His forwardness and audacity often caught them off guard” (67).

brunt	n	the main force, shock, or stress	s: impact
-------	---	----------------------------------	-----------

“They were arguing about leaving and he was carrying the brunt of the argument” (71).

stoically stoic stoicism	adv adj n	in a manner that is apparently or professedly indifferent to pleasure or pain; not easily excited or upset	s: impassive
--------------------------------	-----------------	--	--------------

“‘Ay, Marez me,’ she said stoically and turned to my father” (72).

ominous ominously	adj n	threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments; potentially disastrous	s: menacing, foreboding
----------------------	----------	---	----------------------------

“The days grew heavy and ominous. Nobody seemed to know except the kids that the world was coming to an end” (75).

precariously precarious precariousness	adv adj n	characterized by a lack of security or stability that threatens with danger	s: perilous, uncertain
--	-----------------	--	---------------------------

“I looked up at the black girders of the huge bridge and saw a figure scamper precariously from perch to perch” (78).

Reading Questions

1. How does Anaya use setting to parallel human emotions?
2. How is Andrew different from Leon and Gene?
3. Is Antonio innocent at the beginning of chapter 9? Explain your answer.
4. Explain the irony of Antonio’s father’s dream and the way it ends.
5. Why is bad luck to fish or eat the carp?
6. Explain the inner conflict Antonio begins to face after he learns of the golden carp.

Response Journal

“You are innocent until you understand, the priest of the church said” (71), Antonio dreams. Write a paragraph in which you explain your ideas about innocence and the manner(s) in which it is lost. Develop at least three different aspects or ways of looking at the concept.



Bless Me, Ultima: Chapter 10 (23 pages: begin in class)

dejected deject	adj v	cast down in spirits	s: disheartened, depressed
--------------------	----------	----------------------	-------------------------------

“My father was dejected about his sons leaving, and he drank more than before” (83).

decree	v/n	an order set forth by one having authority	s: edict, law
--------	-----	--	---------------

“It must be so if you want your brother cured,” Ultima decreed” (89).

portent portend portentous portentously	n v adj adv	something that foreshadows a coming event	s: omen
--	----------------------	---	---------

“The drive to El Puerto was always a pleasant one, but today it was filled with strange portents” (90).

contrivance contrive	n v	artificial arrangement or mechanical assembling as opposed to natural or logical development; a trick or scheme	s: invention; plan
-------------------------	--------	---	-----------------------

“He must know that those who tamper with fate are often swallowed by their own contrivance—” (92).

cower	v	to shrink away or cringe usually in hopeless fear of something menacing or domineering	
-------	---	--	--

“I was thinking about the evil Tenorio and how Ultima had made him cower when I heard the hoofbeats” (95).

bravado	n	showy or demonstrative conduct or action often characterized by bluster and swagger	
---------	---	---	--

“he was the youngest of my uncles, and I always remembered him full of live and bravado” (96).

Reading Questions

1. Why was Antonio’s uncle Lucas cursed?
2. What warning does Ultima give Antonio’s uncle Pedro about her actions to remove the curse? What is the literary significance of this caution?
3. Explain the concept of “evil” as is developed in this chapter.
4. Discuss the symbolism of the setting in this chapter, particularly the weather.
5. Describe Tenorio.
6. Explain how Ultima saves Lucas.

Response Journal

“It is because good is always stronger than evil. ... The smallest bit of good can stand against all the powers of evil in the world and it will emerge triumphant” (98) Ultima tells Antonio. Do you agree or disagree with Ultima? Provide specific, real world examples to support your view.



Bless Me, Ultima: Chapter 11 (16 pages)

intone	v	to utter in musical or prolonged tones	
--------	---	--	--

“Narciso is my friend,” Cico intoned” (109).

contemptuously contemptuous contempt	adv adj n	in a manner having no respect, concern, or regard for something	s: disdain, scorn
--	-----------------	--	----------------------

“The huge tail swished and contemptuously flipped it aside” (114).

grandeur	n	the quality of being majestic, magnificent, splendid, stately, or imposing in an awe-inspiring way especially to the view	
----------	---	---	--

“We watched in silence at the beauty and grandeur of the great fish” (115).

haven	n	a place offering favorable opportunities or conditions: a place of safety	s: shelter, asylum
-------	---	--	-----------------------

“I walked away from that haven which held the pond and the swimming waters of the golden carp feeling a great weight in my heart” (119).

impending impend	adj v	that is about to occur; to threaten from near at hand or as in the immediate future	s: imminent, menace
---------------------	----------	--	------------------------

“It was as if she knew the story and found nothing fantastic or impending in it” (119).

Reading Questions

1. What motivates Antonio to take the oath?
2. Explain the symbolism of Narciso’s place.
3. Explain the symbolism of the two fish.
4. Why is Antonio is one of the people to see the golden carp?
5. Explain the symbolism of the different bodies of water in the novel.
6. How does the knowledge Antonio gains in this chapter affect him?
7. How does Ultima resolve the conflict in Antonio’s dream?

Response Journal

“I cannot tell you what to believe. Your father and your mother can tell you, because you are their blood, but I cannot. As you grow into manhood you must find your own truths—” (119), Ultima explains to Antonio. Ultima implies that truth is a personal quality, that different people can have different truths. To what extent do you agree with her: Are there universal truths, and if so what are the ones you consider most important? If there are individual truths, how do you define *truth*? Provide specific, real world examples to support your view.





Bless Me, Ultima: Chapter 12-13 (20 pages)

Shellacked Shellack	Adj n v	covered with a thin layer of waxy material for protection	s: varnished
------------------------	---------------	---	--------------

"The dolls were made of clay and shellacked with candle wax." (123)

scapular	n	A badge worn by members of religious orders, made using cloth and worn under clothing around the chest or back	
----------	---	--	--

"I tore open my shirt and showed them the stringed scapular." (129)

Tilled till	adj v	prepared for crops	s: cultivate
----------------	----------	--------------------	--------------

"They left a son in the dark earth of Colorado, crushed into the tilled earth by a spilled tractor." (125)

Sputtering Sputter	Adj v, n	Making spitting or popping sounds	s: spattering; spluttering
-----------------------	-------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------

"They disappeared out of the dim light of the sputtering torches and into the darkness." (135)

premonition	n	A warning in advance	s: presentiment; foreboding
-------------	---	----------------------	-----------------------------------

"...my mother with strange premonition remembered Narciso." (126)

pliant ply	Adj v	Easily bent	s: malleable; flexible
---------------	----------	-------------	---------------------------

"It was a basket woven from pliant cottonwood branches..." (140)
(126)

Reading Questions

1. Explain the significance of Ultima's dolls.
2. Describe how Gabriel and Narciso use their vaquero heritage to prevail in the conflict with Tenorio.
3. Explain the symbolism of the owl's attack on Tenorio's eye.
4. Why do the needles above the door create ambiguity about Ultima's test?
5. What kind of god does Antonio think would be best? Why?
6. How does Antonio's conversation with Uncle Pedro show the weakness of the Lunas?
7. What invitation do Antonio's uncles extend to him?

Response Journal

"Ultima told me the stories and legends of my ancestors. From her I learned the glory and the tragedy of the history of my people, and I came to understand how that history stirred in my blood." What is the history of your people? Is it glorious? Tragic? How does your family continue the traditions of its ancestors?

Bless Me, Ultima: Chapter 14A (pp. 143-158 "Merry Christmas!")

Misgiving misgive	N v	Feeling of impending bad fortune; doubt	s: foreboding; apprehension
"But I had misgivings, I was beginning to learn that things wouldn't always be the same." (143)			
Vigorously Vigor vigorous	adv n adj	In a strong, healthy manner	s: enthusiastically
"She blinded a man!' Abel nodded vigorously." (145)			
trudge	v, n	walk slowly and reluctantly	s: plod
"The two weeks would be a welcome relief from trudging back and forth to school." (147)			
Decapitated Decapitate decapitation	Adj v n	Destroyed or killed by removing the head	s: behead
"There ain't no such thing as virgin birth,' Florence said looking down at the decapitated doll." (152)			
horde	n	very large group, often uncontrolled and with hostile intent	s: drove, swarm, legion
"I glanced up and saw the screaming horde of first graders rushing down the aisle to sit in the front rows." (156)			

Reading Questions

1. How do Andrew's and Antony's feelings bring them closer together?
2. Explain how his father's response to Tenorio helps Antonio become more of a man.
3. Explain why you think Andrew is upset about the teasing over "his girl in town."
4. Give one example of foreshadowing as Antonio is heading for school.
5. Choose one section of the school Christmas play scene and explain how Anaya makes it humorous.

Response Journal

"I heard about the evil thing they did to Ultima, the story of Tenorio's blinding was throughout the camps,' He [Samuel] paused and looked at me. 'You must be careful, the kids in town will not understand.' 'I will,' I said." Why must Antonio be careful? What exactly will "the kids in town" not understand? Explore Samuel's warning and your feelings about Antonio's response when the issue of Ultima does emerge at school.

Bless Me, Ultima: Chapter 14B (pages 158-176)

cuckold	n	bird who leaves its eggs in other birds' nests; hence, a man married to an unfaithful wife	
<p>”Cuckold of the devil himself, who slept in your bed and left your wife fat with brujas for daughter!’ Narciso taunted,...” (161)</p>			
scoff (at)	v	to discount an idea in a mocking way; make fun of	s: deride, scorn
<p>”He would throw you both in the drunk tank’, the young girl scoffed, ‘then I would be alone all night...’” (166)</p>			
disillusioned (by)	adj v	having lost one’s illusions; free from incorrect ideas or beliefs; also, having lost one’s dreams	s: disenchant
<p>”I followed Narciso mechanically, weak and disillusioned I tramped after him into the dark twilight of the storm.” (167)</p>			
eddy	v, n	to create small whirlpools, usually in liquid; to act in a way contrary to the dominant current	s: whirl, swirl
<p>”I wanted no one to see me, and the storm swirled its eddies of snow around me and obscured me from the world.” (167)</p>			
tumultuous	adj	noisy and disorderly; stirred up	s: unruly; agitated
<p>”A great cry went up from the people as they saw crashing, tumultuous waters fill the dark hole.” (175)</p>			
putrid	Adj	decomposed and rotten-smelling; decayed	s: corrupt
<p>”A putrid, rotting smell was everywhere.” (176)</p>			

Reading Questions

1. Explain the significance of the length of this particular chapter.
2. Contrast the tone of the first half with that of the second.
3. Why would Tony be upset that Andrew was at Rosie’s?
4. Explain two conflicts Tony’s dream resolves.

Response Journal

Antonio prays the Act of Contrition over Narciso. It begins, “Oh my God, I am sorry for all of my sins, not because I dread the fires of hell, but because they displease you, Lord, who art all good, and deserving of my love...” How might this statement help resolve Tony’s fears about hell? Where do sin/wrongdoing come from, and how might people lessen the wrongs that happen in the world?

Bless Me, Ultima Ch. 15/16 (13 pages)

catechism	N., a book giving a brief summary of the basic principles of Christianity in question-and-answer form.	
-----------	--	--

"Part of the time I had to spend with my mother, reciting my catechism." (179)

Monotony	N	unchanging sameness; stultifying lack of variety	S: boredom,
monotonous	Adj.		tedium

"One thing that helped break the monotony of being locked in the storm was the arrival of Leon and Eugene." (180)

Brood	V	to sit on eggs for a long period of time; thus, to focus on sad or disturbing thoughts	S: worry, fret, stew
brooding	N, adj.		

"He drank the shot of whiskey my father had poured for him and went off by the stove to brood." (181)

mortal	Adj.	Causing death; harmful to the point of death	S: deadly; destructive
--------	------	--	------------------------

"He returned to the tree where he committed his mortal sin to find some absolution for his crime." (189)

Absolution	N	the formal washing away of sins bestowed by a priest in the name of God; thus, any kind of forgiveness	S: remission
absolve	V		

See above (189)

Reading Questions

1. How does Ansew act with Tony after the murder? Why?
2. Why is Narciso a drunk? Why is he grateful to Ultima?
3. What results from Gene and Leon's visit home?
4. What is the significance of Gabriel's working alone at the windmill? Why does he feel satisfaction when he returns?
5. Note characters in Ch. 15 and 16 who are described as acting like an animals.
6. Why is Tenorio even more angry at Ultima?
7. Explain Tenorio's statement, "...your curse is that you know too much!"

Journal Response

Antonio's mother says to him, "...I do not want you to waste your life in dreams, like your father...you must serve the people. The people need good leaders, and the greatest leader is a priest..." She then speaks to him about visiting the Lunas for the summer. Are her dreams a "waste"? What do children owe to their parents' dreams?

Bless Me, Ultima Ch. 17/18

momentum	n	tendency of an object to continue in the same direction in which it has been moved	
----------	---	--	--

"Horse's strong arms went around my neck and his momentum made us slide ten feet." (193)

rally (to) rally rallying	v n adj	to call together for a common purpose	s: assemble (with connotation of persuasion)
---------------------------------	---------------	---------------------------------------	---

"The others rallied to his cry and they went off howling like a pack of wild dogs." (195)

genuflect	v	lit., to bend the knee; in a mass, to bend the knees before the altar that holds the Host	
-----------	---	---	--

"The line moved past the water fonts where we wet our fingers and genuflected as we made the sign of the cross." (198)

anointment anoint anointing	n v adj	the act of putting oil or another substance on the forehead; often used in the Roman Catholic religion during last rites and on Ash Wednesday	s: embrocate; inunct
-----------------------------------	---------------	---	-------------------------

"The anointment is done, and the priest moves on, only the dull feeling of helplessness remains." (203)

mournfully mourn	adv v	in a sad and lonely manner	s: sorrowfully
---------------------	----------	----------------------------	----------------

"Outside the wind blew and cut off the light of the sun with its dust, and the pigeons cried mournfully in the tower." (207)

1. How does Antonio's father respond to the old women's explanation about the llano? What is his alternate opinion?
2. Why doesn't Florence believe in God? What does he think hell would be like?
3. Explain the significance of Florence's punishment pose in the church.
4. How does Horse's incident with the candle help characterize him?
5. How does Antonio show the true role of a priest in Ch. 16?

Journal response:

Antonio is very worried for Florence because he does not believe in the Christian god. Samuel says, "Perhaps things would not be so difficult if he believed in the golden carp." Do you agree or disagree? If so, how would the golden carp help? If not, what might help Florence deal with his anger and grief?

Chapters 19-20 (19 pages)

Inextricable Inextricably Inextricability or Inextricableness	Adj Adv N	Difficult or impossible to disentangle, untie, or escape; too involved or complicated to solve	S: Unavoidable; inescapable
--	-----------------	--	-----------------------------

“From my mother I had learned that man is of the earth, that his clay feet are part of the ground that nourishes him, and that it is this inextricable mixture that gives man his measure of safety and security” (228).

Brackish brackishness	Adj N	Having a somewhat salty taste, especially from containing a mixture of seawater and fresh water; distasteful; unpalatable	
--------------------------	----------	---	--

“We had not brought food and so the only thing we had was water from the well, which tasted brackish” (231).

Emanate Emanative	V:I+t Adj	To proceed, come, or issue forth, as from a source	S: emit, exhale, give forth
----------------------	--------------	--	-----------------------------

“A strange singing, a low chanting song emanated from the house all day long” (232).

Monotonous Monotone monotonously	Adj N Adv	Sounded or spoken in an unvarying tone; tediously repetitious or lacking in variety	S: humdrum
--	-----------------	---	------------

“The brown swirling waters lapped at my feet, and the monotonous chirping of the grillos as they sang in the trees mixed into a music which I felt in the roots of my soul” (235).

Crescendo	N V Adj	adj : gradually increasing in volume n : (music) a gradual increase in loudness v : grow louder	
-----------	---------------	---	--

“His body twisted to the crescendo of the fearful drum beat” (230).

Reading Questions

1. Why do Rita and Agnes think Florence is going to hell?
2. After his first communion, what questions does Antonio pose to God? Does he receive the understanding/answers he seeks?
3. How does Antonio come to view the Catholic rituals of confession and communion?
4. How are Ultima's powers needed again? Who asks for her help? What is different about this situation?
5. In what important way have Ultima and Gabriel influenced Antonio? How are their beliefs reflected in Antonio's sense of spirituality?

Response Journal

“...From my father and Ultima I had learned that the greater immortality is in the freedom of man, and that freedom is best nourished by the noble expanse of land and air and pure, white sky. I dreaded to think of a time when I could not walk upon the llano and feel like the eagle that floats on its skies: free, immortal, limitless” (228). What does freedom mean to you? Has your perception of freedom been influenced by your parents, grandparents, friends, or others?

Chapters 21-22 (27 pages)

Rapture	N	N: a state of being carried away by overwhelming emotion	S: ecstasy; exaltation
Rapturous	Adj		
Rapturously	Adv	Adj: filled with great joy or delight	

“The white sun reflected off his bright orange scales and the glistening glorious light blinded us and filled us with the rapture true beauty brings” (237).

Cynic	N	Adj: believing the worst of human nature and motives	S: pessimistic; misanthropic
Cynical	Adj		
Cynically	Adv		

“The golden carp accepts all magic that is good, but your God, Tony, is a jealous God. He does not accept competition—” “Cico laughed cynically” (238).

Loiter	V: I	to remain in or hang around an area for no obvious purpose	S: linger; lounge; lollygag; lurk
--------	------	--	-----------------------------------

“I pointed across the lake where the high school boys loitered on the pier and dove off the high board to show off for the girls” (239).

Render	V	To cause to become or to make; to give or make available; [+many more meanings]	S: make
--------	---	---	---------

“The arrival of the golden carp rendered us silent” (238).

Reverberate	V	To resound in a succession of echoes; To have a prolonged or continuing effect; To be repeatedly reflected	S: resound; echo; ring
-------------	---	--	------------------------

“The sharp, reverberating hoofbeats that moments ago had mixed into the suring sound of the river were now a crescendo upon me” (253).

Reading Questions

1. How does Cico compare the golden carp to the Catholic God? Does Tony agree with this distinction?
2. How does Florence’s death impact Tony? What is ironic about his death in the water?
3. Who are the three figures in Antonio’s dream? What does he envision will happen? How have his experiences affected his view of humanity? Of religion? Of his destiny?
4. Why does Ultima think it’s important for Antonio to spend the summer with his uncles?
5. What does Gabriel tell Antonio during the trip to El Puerto? What does Antonio realize about his parents’ dreams and his own destiny?
6. Throughout the tragic crisis involving Tenorio and Ultima, how do Antonio’s actions illuminate his growth and maturity? What values has he developed? What has he learned?

Response Journal

“Ultima tried to teach me...that the tragic consequences of life can be overcome by the magical strength that resides in the human heart” (249). Have you and/or your family faced tragedy? Have you been able to overcome it? What helps you to carry on through tough times?

