**Guttman Community College**

LASC City Seminar I: Reading & Writing

**Changing East Harlem/Extending Thomas’s Memoir**

Goals

This assignment provides opportunities for students to:

1 - Use evidence to support claims in formal writing

2 - Identify claims and related evidence in a variety of texts

3 - Use concrete methods of planning and organizing to generate formal writing

4 - Describe changes in quantitative data over time (QR goal)

5 - Articulate differing explanations of changes observed in quantitative data (QR goal)

6 - Apply understanding of changes in quantitative data to describe everyday experiences (QR goal)

Assignment Description

In *Down These Mean Streets*, Piri Thomas writes about changes in East Harlem from the 1940s to the 1960s. The neighborhood has changed even more since then. For this assignment, you will compose a new chapter of the memoir in which Thomas reacts to changes to two characteristics of the neighborhood from 1970 to 2010. You can include yourself as a character, introduce other new chacters, and/or write from Thomas’s perspective.

Along with your chapter, you will prepare a short reading guide that explains the changes in East Harlem and why they might matter to Thomas.

Requirements

Part 1 - Description of an element that affects Thomas’s experience in East Harlem: 300 words

Part 2 – Explanation from Thomas’s perspective of changes in East Harlem: 300 words

Part 3 - New memoir chapter covering 1970 – 2010: 600 words

Part 4 - Reading guide for new memoir chapter: 300 words

Materials

Data packet with charts summarizing race/ethnicity, education, occupation, and income data in East Harlem from 1970 - 2010

*Down These Mean Streets*, chapters: 2 (“Puerto Rican Paradise”); 4 (“Alien Turf”); 11 (“How to Be a Negro Without Really Trying”); 20 (“Home Sweet Harlem”) and 34 (“Hey Barrio—I’m Home”)

Steps

Part 1 - Description of Thomas’s East Harlem

* Reread a chapter of *DTMS* and take notes about one neighborhood element that comes up: race/ethnicity, education, occupation, and income
* **Formal writing**: Describe the role your element plays in the chapter. What is Thomas’s race/ethnicity, level of education, occupation, or level of income? How does Thomas’s race/ethnicity, level of education, occupation, or level of income affect his experience in East Harlem? Min. 300 words.

Part 2 – Description of changes in East Harlem, 1970 - 2010

* Read the section of the data packet for your element and take notes about what you observe in the data for 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010: What changes do you notice in the quantitative data related to your element? What differences are there between the quantitative information for different segments of the population across the 5 decades?
* Choose 1 change or difference in the quantitative information related to your element. Take notes about how Thomas might react to the changes. Would he be pleased by the changes? Would the changes make him angry? What questions would he have about how the neighborhood is changing?
* **Formal writing**: Writing from Thomas’s perspective, Describe how the quantitative information related to your element changed from 1970 – 2010. Min. 300 words.

Part 3 - New memoir chapter covering 1970 – 2010

* Reread your chapter of *DTMS* and take notes about the words, phrases and sentences you enjoy the most and any additional information you notice about the element of the neighborhood you worked with in parts 1 and 2
* Reread your description from part 2 of how quantitative information about your element changed from 1970 – 2010.
* Work with a partner to brainstorm a setting or experience in which Thomas might notice or be affected by the changes in the data
* **Formal writing - Draft**: Draft a new chapter of the memoir that takes place in this setting or includes this experience. Min. 600 words.
* **Forma writing - Peer Review**: Read your partner’s new chapter and give feedback about the words, phrases, and sentences you most enjoy, the data in the data packet that you think relates to the new chapter, and ways your partner might improve their new chapter
* **Formal writing – Final Draft**: Revise your draft chapter based on the feedback you received. Min. 600 words.

Part 4 - Reading guide for new memoir chapter

* Using the feedback you received, data that relates to your new chapter, and your descriptions from part 1 and part 2, explain the changes in quantitative information related to your element that you used to develop the chapter.
* **Formal writing**: Your reading guide might follow the format:

I set my chapter in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because I noticed a change in the data for the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ element between 19\_\_ and 19/20\_\_. The change I noticed was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Mr. Thomas would have been pleased/angered by the change because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I tried to show this when I wrote \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.