

Classroom Activities for College Book 2009
Motorcycle Ride on the Sea of Tranquility

Administration of Justice:

How should police officers handle someone who appears to be high on drugs or mentally disturbed?

When were helmets required for motorcycle riders in California? Has this requirement resulted in fewer deaths and injuries?

Architecture:

The original home of the Sahagun family was 900 square feet. How would you design a dwelling to make the best possible use of so small a space?

Art:

Sketch the scene in the tunnel where Yoli finds Chuy.

Astronomy:

Using a primary source index like the Historical New York Times, Historical Los Angeles Times, and Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, find an article about the moon landing on July 20, 1969.

Biology:

What part of the brain is affected by speed?

What are the symptoms of a body affected by speed?

How can one recover from the physiological damage(s) caused by speed?

Chemistry:

What is the chemical formula for speed?

Dance:

Choreograph a dance to show Yoli's emotions while riding on Chuy's motorcycle.

English:

Write an entry for Yoli's diary, in her words, for the day after Chuy was taken from the tunnel.

In your opinion, how much of Chuy's problem was due to Donna's having left him?

How do you think Chuy found out about Donna? Did she write and tell him? Just stop writing? Did someone else tell him?

English:

(p.21) Read the description of Chuy on the motorcycle “His eyes were a sky blue, immense and impenetrable, and his smile was forced, more of a grimace, but of what – pain, anger, mockery?” Which do you think and why?

(p.31) Comment on Pap’s statement “Life got in the way.”

(p.73) Write an entry in Donna’s diary where she describes meeting Chuy’s family for the first time.

Is there a reason for the mention of sweet peas throughout the novel?

Why did Chuy want his name to be Jesse Mitchell Sahaygun? Were Latinos discriminated against during the Vietnam War? Research this; ask a librarian to help you find some primary sources.

Fire Science:

Using the San Diego Union- Tribune, find articles about the fires in autumn 1969. How were policies or procedures then different from now? (*Note: the Union-Tribune is available on microfilm for 1969 but not in a database. You may be able to find the correct dates by using the Historical Los Angeles Times database, which does cover 1969.*)

Geography:

Trace the journey of Caballo Blanco.

If Chuy had gone to the Grand Canyon on his motorcycle, what route would he have taken?

Given the clues (Mankato, Minnesota; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) trace Chuy’s possible itinerary.

How did the Sea of Tranquility get its name?

Is there a Conifer Street in south San Diego or is it fictional? If real, find it is on a map.

History:

Using a primary source index like the Historical New York Times, Historical Los Angeles Times, and Reader’s Guide to Periodical Literature, find an article about the moon landing on July 20, 1969.

Compare the Vietnam War with the first Gulf War (1991). How were they alike? How were they different?

(p.28) Research the Swiss dairies in south San Diego.

(p.30) What was the Cristero war?

Mathematics:

Make a pie graph showing the percentages of those who served in Vietnam who were killed, wounded, missing in action.

Nursing:

What care should be taken for a woman after an abortion? How long does it take to recover?

(p.14) Rosita was a *curandera* in Tijuana. What sort of medical training would she have had?

Psychology:

Look at the Southwestern College Catalog for 1969 and try to determine which psychology course Carolina might have taken. How has that course changed over the years?

What sort of treatment would Chuy have had when he was taken from the tunnel?

Research PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome) and tell if you think Chuy suffered from it.

What do you think caused Chuy's hallucinations in the tunnel?

Sociology:

The book details how Father's Day was spent in this Mexican-American family. Research the customs for Mother's Day.

Why did the family give more freedom to the boys, and how common is this among other immigrant cultures?

Describe in a three-page paper what Carolina's wedding might have been like.

(p.22) Chuy was born in the U.S. and his family had been there for twenty years, yet their celebration had both the Mexican and American flags. Why?

(p.76-77) Using a primary source index like the Historical New York Times, Historical Los Angeles Times, and Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature (ask a librarian to help you), research the Women's Liberation Movement.

Foreign Languages:

Look at the other disciplines above and use those questions.