

QUESTIONS

***PLEASE BE SURE YOUR PAPER REFLECTS THE VARIOUS POINT-VALUES FOR EACH SECTION. (Don't spend most of your effort on question 1a., for example!).

Please take note of the major importance of question 6b. Your answer to that question should be thorough, well-crafted, and supported with specific pieces of data. An appropriate length for your response to this question is about one page.

PART I: Initial Observations (30 pts)

1.) BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Provide a brief overview of the personal and professional history of the artists involved in the creation of this song.

IMAGES

2a.) **Visual:** Describe the performers' visual image, including specific descriptions of clothing, hairstyle, and makeup (if applicable).

2b.) What is the message that the visual image is intended to convey? In short, what does the visual image convey about "who they are"?

2c.) **Mythic:** Describe the performers' mythic image. Consult written or videotaped interviews, concert reviews (which describe stage demeanor), or other representations in the media.

2d.) What is the message that the mythic image is intended to convey? In short, what does their media image convey about "who they are"?

MUSIC

Describe the musical (non-lyrical) characteristics of this song:

3a.) What does the instrumentation (and/or timbre of those instrument(s)) reveal about the musical styles/genres that have influenced this song?

3b.) Describe the vocal quality of the singer(s), and name one stylistic influence (a person or a genre).

3c.) Describe the way(s) the song reveals the influence of the Western classical aesthetic.

3d.) Which of the four elements of African-American music appear in this song? Where? How?

3e.) Identify what you consider to be the most powerful overall stylistic influence upon this song. Support your answer.

3f.) List **three** adjectives that describe the mood or emotion that the music (not lyrics) conveys. For **each**, describe specifically the way the music communicates this emotion/mood.

LYRICS

4a.) Summarize the "plot" of the lyrics: What happens? Who is speaking? Is there a story? (Focus upon the LYRICS ONLY – not on the video)

4b.) To what extent is the listener expected to identify the narrator of the song with the performer? How does that relate to the artist's mythic image?

QUESTIONS

VIDEO

- 5a.) Describe “what happens” in the video. If there is a story, summarize the plot. If there is no story, describe the setting(s), event(s), etc.
- 5b.) State the message of the video in one sentence.
- 5c.) Describe why you answered 5b.) as you did.

PART II: DRAWING CONCLUSIONS (40 pts)

MESSAGE

- 6a.) State this song's message in one sentence. What is the point it is trying to express?
(2 pts)
- 6b.) Support your answer to 6a.) by drawing upon evidence collected in 1.) through 5.), above. (35 pts)
- 6c.) How does the video affect your interpretation of the song's message? Does it change it? Emphasize it? Contradict it? (3 pts)

PART III: PERSONAL CONNECTIONS (20 pts)

PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES

- 7a.) Consider this question about the “meaning” of the song. Is its most powerful “meaning” created by its internal characteristics, such as its music, lyrics, and the way their interactions communicate a message? Or, is the song's most powerful “meaning” created by the ideas that our society attaches to its sounds, stylistic tradition, performer, or his/her image(s)?
- 7b.) Considering your answer to 7a.), who do you think is most responsible for the creation of “meaning” in this song: the creator, the listener, or society? Why?
- 8a.) How does society benefit from the existence of this song?
- 8b.) How does society suffer from the existence of this song?
- 9.) Do you like this song? Why or why not?

PART 4: Diagram (10 pts)