

## Explication 1

DUE 2/10/14

### Overview:

Explications are exercises in *close reading*, one of the primary skills necessary for literary analysis.

The word "explication" comes from the Latin term *explicare*, which means "to unfold"; accordingly, an explication unfolds or unpacks the meaning and workings of a literary text. Explications typically examine a text intensively, *line by line*, so they are usually used to interpret either short poems or short passages from longer works of fiction or drama.

An explication should account for all or most of the selected lines of the poem or passage, paying attention to whatever devices (connotations, allusions, metaphors and similes, symbols, rhythm, sounds, etc.) seem important. Explain how they relate to each other and to the overall meaning and/or effect of the work of literature. Your explication should have a strong thesis, and the rest of the paper should clearly support that thesis (think of your thesis statement as answering the question, "What is this quote about in the context of the overall poem or essay?").

### Instructions:

Use **one** of the questions below to prompt you to select a specific quote to support your response to the particular question. Answer only ONE of the questions below. If you are interested in writing about an aspect of the poem not included in the questions below, please email me with your selected quote and thesis statement. Make sure you explain the significance of the quote you choose as well as relate the quote to the significance of the poem as a whole. **Write approximately 500 words, double-spaced, 12pt. times new roman font. DO NOT EXCEED THE WORD LIMIT. INCLUDE A WORD COUNT AT THE END OF YOUR ESSAY.**

Select **one** of the following questions and use a quote to support your argument:

1. How does Joaquin encounter the idea of racial mixture?
2. How does Joaquin propose to transcend the paradox of culture vs. success?
3. How do women fit into Joaquin's vision of Chicano identity?
4. How do the two voices in "Poem to a Young White Man..." function to support the poem's argument about the war between the races?
5. Does the "Poem for a Young White Man..." argue that a war between the races exists? If so, how? If not, why?
6. Choose either "I Am Joaquín" or "Poem for a Young White Man..." and write about how the poem challenges the geopolitics of knowledge, as defined by Paula Moya.