

American Literature
Study Guide - The Way to Rainy Mountain.tgt

Name: _____ Date: _____

Details of Setting/Senses Appealed To	Effect of Setting on Mood
1. High Country:	
2. Descent to the Plains:	
3. Oklahoma/Rainy Mountain:	

1. Think about the different settings Momaday describes and the moods that his descriptions evoke. In the boxes below, write notes about the details of each setting Momaday describes, the senses his descriptions appeal to, and the effect of these details on the mood of each setting. (8 points each)

Answer each question below in one or more sentences.

2. The author refers to a time when the Kiowa were living "their last great moment in history." What happened to end this period in Kiowa history?
3. According to their origin myth, how did the Kiowa enter the world?
4. Why does Momaday travel to Yellowstone, the Rockies, and the Black Hills?
5. How does the legend about the seven sisters and their brother reflect the determination of the Kiowas to survive?
6. How is Momaday's visit to his grandmother's house so different from previous ones?

Answer Sheet

1. 1. High Country:
 - a. the mountain country is "the top of the world, a region of deep lakes and dark timber, canyons, and waterfalls"; ". . . sense of confinement there. The skyline in all directions is close at hand, the high wall of the woods and deep cleavages of shade . . ."; "The Kiowas reckoned their stature by the distance they could see, and they were bent and blind in the wilderness." These images appeal to the senses of sight and touch.
Mood: The mood suggests that the place is beautiful but dark and cool; it is also confining and somewhat intimidating ("There is a perfect freedom in the mountains, but it belongs to the eagle. . .").
2. Descent to the Plains:
 - a. ". . . the highland meadows are a stairway to the plain. . . . the inland slope of the Rockies is luxuriant . . . The earth unfolds and the limit of the land recedes. Clusters of trees, and animals grazing far in the distance, cause the vision to reach away and wonder to build upon the mind. . . . The sky is immense . . . Sweet clover takes hold of the hills . . . The sun is at home on the plain." These images appeal to the senses of sight and smell.
Mood: The mood is expansive. The reader leaves the lush, dark, and deep forest and suddenly steps into a wide open space with an explosion of color and the smell of sweet clover.
3. Oklahoma/Rainy Mountain
 - a. "The hardest weather in the world is there . . ." with blizzards, tornadoes, and hot summers. "The grass turns brittle and brown, and it cracks under your feet. There are green belts along the rivers and creeks. . . ."; ". . . the steaming foliage seems almost to writhe in fire. Great green and yellow grasshoppers . . ."; ". . . the birds sang out of the shadows. The long yellow grass on the mountain shone in the bright light. . . ." These images appeal to the senses of sight and touch.
Mood: The author's use of words and images suggest a place that is harsh, hot, and uncomfortable, with a sense of loneliness in this vast space. Yet, even though the setting seems inhospitable, the author still sees beauty in the land.
2. The Kiowa surrendered to the soldiers at Fort Sill.
3. According to the myth, the Kiowa entered the world through a hollow log. The author's grandmother told him about Kiowa history and culture.
4. Possible responses: Momaday wants to visit places his grandmother had told him about but had never seen. He wishes to see the land that his Kiowa ancestors had traveled through on their way from Montana to Oklahoma.
5. The legend explains how the sisters escaped from a bear to survive as stars in the sky. It reflects the Kiowa belief that they too, despite great suffering and having to leave their mountain homes, will always endure.
6. Possible responses: He remembers his grandmother praying. Once there was a lot of activity-feasting, talking, and prayer meetings-in the house. Now, after his grandmother's death, there is a funeral silence in the rooms.

Standards Summary: All Standards In Test

SAT 9 2.2.1	Specific Detail
SAT 9 2.2.3	Extending Meaning
SAT 9 2.3.1	Specific Detail
SAT 9 2.3.4	Extending Meaning
Terra Nova 1.1.1	identifying stated information
Terra Nova 2.1	Demonstrate comprehension by drawing conclusions inferring relationships such as cause and effect.
Terra Nova 2.2.4	setting
Terra Nova 3.1.7	effectiveness