

10th grade Assignment

Bless Me Ultima

By Rudolfo Anaya

Choose two of the topics below and write an organized, well-reasoned essays with textual support.

1. Chapters 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 14, 20, and 22 of *Bless Me, Ultima* contain narrations of Antonio's dreams. What do these dreams tell us about Antonio? Do they develop or change significantly over the course of the novel? And what is the significance of the fact that dream sequences play such a large role in the novel's design?
2. Is Rudolfo Anaya seeking in this novel to reflect on, or define, or recommend any particular understanding of or response to "good" and "evil" in the world? If you think he is not, why not? If you think that he is, what kinds of understandings and responses do you think the novel promotes?
3. *Bless Me, Ultima* may be viewed as a coming of age or rite of passage story, a story of a young person's education and development? What other such stories-in literature or film-might this novel be compared to? How does it differ from them? Which aspects of Antonio's coming of age or rite of passage seem universal and which qualities or details are particular to his time, place, and culture?
4. What role does the physical environment-the New Mexican landscape-play in *Bless Me, Ultima*? How do the novel's characters live in it and respond to it? Is the landscape used by the author to provide a realistic material backdrop to the events of the story? to carry particular symbolic or moral or aesthetic values? to do both?