

Black Peculiar Teaching Guide

Suggested Discussion Points

Compare how the titles (of both sections and individual poems) relate to the structure of the book and the poems respectively. Also, how do the sections relate to one another?

How do the analogies relate to the mini-letters in "Black Peculiar :: Energy Complex"?

Discuss the role of the psychological animus in the middle section of the book as it relates to the speaker. Is it the same speaker throughout the book? If so, does the speaker, or the speaker's conflicts, seem to evolve?

Does "Non-Sequitur (a disjointed chorus in three acts)" work as a play or a poem? Both? How? What about the significance of its designation as a "chorus"?

Discuss the use of humor in the book.

Discuss Queen's use of personification in the book. What do the concepts and objects seem to serve as substitutes for? Are some literal?

What themes most resonated with you? Why?

What most challenged you while reading *Black Peculiar*? How did you approach that challenge?

Discuss how the use of repetition might facilitate understanding of the poems.

Assignments

Write a letter to a concept.

Write a poem in the voice of (or in exchange with) your animus.

Write a series of poems with a psychoanalytic theory or element as underlying structure.

Write a satiric poem on a current event topic you feel passionate about.

Write a play that cannot be performed.

Discuss the use of satire, Jungian psychoanalysis, and/or theater. Use specific cultural, philosophical and literary references from the book.

Does *Black Peculiar* fit into or converse with the feminist, African-American, and/or Postmodern tradition in contemporary poetry? How, if so, and if not, why not? Use specific examples to support your argument.