

*Color Purple* Test: Answer any 2 of the following using pre-writing and short answer responses. (100 pts)

1. *The Color Purple* is written in epistolary (letter) form. How do the letters shift focus and audience from the first to the second half of the novel? Why? Use such terms as “Plain, Sweet, Stuff” or “Ethos, Pathos, Logos” to support your answer.
2. Most comedies end happily, “typically reaching a sudden resolution with all characters receiving their proper rewards and finally connecting to their appropriate mates or partners.” What are the proper rewards given to Walker’s protagonists in *The Color Purple* and/or “Everyday Use”? Who are their appropriate mates or partners? Explain using specific examples from the novel and/or short story.
3. Walker’s writing, in the novel and short story “Everyday Use,” clearly champions sisterhood. Why and how does Walker use ‘sister pairs’ (Maggie and Dee, Celie and Nettie, Celie and Shug, Celie and Sofia) to get across her themes? Choose one ‘sister pair’ and discuss using examples from the novel, “Everyday Use,” or our study of gender roles in Tannen’s essays “Conversation Between the Sexes” and “There is No Unmarked Woman.”
4. Alice Walker calls herself a “womanist,” which is defined “a type of feminism that acknowledges the abilities and contributions of black women.” How can her commitment to “womanism” be seen in *The Color Purple* and/or “Everyday Use”? Support this notion using examples from the novel, “Everyday Use,” or our study of gender roles in Tannen’s essays “Conversation Between the Sexes” and “There is No Unmarked Woman.”
5. Critics of the novel say that *The Color Purple* is too much a “womanist” novel, that it is intentionally anti-male in its tone and themes. Support or defend this notion using examples from the novel, “Everyday Use,” Trudier Harris’ essay “The Myth of the American Dream,” or Gerald Early’s claim that the book “utterly condemns the black male’s glorification of his pimp mentality.”
6. In her essay “Alice Walker’s ‘Everyday Use,’” Nancy Tuten says, “Ultimately, however, Mama has the last word; it is she, after all, who tells the story. Yet her control over the text is won gradually.” Explain using specifics from the story.
7. Two themes in *The Color Purple* that commonly get overlooked are “religious belief” and “love.” How are they connected? Discuss their importance throughout the novel. Be specific.
8. Describe Celie’s relationship with Shug. How does it change? Use your knowledge of “Frye’s Archetypal Character Chart” or our study of gender roles in Tannen’s essays “Conversation Between the Sexes” and “There is No Unmarked Woman” to describe her character and comment on how she contributes to the themes in the book.
9. Consider the seemingly ideal world of family and friends that surrounds Celie at the end of the novel. What are the gender roles in this world like? Support this





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