

1. What did you learn about the poet that you thought was interesting?

He grew up in poverty and faced discrimination

His parents were professionals in Mexico, but worked as laborers after moving to Los Angeles

2. List words or ideas you don't know or understand. Then find out what they mean and explain them.

Industrial sewing machine—used to sew things for stores, like curtains or pillows

Radio static—radios were plugged in, and if the electricity in the house wasn't very good, it would make the radio sound bad when the sewing machine used electricity

Disheveled--messy

3. List the "happy" or "sad" words from this poem.

"grunting," "heaving," "biting," "monster," "walls...cave in," "noises of war," "squinty-eyed," "nightly battle," "slouched," "disheveled"

4. What parts of the poem remind you of a song? Do you see anything we learned about jazz music in the poem?

Groove: "heaving & grunting & biting lower lips" has a beat with the -ing words

Polyphony: the sounds of the guys bringing in the sewing machine, the sounds of Mama sewing, the sounds of the house

Call and Response: it isn't hard to imagine the boys shouting out "the monster"

5. Why do you think the poet wrote this poem? What did he want you to see, learn or remember?

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