Coates Essay Sample Outline

Tentative Thesis (based on an analysis of effects): The theme of interrogation and questioning is important to Coates’ life because it seems to be a method that he uses to cope with the constant threat of violence that he experiences as a black man in American society. His constant questioning of reality and history is how he empowers himself.

Part 1: Description of the Theme

How do I live free in this black body? P 12—the question that guides his life/saves him.

Repeated at key moments in his life: mom makes him write and self-interrogate: 29.

Realizes that there are no easy answers for his position in history: 53.

Part II: Analysis of Affects

Questioning as protection: p 12

Self-interrogation helps him realize that he is flawed: 29

Journalism enables him to ask any questions of whomever he wants: 62.

Conclusion Idea: Questioning and interrogation as related to “The Struggle”

If the Dream is forgetting and ignorance of reality (98), than questioning is key to “the Struggle”: “turning towards something murkier and unknown.” 98. Questioning (or the Stuggle) is the method Coates uses to deal with the injustices and violence that are unavoidable as a black man in America.