

Vocabulary:

*Negro* – commonly used term used for an African American through the 1960s

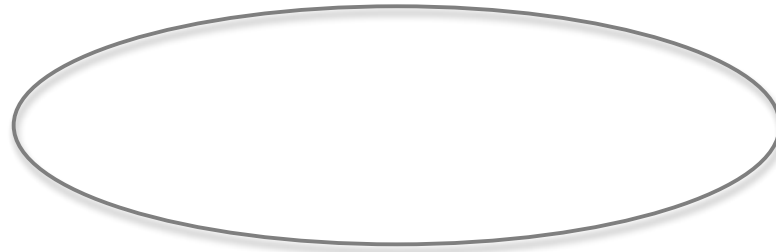
*valise* – a suitcase

*slander* – negative things said about a person or a group

*chauvinism* – attitude of superiority of one group over another

1. a. What dilemma does the narrator face? What risks does he perceive if he tries to help the woman?  
  
b. Would the dilemma have been different if the woman had been in danger? If the incident had taken place during the day? Explain.
  
2. a. What is the background of the narrator? What words or labels does he use to describe himself?  
  
b. How did those labels shape the way he perceived his choices and the decision he made?
  
3. a. Why does he have regrets?  
  
b. Did he make the right choice? Would your answer be different if he were a white American?
  
4. According to Colón, what can racism, prejudice, chauvinism, and “official artificial” divisions do to a people and a nation?
  
5. Who is the victim in this story – Colón, the woman, or the larger society? Explain.
  
6. Colón writes that he “buried his courtesy” that morning. What does he mean? What is the significance of that loss?
  
7. Imagine a different ending to the story. What else might Colón might have done and how might the woman have responded? Describe the effect of that action on Colón.

Identity Chart: Make an identity chart **for yourself** below. It can contain words that individuals use to describe themselves as well as the labels that society gives them. Then answer the question below. Your name goes in the center of the oval; labels go around the oval.



How do the labels you placed on your identity chart shape (affect) how you perceive the world? How do they shape the choices you make?