

## **"Three Women in Manhattan"**

"Three women in Manhattan" is taken from the collection of short stories titled "The Land of Many Colors" which, in Creole, plays on the expression "pays-mêlé" meaning both mixed and problematic country.

- 1- Summarize the story in a few sentences.
- 2- Compare the three women: Claude, Elinor, Véra.
  - How do they differ?
  - What unites them?
  - What is the function of Véra and Elinor in Claude's life?
- 3- Why does the story take place in the US?
  - Why does Claude choose to come to NY instead of going to Paris?
  - What does her moving away from Paris reveal about her feeling for France?
- 4- How is NY depicted in the beginning and in the end of the story?
  - Why is there such a change in the description of the city?
  - What kind of a city lures behind the post-card appearances of the beginning?
- 5- What does this story say about the immigrant's experience?
  - What can the immigrant do with his/her culture of origin?
  - More generally, how do minorities deal with a past that includes oppression?
  - Is it possible for a migrant to go back to his/her country?
  - How does the story describe the immigrant community in NY?
  - How do you interpret Condé's choice to keep the last sentence of her story in Spanish and without a translation?

Textual analysis

- 6- Circle all the words and expressions that are linked to the term UNION.
  - What is the function of this vocabulary in a story that deals with immigrants?

### **Essay topics**

- 1- Following the model of "Three Women in Manhattan," have you had to choose, like Claude, between following in the footsteps of two different adults? Describe those models that you came across and explain who you decided to follow and why?
- 2- With 3 other students, transform the short story you have just read into a short theater play. Create dialogues in lieu of narration when necessary but remain respectful of the short-story story line. Perform in front of your class and vote for the best acting and dialogue following a set of criteria detailed by your teacher.