RODRIGUEZ – “Aria: Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood” QRS

1) What is an aria? Why do you think Rodriguez chose it for his title? Is it an appropriate title? Is it effective?

2) Explain how Rodriguez establishes his ethos in the opening paragraphs and what it is.

3) Describe the tone of paragraph 5, where Rodriguez first raises the issue of bilingual education. Cite specific language to support your description.

4) Why does Rodriguez emphasize the sound of language? Is his doing so an appeal to logos, pathos, or both?

5) Although the entire essay is not strictly chronological, Rodriguez structures it with signals to chronology. What are they? Why are they effective?

6) How would you describe Rodriguez’s attitude toward his parents? Does it change from one point in the essay to another? Identify specific passage.

7) In several sections, Rodriguez makes his point by narrative (such as the moment in school when he first hears his name). How does narrative contribute to the effectiveness of Rodriguez’s argument?

8) Where in the essay does Rodriguez present his most straightforward argument? Is it effective? Would it have been more effective if it had been placed nearer the beginning?

9) What major counterarguments does Rodriguez address? (He does not address them all at once; identify specific passages).

10) What weakness in reasoning are “middle-class ethnics” guilty of according to Rodriguez (para. 43)?

11) Rodriguez uses very little Spanish in this essay, in contrast to other writers whose heritage includes the Spanish language. What is the effect of this choice?

12) Who do you think is the intended audience for this essay? Cite passages to support your viewpoint.

13) What is the tone of the final paragraphs (beginning with para. 69)? Is it different from the tone in the rest of the essay? What would have been the effect of eliminating these last paragraphs?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

MESSAGE
Message(s) conveyed, audience(s)

TONE
Tone(s) used, shift(s) in tone, how tone conveys the message(s)

DICTION
Groups by part of speech, tone, effect, etc.

SYNTAX
Figurative language, patterns, parallel structure, antithesis, juxtaposition, rhetorical questions, transitions, overall structure, paragraph structure(s), etc.