

Use your study guide to help and let us discuss what **colonial** and **postcolonial** mean and how these terms relate to your prescribed texts.

These two concepts will have to dictate how you view your poems and books for this course. It is essential that you understand what they mean.

When answering essay questions, always remember to address these two concepts in your writing.

I would like to hear your thoughts.

In my understanding, colonialism occurs when one country invades another, bringing in settlers and foreigners and taking control of the governance and political power of this country. This leads to the exploitation of that country as well as its natives, its land and its assets. Post-colonialism, however, refers to the way in which a previously colonised country has changed with regards to its political structure, cultural diversity and economic systems after it has regained its independence.

The two terms, colonialism and post-colonialism relate to the prescribed texts for this semester as the texts are African-based. Africa has experienced colonialism as well as post-colonialism throughout history. Thus these two terms are relevant in *Nervous Conditions*, *South African Poetry*, *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Seven Steps to Heaven*.

Brilliant answer Kaitlin. This is wonderful. When we get to *A Raisin in the Sun*, it gets a little more complicated as we are looking at an African-American family who are losing touch with their heritage.

What about the assimilation of culture? Can you name things in everyday life that show this?

It is an interesting question about assimilation of culture. I think sometimes assimilation of culture can look the same as postcolonialism. With culture assimilation one culture group adopts the language, practices and beliefs of another group, and often losing some aspects of their own traditional culture in the process. Postcolonialism shows the same signs, but the process is due to the effect of colonialism, whereas culture assimilation can be as result of different causes. I'm not sure if postcolonialism can flow over into assimilation of culture? How long does postcolonialism last?

One more question, what would it be called if the invaders of a country adapt to the habits and tradition of the invaded country?

To use an example of "Seven Steps To Heaven" of post colonialism: Exclusive Park and its inhabitants copied the lifestyle and habits of, at that time, the "white" suburbs.

Whereas culture assimilation would be where Sizwe changed his life style when he went to university, he adopted a different belief and practices. This culture assimilation is where one culture group integrates with another culture group. Some of the whites integrated with the some of the blacks, where Sizwe and Patrick were an example of that.

Tineke, you raise some interesting points. I would think that assimilation is a by-product of colonization. I have found this quote:

"Assimilation involves those who are colonized being forced to conform to the cultures and traditions of the colonizers. Gauri Viswanathan points out that "cultural assimilation [is] ... the most effective form of political action" because "cultural domination works by consent and often precedes conquest by force" (85)."

[\[https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/postcolonialstudies/2014/06/20/colonial-education/\]](https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/postcolonialstudies/2014/06/20/colonial-education/)

It is also interesting that you ask for a word for invaders who adapt to the invaded country. This is also a by-product of colonization, won't you say? It works both ways because the invader must adapt to new cultures and people just as much as the invaded do. This would be a fascinating point to debate.