

American History X Movie Workshop.

Material Designer: César Tenorio. Grade: 11th Students: _____

Characters in American History X

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1. Cut along the lines and match up the descriptions of the characters with the appropriate names. Have it checked and then stick them into your books.

Derek	Black and occupies a position of authority at school. Very educated (2 PhDs) and specialises in English, though clearly his ethnic origins defy this. A saintly figure that comes to Derek in his time of need.
Danny	A manipulative father figure for both Derek and Danny. A political self-serving idealist who revels in the control he has over the young.
Sweeny	An English teacher and one who represents the liberal community with his views (e.g. when around the dinner table with the Vinyards). However he is not ready to accept that people can change and is an example of how so called liberal minded people can have closed minds.
Cameron	The younger brother of Derek who hero-worshipped him. Intelligent but blinded by the actions of his brother and need to maintain the ideals and image of him so as to fulfil his fatherly needs.
Seth	A positive black character that is the stimulus for Derek's catharsis. He, with Sweeny, balances the stereotypes of black characters in all film and indeed the mirroring sub plot that exists. He chooses to ignore the prejudice and sums up the change of environment by saying to Derek that "in here you is the nigger."
Davina	A Christ like figure struggling to overcome the mythology of his past. Battles through a catharsis to help his younger brother. Of high intellect and leadership. Confident athletic and a powerful speaker who can verbalise his ideas and thoughts to others. Becomes the father figure of the family.
Murray	Ignorant and overweight he has struggled to find a place for himself until he joined this 'group'. He constantly battles to be accepted- e.g.. the basketball game, pulling the gun on Derek. His ignorance is exhibited by his constant and excessive use of swear words as he can't find the adequate words to express himself.
Lamont	Derek's girlfriend and a character that thrives on the venom that the Nazi movement creates, (notice her eyes and mouth when Derek loses control at dinner). She gains a sort of sexual pleasure from saying things that are controversial and that will inflame normal society. Young and impressionable. Shows that she is brainwashed when she, like Judas, betrays him three times.
Stacey	Younger sister of Derek. Intelligent, she shows the path that can be taken. She is the opposite of Derek, female and a 'democrat' - open minded and liberal.

Character Study- Derek Vinyard

Fill in the gaps with the appropriate words or phrases.

Derek was an _____ student who did well at school, embracing literature and inspired by his English teacher _____. His father on the other hand was bitter because he felt that _____

Subconsciously those views worked their way into Derek.

When Derek's father is _____, Derek is full of _____ and _____, and he turns channels this into a _____ - _____ group. Seeing that Derek was a passionate but also intelligent person, _____ manipulates Derek's anger and turns him into an inspiring leader. No where better in the film is this shown when Derek _____

Because of this, two of the black players return to his house at night to steal his car. Derek responds by _____

As he is being arrested, the audience gets the first idea that Derek is a _____ - figure as when he is arrested he _____. As a result he is sent to prison.

Whilst in prison Derek is forced to realise face the fact that _____. He is aided by two black figures, _____ an in mate he folds laundry with, and his former teacher _____. It is in prison that he changes, rises from the death of the "old racist Derek" to become the new open- minded man that must be released from prison so that _____

Costume is an effective way in which Tony Kaye shows Derek to be a Christ- figure. Label the aspects of costume and say how they contribute to this idea.

