

Magical Realism Notes and Assignment

Magical Realism is:

- ◆ *A term borrowed from art criticism, describing an art style that attempts to depict the enigmas of reality*

Characteristics of Magical Realism

- ◆ The issue of borders and boundaries is essential. Characters cross borders, experience mixing, and change as a result.
- ◆ Hybridization is central to the text; inharmonious opposites (such as rural and urban, life and death) are merged.
- ◆ Two conflicting perspectives are present; a rational view of reality meets an acceptance of the supernatural as reality.
- ◆ The supernatural is not questioned and is normalized in the perceptions of narrator and characters as elements of the fantastic are woven into the text and presented in a straight-forward, unemotional style.
- ◆ Myth and fairytale are utilized extensively in the text.
- ◆ According to M. H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, “these novels violate, in various ways, standard novelistic expectations by drastic—and sometimes highly effective—experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of the everyday, the fantastic, the mythical, and the nightmarish, in renderings that blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic.”

Assignment:

- ◆ Find 5 examples of magical realism in the novel *Song of Solomon*.
 - ◆ *Record the quote, page number and reason why it is an example.*
- ◆ Answer the following question: Why would Morrison use magical realism in her narrative?