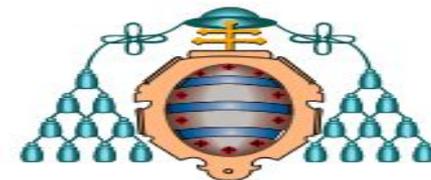
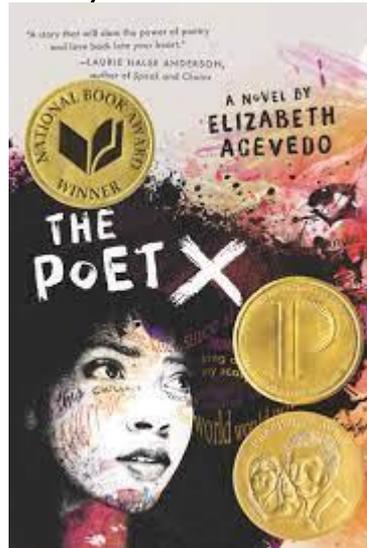


COIL 2022, Week 2

Department of World Languages and Cultures,
Salem State University

Department of English, French and German
Philology, Universidad de Oviedo

February 22, 2022, 1:40-2:55 (ET)

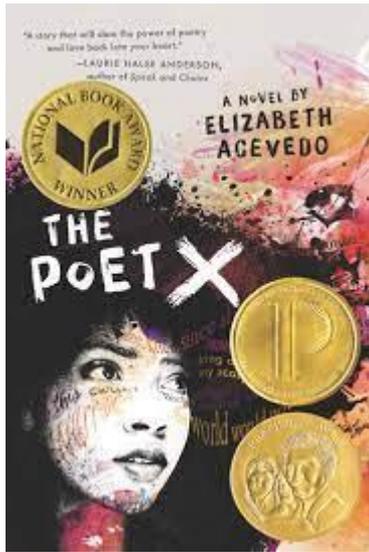


UNIVERSIDAD DE OVIEDO

Objectives for today:

To reflect on:

intercultural miss/communication, alienation, stereotypes, prejudice, peer pressure, gender issues, racism, culture clash, Americanization, imperialism and globalization, religion, mother daughter relationship



Through the analysis of *The Poet X*, (2020), Elizabeth Acevedo

To further acquaintance with each other at a personal level

Opening Remarks

- find her own voice
- find her identity separate from her parents' and white America
- The poetry club constitutes a sense of community
- she is not alienated anymore
- religion and poetry and god and people are all interconnected,
- the importance of questioning and finding our own paths.
- The poetry finally allows her to feel seen and heard.

Resistance!!!

She wants her account to be taken as truthful, a new approach, to the expectations of life for her and others. Her work in a way goes **off-script**.

“The effect is illuminating, like **seeing a familiar landscape from a surprising new angle.**”

#me too movement producing work “**in which the forms of fiction serve as the material upon which further forms can be superimposed.**” Doherty, Maggie. Metafiction and #Me too. The Yale Review, April 1, 2020

new artistic forms, new ways of life forms?



Agenda

Share specific points in small groups (25 min.)

Populate slides with main points in each group

Populate whole group slide with significant cultural statements (25 min.)



The Poet X

Growing up in America and the World



Identity

Instructions for during the week small group meeting:

- *Introduce to each other.
- *Choose a facilitator and time manager.
- *Talk about the topics on your group poem.
- *Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your statement in your group specific slide between 7-14 (**Do not populate the rest of the slides during the small group meeting**)
- *Individually, take notes on things that stand out to you or surprise you to talk about in the bigger group.

Group 1. Names:

The Mic is open

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. **Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:.**

This poem symbolises Xiomara finding her own voice, which not only allows her to process and express her thoughts, but also shows that her feelings and opinions are valid and matter. Thus, Xiomara finds that sharing her poetry is something rewarding and that she is good at, so she wants to keep doing it. This moment is crucial in her identity journey as she discovers she is doing something she did not think she would be able to, and discovers a new(ish) passion that gives her something to look for in the future.

Altogether, the poem represents finding our own voice and using it to express ourselves and find our identity in the process.

Group 2. Names:

Invitation

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:.

“Invitation” is a turning point for Xiomara’s story. At this point, she realizes that poetry is what she is meant to do, and what she is good at. Xiomara is given a voice through her poetry, which is something she has never had before. A piece of her and Twin has finally been seen. She wants to use her poetry for good, and be a voice for others. This poem also represents a change within her relationship with her parents, as she reconnects with her mother, and her father starts talking more.

5-line statement: This poem represents a vast reality of Elizabeth’s own life considering it was written for the purpose of having a story that both Elizabeth and her students can relate to. We believe that there are elements in the novel that foreshadow Elizabeth’s life growing up, she lives within each of the characters - Mrs Galiano and Xiomara - as a teacher and as a girl coming of age. Poetry plays a huge role in her story and its storytelling through verse represents this further to her audience. Like Xiomara, Elizabeth wants to use the voice she has been gifted through sharing her poetry to speak and storytell for others to relate to. It is as though Xiomara’s story holds elements of the story of the author.

Group 3. Names:

Sunday December 16 All the Way Hype

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. **Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:.**

This poem, *All the Way Hype*, is written after Xiomara's success at the open mic poetry event. For the first time in her life this is a moment in which she feels appreciated and heard for poetry skills rather than her image. This poem shows a shift in her confidence and ability to share her work with others, because now she feels more comfortable with herself. In the poem, we can see how her writing acts as a form of therapy for her to heal the amount of hurt she has felt in her life. At the end of the poem, we see a strong comparison between her love for poetry and her mother's love for religion, which is a recurring theme throughout the book, even if Xiomara has never felt much of a connection to religion herself. Through her poetry, she now has found a place where she feels she belongs and something that she can devote her life to.

Group 4. Names:

Monday December 17th At Lunch on Monday

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. **Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:.**

The poem shows the significance that writing poetry has acquired in Xiomara's life. Through this creative form she feels seen and appreciated for the first time in her life. The poem conveys a great moment of intimacy shared between Xiomara and Isabelle where they open up to one and other and reveal their own vulnerability. It also shows that there is someone else out there who gets poetry like she does, which makes her feel understood. We think that this is further emphasized by the fact that they barely talk in this poem, but can speak to each other without physically talking.

We mentioned Xio's poetry is like a language she has developed to communicate with Isabelle and the others in the poetry club. Because there is so much emotion and passion in every poem she writes and hears, Xiomara is able to express feelings she once kept locked up. Such feelings allow her to build genuine friendships.

In this poem, we can see how Xiomara is able to make friends outside the church. The poetry club constitutes a sense of community to her and to the rest of the members. In this environment, she is not alienated anymore, but she feels understood. Isabelle communicates her feelings to Xiomara through her writing without even having to look at her.

Group 5. Names:

Tuesday December 18 At Poetry Club

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. **Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:**

The poem represents the reclaiming of her individual identity separate from what her parents have religiously instilled in her. Xiomara is developing her love of poetry publicly rather than continuing to hide her writing. The poem shows a new sense of belonging where she has found her own community and her support system where she can truly be herself. Performing her poetry live and sharing it with a group of people she feels comfortable with has brought her a new perspective of life and how she feels about herself, allowing her to become more confident. We feel the poem shows the importance of defying constraints and embracing your true self as well as talents.

Group 6. Names:

Everyday after English Class

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. **Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments.**

The poem “Every Day after English Class” by Elizabeth Acevedo on pages 287 and 288 shows how freeing it can be to share one’s own words. It presents a metaphor (“[...] what it means / to be a closed bud, to become open”) that represents Xiomara leaving her comfort zone after having read her poetry at open mic night. Now that Xiomara has “become open,” she has joined Ms. Galiano’s poetry club, participates in English class, and shares her work with not just Ms. Galiano but her newfound friends in the club. In this way, Xiomara’s shared poetry has built a community of people who appreciate her and her words, thus making her feel confident and proud. Acevedo wants to show through “Every Day after English Class” that the power of language and the ability to express oneself is of vital importance for mental health and social development.

Group 7. Names:

p. 356-357: Assignment 5- First and Final draft

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:.

To Elizabeth Acevedo, this poem shows a path for healing. We see Xiomara approach Catholicism, which she had both loved and hated, on her own terms and through her own perspective. In doing this, Xio is able to find a new way to understand and transform the role of religion in her life. This new approach, in which religion and poetry and god and people are all interconnected, allows Xio to find healing through communication and community. For us, this experience of struggling with our family or culture's religion is relatable and demonstrates the importance of questioning and finding our own paths.

Group 8. Names: p. 356-357: *Assignment 5- First and Final draft*

Read/analyze together this poem in detail. Write a five line statement as a group of what the particular poem meant for Elizabeth and for you. Post your comments:.

This entire poem and 'assignment' is centered around faith and what you are passionate about. Whether that is believing in God or a religion, it is your passions, beliefs, and what light is to you. For Xiomara, this is poetry. Through her words, she finally feels free and able to express herself. She finds her words to be extremely powerful. Her religion and the gender expectations of women made Xiomara feel unseen and restricted, as if she was being molded. The poetry finally allows her to feel seen and heard. She learns that she can make her own expectations. Although she does not have a great relationship with religion, she still treats it with respect. The assignment itself is unfiltered and she simply writes about her thoughts because she finally feels comfortable expressing them. We as a group felt that this was a good way to conclude the novel. We could see Xiomara's progress in her passion and self-confidence and how much she has matured. It differs from the beginning of the novel. She is learning to empower herself with religion and poetry, and she has been able to embrace both worlds without worries of others' expectations.

Instructions for the in class meeting

February 15

*Choose a facilitator and time manager.

*Talk about the topics you encounter in the book.
Populate your group slide between 16 -23 slides

*Individually, take notes on things that stand out to you or surprise you to talk about in the bigger group.

Group 1. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
<p>Growing up; first-love. Building/exploring your identity. Sexuality and hypervisibility (vs. invisibility). Misogyny Religion, tradition. Questioning your faith Finding a balance/meeting point. (Parental) abuse - multifaceted. Silence and obedience vs. Speaking up and freedom/independence.</p>	<p>The mic & Performing; finding and being able to express her own thoughts. Music: Her relationship with Aman; a break from her home, her idols. Church and house: Oppression. Xiomara's Notebook: Her brother's love; Herself; Her poetry. Xiomara's Baby Bracelet: Her mother's love / understanding; Her relationship with her mother. Miracle(s): Her and her brother, Her mother's faith, Xiomara's burden, her parent's expectations. The Eucharist: rejecting it, public rebellion.</p>	<p>The 'chapters' resemble diary entries – separated by date.</p> <p>The narration is (mostly) in the form of poetry – free style. A lot of alliteration.</p> <p>It makes the chapters shorter as they focus on particular events, feelings, conflicts, etc. The poetic style enriches the narration; the form reflect the story.</p>

Group 2. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
Religion Romance Sexuality Shame Family Friendship Poetry Fear Mother-daughter relationship	Apples Notebook Bracelet Virgin Mary/God Her name Fire	Repetition Short stanzas Prose Divided poem Trauma reflected in the structure Mostly english, some spanish Spacing for emphasis Blank verse Poems starting with the title

Group 3. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
<p>Judgement, Repression, Community, Danger, Resilience, Rebellion, Expectations, Unique, Self-Expression, Self-Acceptance, Acceptance, Sexism, Sexuality, Sexualization, Sexual Exploration, Hard work, Religion, Abandonment of Religion, Worth, Family Pressure, Debt, Confidence, Talent, Underappreciation, Devotion, Blasphemy, psychological and physical Abuse, Piety, Regret, Miracles, Resentment, Maturity, Puberty, Coming of Age, Selfishness, Forgiveness, Personal Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jewelry (bracelet) - Her identity and her connection with her family.● Journals (her notebooks) - a way escaping from reality.● Apples - Xiomara's favorite food, connection to religion as well● Mother's scarred hands - shows how mother was abused in order to force religion on her.● Music - shares music with Aman, mentions wearing her headphones and using music as kind of an escape at times● Well-Worn Bible - shows mother's devotion to religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Free verse● repetitions● internal monologue (?)● diary entry● enjambment● school assignment (?)● dialogue (conversations)● haikus

Group 4. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Religion and faith.-Family and friendship.-Sexuality.-Alienation.-Stereotypes: Dominican community and male/female social expectations..-Coming of Age-Trust-Self Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-The Bible: Many stories and aspects are mentioned throughout “ The Poet X”.-The notebook: a symbolic representation of her “soul”. It provides Xiomara with a way to establish meaningful relationships and to express her feelings.-The bracelet: personality that is torn between how she is and how her mother wants her to be.-Music: a way to interact with people. Especially, to connect with Aman.- Ms. Galiano: A mother-like figure who comforted Xio when her mother couldn't.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-The way she writes the poems expresses the way in which she is feeling, e.g. fragmentation.-She sometimes uses educational ideas to connect to her feelings, like things she learns in school. For example, she uses the scientific theory of “conduction” to explain her feelings for Aman.-Childlike manner to tackle issues laments her innocence (Diary entries).-Connection with the style of slam poetry and the opposition towards more conventional forms of poetry. The use of poetry itself to write a diary is also “innovative.”

Group 5. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Coming of Age- Religion- Loss of Faith- Sexuality- Love- Escape From Societal Constraints- Family- Mother Daughter Relationships- Friendship- Gender- Art- Guilt/Shame- Power- Conformity- Womanhood- Femininity- Culture- Immigrant Struggle- Self Discovery- Alienation- Freedom- Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Her baby bracelet- Her notebook- Apple (her favorite snack being a forbidden fruit)- Her rejection of the Eucharist- Tampons (sin)- Poetry Club and Ms. Galino as Symbols of Comfort- Art Room (Safe Space symbol)- Symbol of Poet X (which allowed her to explore her identity while remaining safe)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Creative Use of Stanzas- Line Breaks- Use of Repetition- Code Switching/Spanglish- Use of Italics- Free verse- Use of Dialogue- Deep Description/imagery- Creative Use of Titles to relate to Theme- Use of Diary Entries

Group 6. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Religion - Xiomara does not want to get confirmed. X dislikes that Christianity seems to restrict women and tell them what to do. Xiomara's mother is extremely religious● Warrior - Xiomara is like a warrior. Her name means "battle ready." She is very independent, she defends her brother● Voice, power of language (oral or written) - Inability or ability to express oneself. Sharing her poems, getting progressively more comfortable sharing poems.● Sexuality - Twin can't be open about his sexuality. Xiomara wanting to be in a relationship with Aman, trying to grow up and develop her sexuality, but she is oppressed by her religious mother.● Dealing with changing body, growth, growing up● Immigration - Xiomara's mother is an immigrant (from DR)● Family, expectations of family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Poetry Notebook - old and new.● Music● Twins - bonds between twins (Xiomara and Twin)● The Church - the Bible. The symbolism of Adam and Eve. Xiomara does not want to be like "Eve," who must resist temptation. Also, the bread and wine, with Xiomara not wanting to have it.● Baby bracelet - breaking it, regaining it. Represents bond between mother and Xiomara.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The book is written like a diary entry, but in poetic form.● The journal is her entire life which includes all the good and bad things that have happened to her.● Stream of consciousness through poetry.● Some poems are written in stanzas, haikus, and sometimes words go diagonally across the page● Some poems are final or rough drafts of English assignments

Group 7. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you encounter in the book	Key symbols	Aspects of the poems and text structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Religious conflict● Outcasts● Body image● Sexuality connected with guilt and shame● Gender self-discovery/identity● Generation gap● Immigrant experience● Dysfunctional relationships● Power and lack thereof● Isolation● Power of language, art is personal liberation● Sexual assault and violence against women● Homophobia● Gender roles and expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Apples● Apples and eve● Asking questions/being inquisitive connected to tree of knowledge in Bible● Bracelet from mom● Xiomara's name is not biblical● Bracelet is a symbol of the 2 roles that Xiomara has to play in her life(bracelet has her name on one side and daughter written on the other)● Communion which symbolizes her questioning her family's legacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● combining English and Spanish● draws from Dominican culture● many different styles of poetry● the way she uses space and words adds so much affect to her writing.● lost of repetition● titles for each poem that connects with poem● title was sometimes part of the poem● internal rhyme and alliteration● uses slang

Group 8. The whole book

Your takeaway: Write any ideas that came up in your group:

Topics/themes you

encounter in the book

- fat-phobia/sizeism
- gender roles/gender expectations
- LGBTQ+ identity/homophobia
- religion
- sense of belonging
- self-discovery
- expectation that first-born girl must be 'perfect'
- independence vs. dependence
- religious guilt
- culture (immigrant)
- family's life on island vs. Xiomara's life in America (expectations/failures/toxicity)
- chastity
- sexism/masagony

Key symbols

- jewelry - protection
- poetry - freedom, expression, religion
- poetry club - Confirmation meetings
- music and hip-hop - against family expectations
- Xiomara - non-Saint name, 'ready for war', difficult to pronounce/against the standard/not understood
- Xiomara vs. Eve (attraction to boys vs. attraction to apple)
- poem verses vs. bible verses
- Father Sean as God
- dreaming - American Dream
- church - oppression
- school/Aman/cell

Aspects of the poems

and text structure

- poems mimic written assignments (essay)
- continuous structure, doesn't jump around
- feels like diary entries, unfiltered
- no rhyme patterns
- split structure mimics conflicting speaking pg. 306-307
- words like ants marching for ant poem
- words in a straight line for not an ant poem
- poems feel like a stream of consciousness/actually reading Xiomara's thoughts
- repetition reveals emphasis/important moments
- mix between english and spanish (identity, journal-like, etc.)
- haikus

The whole class

Interesting

Xiomara had to go on a self-discovery journey that involved adolescence as an immigrant.

There were a lot of religious symbols within the book; “Xio = Eve”.

The poems were like reading Xio’s thoughts; “her stream of consciousness”.

Combined English & Spanish.

The titles flowed nicely into the poems.

Surprising

Themes of dysfunctional relationships in many lenses.

Sexuality - shame that comes along with that (for Xio & Twin); all the changes her body is going through.

Xiomara’s name is not biblical.

“Xiomara” = Warrior, and that perfectly sums up her nature and journey.

The “Rough Drafts” vs “Final Drafts”; we all edit and change our writing which hints towards Xio’s growth towards self-awareness.

Other

“Tampons” as a symbol of Xio’s mother’s fear of sexuality and also a symbol of coming of age.