

# Mary Ellen Mark Questions

Using the essay in American Odyssey answer the following questions and do a good job or you'll screw up, and don't cheat by the way. Are you even reading these instructions? Or do you think you can just waltz in and start spouting off what you think I want to read? Do or do not, there is no try.

1. What is the theme of the poem *Human Family* by Maya Angelou? (4pts)  
We are more alike than we are unlike.
2. What have MEM's travels done? (3pts)  
Defined her vision as a photographer.
3. What are the tricks of being a photographer according to MEM? (6pts)  
The trick is to be open enough to recognize possibilities/ideas the moment they appear and driven enough to pursue them.
4. How can taking pictures can be a contradiction? (5pts)  
The camera at once facilitates a connection with the subject and at the same time provides a necessary distance.
5. What two things happen when the camera is between MEM and the subject? (5pts)  
It shields her from a grim reality while allowing her access to otherwise impenetrable worlds.
6. How did the experience of photographing patients in Ward 81 change MEM's life and what did this allow her to do? (6pts)  
She began to concentrate on a small group of people who live in a clearly defined area which allowed her to return day after day to explore the group and to intimately document their rituals, customs, and lives.
7. Why does MEM spend a lot of time on her projects and what is important in her photographs? (6pts)  
I try to spend as much time as possible on a project to build a rapport with my subjects. Intimacy is very important in my photographs.
8. How and why is being a woman advantageous? (6pts)  
Being a woman is often an advantage in enabling me to achieve intimacy because people, especially strangers, are less threatened by women.
9. What kind of people does MEM prefer to photograph? (3pts)  
I much prefer to photograph people I care about.
10. What is necessary for any degree of trust? (3pts)  
To develop any degree of trust with someone, a photographer must be very honest.

11. What makes teenagers good subjects? (5pts)  
Young teenagers are interesting to photograph since that are often much less inhibited than adults and allow you to see just who they are.
12. What does Shawnee fear? (6pts)  
She fears losing a member of her family, not being able to live with her Mom, and someone breaking into her house.
13. What has MEM always tried to let her photographs be? (3pts)  
I've always tried to let my photographs be a voice for people who have less of an opportunity to speak for themselves.
14. What has changed regarding documentary work and what three sources does MEM use to finance her personal work? (8pts)  
Documentary assignments are almost nonexistent. These days the money to support her personal work comes primarily from portraiture assignments for magazines, some commercial work, and teaching.
15. What three things does MEM try to do in regard to the subjects of her assignments? (6pts)  
She tries to find the quiriness in her subjects, to go beyond clichés and discover the common human element that connects people all over the world.
16. What kinds of shots does MEM constantly try to make? (4pts)  
I am always thinking about making pictures that speak for themselves.
17. A great picture has to go beyond the literal subject matter. (3pts)
18. What is MEM's ultimate goal for her photos? (4pts)  
Ultimately, I want my photographs to move people.
19. In closing, MEM states, "Without photography my life would have been unimaginably different." What would she regret? (4pts)  
Not meeting all of the amazing people who shaped her life.
20. Write five comments about the attached photograph. (10pts)

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