

•Who is Juan? Why do you think Juan took an interest in Chiron? What does Chiron need from Juan? What are some advantages and disadvantages of Chiron's relationship with Juan? How do you choose the people with whom you associate?

Juan is the neighborhood drug dealer. I believe Juan took an interest in Chiron because he may have seen similarities in Chiron. Chiron needs a father figure from Juan. Juan is very kind and patient with Chiron and gives him a space that is safe and belonging, but Juan is the cause of his mother's drug addiction which causes him to be neglected. When choosing people with whom you associate, I believe it is important to know their heart. While Juan is a drug dealer, you can tell he still has a good heart and genuinely cares for Chiron. I feel that overrides his cons. So I feel it is important to take into consideration the honest intentions of others.

•Describe Chiron's relationships with his peers. Why do you think the bullies target Chiron? What advice does Kevin give Chiron about how to respond to bullies? Do you agree with Kevin? Explain your answer.

Chiron is an outcast amongst his peers. He is often bullied and ridiculed by them. I believe Chiron is a target due to his quiet personality, which makes it seem like he is an easy target. Kevin tells Chiron that in order to stop people from picking on him, he has to show them that he is not soft. He has to stand up for himself. I both disagree and agree with Kevin on this point. While it is important to stand up for yourself, the way Chiron went about it later on in the movie is not how it should be done. Chiron ended up going to jail due to the fact that he resorted to violence against his bully. While he did stand up for himself, he paid a price for it.

•Describe Chiron's relationship with his mother. What are some ways that Paula contributes to Chiron's confusion about his sexual identity? What do you think of Juan's decision to confront Paula? Why does Juan lack credibility with Paula? What approach would you have taken?

Chiron's relationship with his mother is that of an emotionally abusive and neglectful one. Paula contributes to Chiron's confusion about his sexual identity with her neglectfulness. She is not a dependable figure that Chiron can go to and talk about his sexual identity with, thus he had to instead ask Juan about it. I believe Juan did the right thing by confronting Paula. Even if he is the drug dealer, Paula is still an adult who makes the decision to do drugs despite having a child that she needs to care for. I would have convinced Paula to go to rehab to get better for her child or threatened to have him taken away to put pressure on her to want to change for the better.

•Is Chiron's identity ultimately shaped by him or by others? How do his nicknames play into this idea?

I believe both others and Chiron himself are what shapes his identity. I believe nicknames play into this because nicknames are given to us by others but it is based on something of our own personality, showing that while the nickname is created by someone else, it is inspired by our own identities.

•How does the chapter structure of the film support or disrupt Chiron's journey as a character?

The chapter structure was an entertaining way to show Chiron's journey. I feel it supports his journey as a character as it portrays vital moments in his life and shows his struggle

and confusion with his sexual identity. As a kid, it shows his innocence and how Chiron does not fully understand the concept of sexuality. As a teenager, Chiron is aware of his sexuality but is not open about it with the rest of his peers except his best friend Kevin who has mutual feelings for him. As an adult, Chiron hides behind a mask of masculinity and toughness to avoid being picked on or looked down upon when he was younger. But we see parts of his true self come out when talking with people he loves. He cries around his mother and he admits his ongoing love for Kevin.

•What is the significance of moonlight in the film? How does it play into the film's existing theme of identity?

Moonlight shows the concept of how our identities are shaped. In the movie, we follow Chiron on a journey of finding his identity. Due to societal pressures, there are parts of him he feels he has to hide, such as his sexuality. Society also made him feel the need to become someone “hard” so that people would not mess with him. Him having to hide parts of his identity and also shaping his identity to match that of what society tells him too shows how our environment shapes who we are for better or for worse.

•One theme that is present throughout the film is coming to grips with who you are. In what ways does society play a part in denying one’s ability to do just that?

When it comes to accepting who you are, society makes that hard in many ways. Society decides what is normal and what's not, so if you fall into the category of not being “normal” then you will feel like an outcast or feel like something is “wrong” with you because everyone around you feels that you shouldn't be that way. Having these narrow minded beliefs is what causes people to prejudice and discrimination within their hearts and those who are different are ridiculed and looked down upon. This then causes fear for people who are similar to those different people to not want to openly share that part of their identity and instead hide it.

•Juan, whose character is played by Mahershala Ali, is the fatherly figure that is missing in Chiron’s life. How important are positive reinforcements in the life of someone struggling with their sexual orientation

It is very important to have positive and welcoming people in the life of someone struggling with their sexual orientation. If someone only has negative and narrow minded people in their life while they are struggling with their sexual identity, it could negatively affect the way they view themselves and how they choose to proceed with that part of their identity. Positive people will help them accept and love that part of themselves and not be filled with shame, hatred, or fear of their sexual orientation.