ENG257 African American Lit
Weekly Reading and Writing #8

READING

Tuesday
- Malcolm X: pages 1859 – 1876 and The Ballot or the Bullet page 116 and track #23

Thursday
- Amiri Baraka, page 1937 – 1939 and Preface page 1939, Wailers page 1945 – 6 and track #17 and selected poetry
- Sonia Sanchez, page 1963 and Summer Words, page 1966 and track #15
- Michael Harper, page 2070 and Dear John Dear Coltrane, page 2071 and track #19
- Jayne Cortez, page 2035 and How Long Has Trane Been Gone, page 2036 and track #18

WRITING: please begin your writing with a brief explanation of the Black Arts Movement (prompt one) then choose from the following prompts to develop your explanation:

• Required: Briefly explain the Black Arts movement and place it historically in the African American tradition.

• Malcolm X is a 20th century icon of the Black Arts Movement. What expectations did you have about his life and work before our study? In what ways did your ideas about his contribution to the tradition change? In what ways did they stay the same?

• Having read the poetry tributes to Malcolm X (Brooks, Walker, Baraka), compose your own tribute in a poem. Then explain in what ways your poem signifies on the tradition and on Malcolm X.

• Describe Malcolm X’s work in relation to the African American literary tradition. In what ways can you appreciate his literary heritage. Think for example of themes, issues, tropes, images, diction.

• Describe Amiri Baraka’s work in relation to the African American literary tradition? In what ways can you appreciate his literary heritage. Think for example of themes, issues, tropes, images, poetic style, diction.

• Sonia Sanchez is considered “one of the most admired and respected poets of the Black Arts Movement.” Use details from the Movement (text) and her poetry to explain why.

• Consider either Harper or Cortez’s tribute to Coltrane by listening to any Coltrane (on our cd for starters). Then compose your own tribute to Coltrane in a poem. Finally, write a prose explanation of the ways in which your poem signifies on a previous poet, on Coltrane and his sound and legend, and on the tradition.