

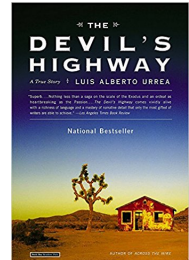
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Close Reading Organizer - Chapter 7: A Pepsi for the Apocalypse

Directions: Read each summary entry and think about which themes listed in the Themes Key apply to it, then color in those themes in the Theme Tracker. Next, write a few sentences of Analysis to explain how the themes you chose apply to each summary section.

Themes Key

- 1 Desolation and Desperation
- 2 Myth, Religion, and The Spirit World
- 3 Humanity and “Illegality”
- 4 Bearing Witness



Summary	Theme Tracker				Your Analysis
<p>Urrea imagines Mendez waking up on the morning of May 19th—the day of the Wellton 26’s walk through the desert. The Saturday morning is hot, and Mendez nurses his hangover with a breakfast of beans. He says goodbye to his girlfriend, Celia, and heads out onto the stinking street. He goes to Maradona’s house and tries to rouse him by knocking on the front door, but cannot. Mendez calls El Negro to tell him that Maradona is either gone or so drunk he can’t be woken, and El Negro calls Santos and Lauro to fill in. Urrea notes that “it says a lot about Maradona that he has to be replaced by two other polleros.” Mendez boards a bus and heads downtown.</p>	1	2	3	4	
<p>At the safehouse, the walkers are beginning to wake up. They eat a meager breakfast, then Mendez, Santos, and Lauro</p>	1	2	3	4	

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

arrive. The polleros advise the walkers to go over to the store and buy water. Mendez tells the walkers to meet him at the bus station. At the corner store, the walkers buy waters along with candy, chocolate, and sodas.					
At the bus station, Mendez urges the men to “look normal” while he bribes a bus driver. The walkers must pay fifty pesos each for passage to the border, and the bus driver takes their money without a word. Mendez warns the men that they will soon arrive at a checkpoint, and that if any of them are questioned as to their destination, they should say they are headed to San Luis. After successfully passing the checkpoint, Mendez instructs the driver to drop them off in a sandy spot just south of a rest area. It is one thirty in the afternoon, and the border is less than one hundred yards away. The men get off the bus and run through the sand to the border, where they step over a rusty barbed wire fence. Mendez welcomes them to the United States.	1	2	3	4	
After five minutes, Mendez stops the men and tells them they are going to take another ride. Mendez walks down a road and disappears—he comes back a few minutes later in a van driven by El Moreno . Later, Urrea writes, the survivors will give differing accounts of what kind of van it was, and differing accounts of how many men piled in—some survivors claim	1	2	3	4	

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

at least seventy men had been in their group.					
The men endure an uncomfortable ride that lasts a total of ninety minutes, though some survivors would later claim it took over four hours. Once the van arrives at a “big rock” which signals entry to the path they will walk, they disembark once again. Mendez briefs them on what their trip will hold: he promises that they will walk only at night, and only for a few hours at a time. They will wait out the sun in whatever brush they can find. Mendez tells the men that each of them is responsible for his own water, and once again insists that it is just a few hours’ walk to their next pickup spot.	1	2	3	4	
What Mendez does not tell the walkers is that they have arrived at the big rock a couple hours ahead of schedule—normally, they would arrive just as the sun was going down, and walk into the night, but now the men face an extra couple hours of exposure to the triple-digit heat. As the men set off on foot, Urrea writes, “their Pepsis [are] already warm.”	1	2	3	4	