MLA Style

For your first paper, evaluate the choices made by Trevor Noah’s mother in the reading thus far. Use the research you’ve done on apartheid and the Saint Leo core value of integrity as part of your evaluation. We know that she willingly and in full knowledge chose to commit a crime by having a relationship with Trevor's father and asking him to become a parent with her. She also chose to live in illegal locations. She chose to stay in South Africa so that Trevor was not only born but lived as a crime. In other words, she’s a criminal, and her choices had huge consequences for herself and for her child. What do you think of her choices? Are they well informed, smart, ethical, criminal, stupid, etc? Remember to keep our theme in mind: It’s complicated.

Your answer to the question of what you think of her choices is your thesis, and you’re writing an argument. Write for an audience that has read the assigned material. You’re welcome to include support from farther along in the book if you’ve read ahead. You’ll want to be very specific in your support. Include at least a couple of quotes and point to particular passages where you see crucial decisions made. Pay attention to Trevor’s language because his choices of how he depicts his mother and his own feelings will guide you in evaluating what you think of Patricia’s decisions. You’ll also want to include one secondary source on apartheid since the cultural context for her choices is so important.

All arguments and decisions rest on assumptions. You will want to examine Patricia’s assumptions in evaluating her decision. You may need to state and explain your own assumptions as well.

Be sure that you have a solid, defensible thesis statement toward the end of the introduction. Have a topic sentence for each paragraph and avoid sentence-level errors, particularly serious errors such as fused sentences or comma splices. Do NOT summarize; bring up the relevant points from Born a Crime that support your thesis. Do you not use the word you.

For your draft, I want you to do the following. For each paragraph’s topic sentence, write, “I believe in my thesis because (fill in the blank here).” The last sentence of each paragraph should read, “This paragraph supports my thesis because (fill in the blank here).” When you revise, you will change these sentences to be subtler, but by going for the obvious at the drafting phase, you should improve paragraphing.

Please copy and paste onto the last page of your essay:
This essay is my own original work written for this class. If I used an idea from a source, though the essay does not require sources, I have given the author credit.