

### What do you see?

1. Opening scene- camera focus: a cellphone that has a card on it saying “if found...you’re welcome”, a wedding ring, and a gold watch, which are all on top of two blue books. Right away one can assume Andre is wealthy, married, and educated before being told/shown that he is black.
2. Family photograph- Andre’s family is in front of a huge house in the suburbs- a white car in the left background and a black car in the right background (we read left to right). Rainbow (wearing red) is standing, leg crossed over, and hand on her hip. Andre is standing next to her with his hands in his pockets. The kids appear in the frame standing straight and poised. All are wearing bright colors, except Andi who is wearing white with a camouflage button up over top.
3. Shoe collection- Andre walks down a hallway surrounded by white walls (camera is focused on Andre’s back as he walks) into what appears to be a dark room. When the light comes on, his entire shoe collection appears and Andre looks around. Then the camera focuses on Andre’s face as he smirks and his eyes squint (look of confusion, like he doesn’t belong there).
4. Andre walking outside- The camera focuses first on Andre’s shoes then goes up (this camera technique happens in other scenes too to introduce Andre). His shoes are black but with white soles and white shoelaces. He is wearing a black and white polka dotted shirt with an off-white blazer overtop and a black and white handkerchief in the front pocket. He keeps looking both ways like he is confused where he is even though he is outside of his house (squints his eyes, head moves side to side). White flowers in the background of the scene.
5. Fruit/wine- Almost always appears to be a bowl of fruit on the kitchen table where Andre and his family sit; there is fruit at Andre’s work on the café counter where two white people are standing; there is fruit at the meeting when Andre daydreams about the feast the white staff has. In the same daydream, a white co-worker is feeding Andre grapes and Andre is drinking wine. At home, the family has a glass of wine to celebrate Andre’s promotion.
6. Cars- Camera shot down at parked cars. There are mostly white cars in the parking lot, only two black cars. Andre is driving a white car and so is the woman that steals his spot. Then she gets out of the car and flips him off.
7. Car switch- Andre drives Andi to school in a black car, and then drives away in a white car.
8. Zoey- wears a pink shirt with a puppy dog on it (whiteness), a colorful headband (whiteness), and a gold chain around her neck (blackness) - shows merging of whiteness and blackness.
9. Andre body language and gestures- frequently has hands in his pocket, slouched when he stands, leans over when he walks, arms cross and raises his hands when he gets mad, points his finger a lot, does “the shake”, high fives, fist bumps, elbow bump, fist in the air (black power movement), dancing- all perpetuates black stereotypes.

10. Workplace- A clear divide in the workplace- us (black) versus them (white). Andre is to the left of a white wall by his office that says DREAM with a definition written big in black letters (possibly a reference to MLK). The shake- Andre and Chris do the stereotypical “black” handshake in slow motion, camera focused on black and white hands coming together. Black and white people divided in meetings (black on one end of the table, white on the other).

### **What do you hear?**

1. Opening scene- Hip Hop music in the background- Andre establishes himself right away as a black man, and his wife as mix-raced.
2. Andre- High- pitched voice when angry or upset (especially when Andi says he wants to play field hockey), loud exaggerated laugh at times.
3. Tour guide- “If you look to your left, you’ll see the mythical, majestic, black family...out of their natural habitat...and yet still thriving...go ahead and wave...they’ll wave right back...they’re just, just amazing” (this line portrays the family as unique, wild animals that act as puppets).
4. Pops- Always chimes in his opinion from the background- “If you would’ve joined that black firm like I told you, you would’ve been Mr. President five years ago”; “so, fried chicken is too black for you?”, “you finally made it son, to head puppet of the white man”, “this ain’t our culture, we black not African”.
5. The handshake- slapping of hands when Andi does the “black” handshake with his white friend Zack.
6. Andi- says words/phrases that dad disapproves of: “fee hockey” “when in rome” wants to be called “Andi” in school- “it says I’m edgy, but approachable”
7. Use of slang when talking to Andre- “What’s up Mista Dre” (Zack to Andre), “Dre, whaddup! Or should I say Mr. Senior Vee Peezy” (Chris to Andre), “Yo! Dr. Dre”, “wassup driggity Dre” (Josh to Andre), “there he is, my main man!” “remember, really put your swag into it” (white boss to Andre), Andre gets appointed as Senior Vice President of the Urban Division- White people in the episode feel they need to talk in slang to approach Andre because he’s black, he is also given a job title tailored to his blackness.
8. Background music- Hip hop, Rap, R&B, Usher.
9. Lack of racial identification- Andre is bothered that his younger kids do not identify the weird girl in their school as being black (race is extremely important to Andre).
10. Family meeting- Zoey talks like a valley girl, Andre tells Andi he will not throw him a Bar Mitzvah, but will have an African rites of passage ceremony (which he doesn’t even know what that is), kids say they did not know Obama was the first black president.

### **Thesis:**

Throughout the episode, the use of bright colors symbolizes the whiteness that Andre finds invasive in his household. Even though he blatantly resists this whiteness, the subtle use of black and white in many scenes suggests that Andre too is being consumed by the normalized whiteness that surrounds him, which is deeply troubling.

## **Analysis:**

Andre's exaggerated body language of throwing up his hands, shaking his head, squinting of his eyes, and raising his eyebrows in disapproval of his family's "white" behavior as being culturally invasive to their "black" roots presents itself through the use of colors. In the picture frame of Andre's family, his wife is wearing bright red with a white trim along the edges, which symbolizes both her power in the family and her whiteness. Her very name being Rainbow, referring to a variety of colors that ultimately blend together to create white, is a clear example of how whiteness invades Andre's household as she is described as a "mixed-race woman... who isn't even technically black". In the same picture and throughout the episode, his children are frequently seen wearing bright colors, pure white, rainbow stripes, and floral prints signifying innocence, playfulness, youthfulness, and purity, all of which are adjectives to describe whiteness. In the family portrait, Andi is wearing a white t-shirt with a camouflage shirt over top, which is indicative of his attempt to camouflage or blend into white culture to fit in with the other white kids at school. In multiple scenes in Andre's work place, fruit bowls are frequently seen associated with white characters, once again connecting bright colors with whiteness and privilege. In the scene where Andre daydreams about becoming one of "them", meaning the white upper-management team, he visualizes being fed green grapes by his white co-worker like a king would. The constant presentation of bright colors, especially in Andre's home (fruit bowls on the kitchen table), insinuate that no matter how hard he tries to keep his family from becoming "white", he cannot avoid it and ultimately gives in to the normalized and preferred white culture.

Aside from colors symbolizing whiteness, the use of black and white in association with Andre signifies his racial identity struggle that he faces throughout the episode. In an earlier

scene, the camera is behind Andre as he walks down a hallway surrounded by white walls leading towards a dark room (black and white) that lights up into a massive closet with shoes, hats, and clothes. Andre says “I guess for a kid in the hood, I’m living the American Dream”, connecting materialistic wealth with the American Dream that many strive for, yet his smirk, squinting of the eyes, and drawn back posture suggest he is uncomfortable with this due to his black background. There are two scenes that start out focusing on Andre’s shoes, which are black with white soles and laces (black and white), then move up to the rest of his body and face, symbolizing his mobility from the bottom to the top as a black man which Andre makes clear is an abnormal situation. The sole of the shoe and laces being white perpetuates the whiteness he depends on to get ahead at work and the whiteness that constitutes his new life. Besides black and white shoes and apparel, an important pattern throughout the episode that insinuates this black and white theme as a symbol for Andre’s identity struggle is represented through cars. In the background of the family portrait, there is a white car on the left and a black car on the right that Andre owns, which also speaks to the American standard of reading from left to right, placing white in the dominant view. In some scenes, he is driving the white car and in other scenes he is driving the black car, indicative of his internal identity crisis and confusion with being a black man living in a normative white society. Andre’s racial identity crisis deeply troubles him, causing him to frequently contradict himself by going back and forth between being proud of his black roots and being ashamed of it, while also acting irrationally towards his family who have already conformed themselves to the dominant, normal, and preferred white culture.