In her own words: Listening to Toni Morrison talk about Margaret Garner

For your homework tonight, listen to the interview Morrison gave to NPR in November 2010. She discusses her collaboration with composer Richard Danielpour to create an opera based on the real-life story of Margaret Garner. Follow the link below to access specific portions of her interview—listen to her words, and then write down your thoughts to the following questions about her interview. Be prepared to share your thoughts in our next class.

<https://www.npr.org/2010/11/17/131395936/a-mother-s-desperate-act-margaret-garner>

Part 1: The Story and Slavery

A. What point does Morrison make about the relevance of a “slave story” to all humans?

Part 2: The Character of Margaret Garner

B. How do Margaret Garner’s actions demonstrate a type of freedom that slavery did not allow?

C. How are Margaret Garner’s actions different from those in the Greek tragedy of “Medea”?

Part 3: Richard Danielpour discusses Choosing Margaret Garner’s story

D. Why does the composer believe that this story needs to be told again (and still) today?

Part 4: Themes in Margaret Garner

E. What are some of the themes of the opera (and the novel) that we should be looking for?