The American Dream

Essential Questions

In what ways does the American Dream manifest itself in American life?

How does one create a personal definition of the American Dream?

Unit Overview

If asked to describe the essence and spirit of America, you would probably refer to “the American Dream.” First coined as a phrase in 1931, the phrase “the American Dream” characterizes the unique promise that America has offered immigrants and residents for nearly 400 years. People have come to this country for adventure, opportunity, freedom, and the chance to experience the particular qualities of the American landscape. Consequently, different groups of people have left their imprint on the philosophical foundations of this country and contributed to what has become a modern American Dream. In this unit you will explore the foundations of the American Dream through literary movements and a variety of American voices. You will also investigate how this Dream might be realized in your own life and in the lives of those around you through a survey investigating assumptions about the American Dream. The unit will prepare you for a wide body of literature that continues to incorporate this idea and help you to synthesize this information into your own understanding of the concept.
The American Dream

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Learning Focus:
Making Text Come to Life

Whether you have seen it in a movie, read about it in a book, watched it on a popular sitcom, heard it from your parents, or viewed it being played out in a presidential campaign, “the American Dream” has become a part of our culture and a term used in our everyday lives. But what does it mean? Is there one kind of American Dream, or is it unique to each and every one of us? More importantly, do we all have the same access to that dream?

Reading primary and secondary sources exposes you to different viewpoints concerning the American Dream. Much has been written about the American Dream, and many secondary sources provide a more objective look at various points of view that have been developed about the American Dream. Encountering a wide variety of points of view allows you to deepen and broaden your understanding of how this idea came into being and how it has changed throughout our history.

Reading original or primary texts allows you to access the thinking of writers in a certain time period without the filter of another’s analysis. You get a writer’s subjective view of ideas of success, money, work, failure, and access—all aspects of the American Dream as it has been articulated through the ages.

Having the opportunity to conduct your own primary source survey puts you in the position of a researcher testing and validating your own ideas of what makes up the American Dream.
Essential Questions

1. In what ways does the American Dream manifest itself in American life?

2. How does one create a personal definition of the American Dream?

Unit Overview and Learning Focus

Predict what you think this unit is about. Use the words or phrases that stood out to you when you read the Unit Overview and the Learning Focus.

Embedded Assessment 1

What knowledge must you have (what do you need to know) to succeed on Embedded Assessment 1? What skills must you have (what must you be able to do)?
What Is the “American Dream”?

**SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Pair Share, Quickwrite**

As you read each statement below, use a scale from 1 – 10 and decide to what extent these ideas are prevalent today. If the idea presented in the statement is something you are exposed to on a regular basis, rate it a 10. If you do not see evidence of the statement at all, rate it a 1 (and remember there are plenty of numbers in between).

1. Education is important primarily to increase one’s self-knowledge.
2. Individuals’ rights are superior to the needs of society.
3. Belief in God has been characteristic of the American experience.
4. Mankind is basically evil.
5. Education is important primarily to get a job.
6. Truth is found in faith.
7. Human beings are basically good and getting better.
8. Individual liberties must always be controlled by government authority.
9. A free press is important to equal rights for everyone.
10. Truth can be found in science.
11. The American Dream means making lots of money.
13. Everyone can achieve the American Dream.
14. The American Dream includes getting married and having children.

**Quickwrite:** Reflect on your rankings. Share your responses with a partner or a small group. You might choose to share your responses with the whole class. Consider the class discussion and select one or two statements above. Describe your position in reaction to the statement(s) and explain the rationale for your thinking.
You have been exposed to a variety of sources throughout your high school experience. Some of these sources have been primary sources and some have been secondary sources.

1. Brainstorm examples of primary and secondary sources, then define primary and secondary sources in the space below. Consider the similarities and differences and even examples of sources you have used in the past.

Primary Source:

Secondary Source:

2. Your teacher will provide dictionary definitions of these terms. Copy them below. How close were you? What did you already know and what is new?

Primary Source:

Secondary Source:

3. Apply your knowledge to the following list. Next to each example, write either “primary” or “secondary” to identify the type of source.

   - Interview
   - Biography
   - Book About the Civil War
   - Original Photograph
   - Original Work of Art
   - Article Critiquing a Work of Art
   - Works of Literature
   - History book
   - Letters
   - Video of a Musical Performance
   - Poems
1. Brainstorm a list of characteristics or traits you believe are part of the American Dream. Write your list in the space at the left.

2. **Quickwrite:** Select one trait from your list and write about that trait.

### “Ellis Island”

3. Read the poem “Ellis Island” silently. Volunteer to read the poem aloud to the class or listen while others read. Underline the dreams and disappointments of the people as they are expressed in the poem. Discuss the underlined passages with the class.

4. Brainstorm about the dreams, hopes, and backgrounds of your ancestors. Share your thoughts in a small group.

### Biographical Sketch

5. Before reading the poem “Europe and America” complete a brief biography for yourself. On separate paper, write the following information regarding you and your family (past and present). Then share your answers with another student.

- Place of birth for you, for your parents and/or grandparents
- Places lived – you, your parents, and/or grandparents
- Schools attended – you, your parents, grandparents
- Significant adults or people in your life
- Dreams of your parents and/or dreams for yourself
- Disappointments of your parents and/or disappointments for yourself

### “Europe and America”

6. Read the poem to yourself or listen while your teacher reads the poem aloud to the class. Highlight **images** in the poem that show the contrast between the experiences of the father and son.
Beyond the red brick of Ellis Island where the two Slovak children who became my grandparents waited the long days of quarantine, after leaving the sickness, the old Empires of Europe, a Circle Line ship slips easily on its way to the island of the tall woman, green as dreams of forests and meadows waiting for those who'd worked a thousand years yet never owned their own.

Like millions of others, I too come to this island, nine decades the answerer of dreams.

Yet only part of my blood loves that memory. Another voice speaks of native lands within this nation. Lands invaded when the earth became owned. Lands of those who followed the changing Moon, knowledge of the seasons in their veins.

by Joseph Bruchac

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Part Native American, Joseph Bruchac began telling Native American stories for his own children and published his first book of stories in 1975. An award-winning writer and professional storyteller, Bruchac has since written dozens of books for children and adults that seek to promote and preserve Native American stories and culture.
My father brought the emigrant bundle
of desperation and worn threads,
that in anxiety as he stumbles
tumble out distractedly;
while I am bedded upon soft green money
that grows like grass.
Thus, between my father
who lives on a bed of anguish for his daily bread,
and I who tear money at leisure by the roots,
where I lie in sun or shade,
a vast continent of breezes, storms to him,
shadows, darkness to him, small lakes, rough channels
to him, and hills, mountains to him, lie between us.
My father comes of a small hell
where bread and man have been kneaded and baked
together.
You have heard the scream as the knife fell;
while I have slept
as guns pounded offshore.
Denotation and Connotation in “Europe and America”

Denotation refers to the dictionary definition of a word. Connotation refers to the associations connected to a word. Connotation usually has a more powerful effect on the reader. It may be a visual image or an idea to ponder.

7. Look at the examples listed. Then state the denotation and connotation of key phrases from the poem “Europe and America.” Discuss the effect that those particular words have on the reader. Choose some words or phrases of your own to analyze (use separate paper).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word or Phrase</th>
<th>Denotation</th>
<th>Connotation</th>
<th>Effect on the Reader</th>
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| emigrant bundle of desperation | **emigrant:** One who leaves the country of his or her birth  
**bundle:** A group of objects held together by tying or wrapping  
**desperation:** Recklessness arising from losing all hope | The father is associated with that which is negative, bringing all his hopelessness to the new world. | The words set up the reader to contrast the father’s experience with the son’s. |
| bedded on soft green money | | | |
| bed of anguish | | | |
| vast continent of breezes, storms to him | | | |

8. Create a graphic organizer that compares and contrasts the ideas and dreams of past and present generations.
Sentence Synthesis

Consider how the effect on the reader might change if you change any of the key phrases in “Europe and America.”

9. Imagine that instead of “bedded on soft green money,” the poet were to have written “funded by filthy bills.” How does that change affect the reader? Write your answer in the space below.

10. Now look again at the phrases you examined on your own paper. Exchange the key word(s) in those phrases with different word(s) that have a similar meaning but different connotation. Reflect on how the change might affect the reader’s interpretation.

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<th>Word or Phrase</th>
<th>New Word or Phrase</th>
<th>Effect on Reader</th>
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After reflecting on the idea of the American Dream and those who came from distant lands to find their own pathways to the dream, you will next look at some historical groups and the imprint they have left on the American Dream through their philosophical underpinnings.

You will research a particular historical group and its philosophy in order to teach fellow students about your findings. You will then, in turn, learn from your peers regarding other philosophies that have permeated America’s diverse belief systems so that you can make connections to the texts and ideas in this unit.

1. Read your assigned pieces (which are primary sources) in order to research the philosophy that has been assigned to you. For each source you analyze, record two to three quotations that grab your attention. Using a three-column journal, document the source and the quote in the left-hand column of the paper. In the middle column, write your response to the quote in connection to the philosophy your group is studying. In the right hand column, note any modern connections.

2. Locate an additional primary source (or excerpt) that adequately reflects the philosophy’s identified characteristics. You might have already done this in your initial research. While this is the individual portion of the assignment, check in with your group members to make sure you have a diverse set of primary sources so when you return to your groups, you will have a blend of voices and experiences to discuss. You will want to include quotes and responses from this source in your journal.

3. Use your research and journal entries to answer the questions listed on the student page for your topic. Through this process, you should have a firm understanding of the core tenets associated with your philosophy.

4. Using your research, your understanding of the assigned texts, your responses to the questions, and your individual primary sources, create a concept map on chart paper or poster board. Use pictures, symbols, and words to represent the information learned regarding the specific philosophy. It might also be wise to include a copy or a created image of the additional primary source you located. Include characteristics of the philosophy, major writings, historical and modern connections, and key people. Present the map to the entire class. Each group is responsible for giving the class a comprehensive overview of its assigned philosophy.
Group 1: Puritans

1. Research to answer the following questions regarding the Puritans:

   - What is their view of God?
   - What are their values?
   - How do they define truth?
   - Do they have an optimistic or pessimistic view of life? Cite evidence.
   - What are their views of work and worldly success?
   - What is their view of society?
   - Who is their authority?
   - What is their view of education?
   - Do they view man as inherently good, evil, or somewhere in between? Cite evidence.

2. Read the excerpt from The New England Primer. Discuss with your group the purpose of reading according to this book. How widespread was reading meant to be? What is the image of God and religion presented by the primer?

3. Read “The Trial of Martha Carrier.” What are the charges against Martha Carrier? What is the evidence against her? Discuss how the Puritan sense of justice and evidence is on trial in this presentation of the Salem witch trials of 1692.

4. Research Puritans and find at least one primary source which gives further insight into and specific examples of their philosophy and how it translated into how they lived.

5. Look back at the anticipation guide you completed at the beginning of this unit. Identify any Puritan philosophy embedded in the questions.

6. How would you define the American Dream according to the Puritans? Explain.
Group 2: Revolutionaries

Research to answer the following questions regarding the Revolutionaries:

- What is their view of God?
- What are their values?
- How do they define truth?
- Do they have an optimistic or pessimistic view of life? Cite evidence.
- What are their views of work and worldly success?
- What’s their view of society?
- Who is their authority?
- What’s their view of education?
- Do they view man as inherently good, evil, or somewhere in between? Cite evidence.

On your own paper define the term perfection. Define moral. Find both terms in a dictionary and compare the definitions. Do you believe it is possible for a person to achieve moral perfection? Write a paragraph in which you take a pro or con position. Support your thesis with examples from personal observation, reading, or experience. Share your paragraph with your group and discuss.

Read “Moral Perfection” from The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin. Discuss the qualities that Franklin chose in his autobiography and compare them to the details you included in your paragraph as well as the paragraphs of your group members. Do you think trying to arrive at moral perfection is a worthwhile goal? If it is, what does it show about a person who would try to do this?

Create your own list of virtues for yourself. State how you will try to achieve each virtue.

Read the “Sayings of Poor Richard,” from Poor Richard’s Almanack by Benjamin Franklin. Discuss these sayings in your group. Choose at least five and rewrite them for a modern audience.

Research the Revolutionaries and find at least one primary source that provides additional insight into and specific examples of their philosophy. How did that philosophy translate into how they lived?

Look back on the anticipation guide you completed at the beginning of this unit. Identify Revolutionary ideas embedded in the questions.

How would you define the American Dream according to the Revolutionaries? Explain.
Group 3: Transcendentalists
Research to answer the following questions regarding the Transcendentalists:

- What is their view of God?
- What are their values?
- How do they define truth?
- Do they have an optimistic or pessimistic view of life? Cite evidence.
- What are their views of work and worldly success?
- What is their view of society?
- Who is their authority?
- What is their view of education?
- Do they view man as inherently good, evil, or somewhere in between? Cite evidence.

Read the excerpt from “Self-Reliance.” Pick two or three passages from the selection that state a strong opinion. Write a personal response to the passages.

Read the excerpt from Walden. As you read, underline or highlight specific examples of Transcendentalist philosophy. Write the connection in the margin. In your group, summarize Thoreau’s criticisms of society. Identify a facet of modern society that Thoreau would object to and explain why he would find it objectionable.

Research Transcendentalists and find at least one primary source that provides additional insight into and specific examples of their philosophy. How did that philosophy translate into how they lived?

Look back on the anticipation guide you completed at the beginning of this unit. Identify Transcendentalist ideas embedded in the questions.
The New England Primer

For more than a hundred years Puritan children received their first schooling from *The New England Primer*. Since the chief purpose of education in Puritan times was to enable people to read the Bible, it was natural that the alphabet rhymes chanted by the children should be based on Bible stories. The Primer is believed to have been in existence by 1688. Several versions have been printed, often with different verses for the letters.

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>In <strong>Adam</strong>’s Fall, We sinned all.</td>
</tr>
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<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Heaven</strong> to find; The <strong>Bible</strong> Mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Christ</strong> crucify’d For sinners dy’d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>The Deluge</strong> drown’d The Earth around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td><strong>Elijah</strong> hid, By Ravens fed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>The judgment made <strong>Felix</strong> afraid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>As runs the Glass, Our Life doth pass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td><strong>My Book</strong> and Heart Must never part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td><strong>Job</strong> feels the Rod, Yet blesses <strong>God</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Proud Korah’s troop Was swallowed up</td>
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<td>L</td>
<td><strong>Lot</strong> fled to <strong>Zoar</strong>, Saw fiery Shower On Sodom pour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Moses was he Who <strong>Israel</strong>’s Host Led thro’ the Sea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Noah did view The old world &amp; new.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Young Obadias, David, Josias, All were pious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Peter deny’d His Lord and cry’d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Queen <strong>Esther</strong> sues And saves the Jews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Young pious <strong>Ruth</strong>, Left all for Truth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Young Sam’l dear, The Lord did fear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Young <strong>Timothy</strong> Learnt sin to fly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Vashti for <strong>Pride</strong> Was set aside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Whales in the Sea, God’s Voice obey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Xerxes did die, And so must I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>While youth do cheer Death may be near.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Zaccheus he Did climb the Tree Our Lord to see.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. Martha Carrier was indicted for bewitching certain persons, according to the form usual in such cases, pleading not guilty to her indictment. There were first brought in a considerable number of the bewitched persons, who not only made the Court sensible of any horrid witchcraft committed upon them, but also deposed that it was Martha Carrier, or her shape, that grievously tormented them by biting, pricking, pinching, and choking of them. It was further deposed that while this Carrier was on her examination before the Magistrates, the poor people were so tortured that every one expected their death upon the very spot, but that upon the binding of Carrier they were eased. Moreover, the look of Carrier then laid the afflicted people for dead, and her touch, if her eye at the same time were off them, raised them again: which things were also now seen upon her trial. And it was testified that upon the mention of some having their necks twisted almost round, by the shape of this Carrier, she replied, It's no matter though their necks had been twisted quite off.

II. Before the trial of this prisoner, several of her own children had frankly and fully confessed not only that they were witches themselves, but that this mother had made them so. This confession they made with great shows of repentance, and with much demonstration of truth. They related place,
time, occasion; they gave an account of journeys, meetings, and mischiefs by them performed and were very credible in what they said. Nevertheless, this evidence was not produced against the prisoner at the bar, inasmuch as there was other evidence enough to proceed upon.

III. Benjamin Abbot gave his testimony that last March was a twelvemonth, this Carrier was very angry with him, upon laying out some land near her husband's. Her expressions in this anger were that she would stick as close to Abbot as the bark stuck to the tree, and that he should repent of it afore seven years came to an end, so as Doctor Prescot should never cure him. These words were heard by others besides Abbot himself, who also heard her say she would hold his nose as close to the grindstone as ever it was held since his name was Abbot. Presently after this he was taken with a swelling in his foot, and then with a pain in his side, and exceedingly tormented. It bred into a sore, which was lanced by Doctor Prescot, and several gallons of corruption ran out of it. For six weeks it continued very bad, and then another sore bred in the groin, which was also lanced by Doctor Prescot. Another sore then bred in his groin, which was likewise cut and put him to very great misery. He was brought until death's door and so remained until Carrier was taken and carried away by the Constable, from which very day he began to mend and so grew better every day and is well ever since.

Sarah Abbot, his wife, also testified that her husband was not only all this while afflicted in his body, but also that strange, extraordinary, and unaccountable calamities befell his cattle, their death being such as they could guess at no natural reason for.

IV. Allin Toothaker testified that Richard, the son of Martha Carrier, having some difference with him, pulled him down by the hair of the head. When he rose again, he was going to strike at Richard Carrier, but fell down flat on his back to the ground and had not power to stir hand or foot until he told Carrier he yielded: and then he saw the shape of Martha Carrier go off his breast.

This Toothaker had received a wound in the wars and now testified that Martha Carrier told him he should never be cured. Just afore the apprehending of Carrier, he could thrust a knitting needle into his wound, four inches deep; but presently, after her being seized, he was thoroughly healed.

He further testified that when Carrier and he sometimes were at variance, she would clap her hands at him, and say he should get nothing by it; whereupon he several times lost his cattle by strange deaths, whereof no natural causes could be given.

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4 lanced: opened or cut through
5 calamity: great misfortune or disaster
V. John Rogger also testified that upon the threatening words of this malicious Carrier, his cattle would be strangely bewitched, as was more particularly then described.

VI. Samuel Preston testified that about two years ago, having some difference with Martha Carrier, he lost a cow in a strange preternatural\(^6\) unusual matter: and about a month after this, the said Carrier, having again some difference with him, she told him he had lately lost a cow and it should not be long before he lost another, which accordingly came to pass: for he had a thriving and well-kept cow, which without any known cause quickly fell down and died.

\(^6\) preternatural: unnatural
It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another, habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping, and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalog more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.
These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. **Temperance**
   Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. **Silence**
   Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. **Order**
   Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. **Resolution**
   Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. **Frugality**
   Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.

6. **Industry**
   Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. **Sincerity**
   Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. **Justice**
   Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. **Moderation**
   Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. **Cleanliness**
    Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. **Tranquility**
    Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. **Chastity**
    Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another’s peace or reputation.

13. **Humility**
    Imitate Jesus and Socrates.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) **Socrates** (sokˈrætəs): 4697–399 BC, Greek philosopher who lived humbly
“SAYINGS of Poor Richard”

by Benjamin Franklin

About the Author

Benjamin Franklin published Poor Richard’s Almanack, which included advice and popular sayings, many of which are still common today. Franklin expanded and adapted sayings from common culture and other writers, but he also composed original sayings.

From Poor Richard’s Almanack

Experience keeps a dear school, but a fool will learn in no other.
Hunger is the best pickle.
Love your neighbor; yet don’t pull down your hedge.
If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him.
Three may keep a secret if two of them are dead.
A small leak will sink a great ship.
Silks and satins, scarlet and velvet, put out the kitchen fire.
If a man could have half his wishes he would double his troubles.
A lie stands on one leg, truth on two.
He that is of the opinion that money will do everything may well be suspected of doing everything for money.
Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.
God helps them that help themselves.
A word to the wise is enough.
Fish and visitors smell in three days.

Literary Terms

An aphorism is a short, clever saying about life.
The used key is always bright.
Lost time is never found again.
The sleeping fox catches no poultry.
He that falls in love with himself has no rivals.
One today is worth two tomorrows.
Little strokes fell great oaks.
Since thou are not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour.
Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship.
Fools make feasts and wise men eat them.
When the well’s dry, they know the worth of water.
If you would know the worth of money, go and try to borrow some.
Make hay while the sun shines.
He that lieth down with dogs shall rise up with fleas.
’Tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright.
The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise.
If you would have your business done, go; if not, send.
by Ralph Waldo Emerson

There is a time in every man’s education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what he can do, nor does he know until he has tried….

Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind….

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said today. “Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.” Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood….

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1 bestowed: presented as a gift or an honor
2 aversion: strong feeling of dislike
3 hobgoblin: something causing superstitious fear
The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has got a fine Geneva watch, but he has lost the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so, being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His notebooks impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber 4; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity entrenched in establishments and forms some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom, where is the Christian?

4 encumber: to impede or hinder
When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defense against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated¹ with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude² from them.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln,³ and about two miles south of our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground;⁴ but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon.

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshiper of Aurora⁵ as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: “Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again.” I can understand that. Mornings brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting

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¹ **saturated**: soaked, full to capacity
² **exude**: to ooze or spread in all directions
³ **Lincoln**: Small town in Massachusetts between Concord and Sudbury, which is mentioned in the next paragraph.
⁴ **Concord Battle Ground**: A reference to Emerson’s poem “Concord Hymn.”
⁵ **Aurora**: Greek goddess of dawn
with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an *Iliad and Odyssey* in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmic about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, “All intelligences awake with the morning.” Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to paint and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done. I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live

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**Infinite** comes from the Latin word meaning “unbounded” or “unlimited.” The word is formed from the root *fini*, meaning “end” plus *in*, meaning “not.” Other words based on *fini* include *final, confine*, *definitive*.
so sturdily and Spartanlike\(^{11}\) as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime,\(^{12}\) to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of man here to “glorify God and enjoy him forever.”\(^{13}\)

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable\(^{14}\) wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumbnail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning,\(^{15}\) and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy,\(^{16}\) made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the Nation have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether they do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers,\(^{17}\) and forge rails and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our lives to improve them, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each

\(^{11}\) Spartanlike: The inhabitants of the ancient Greek city-state of Sparta were famed for their courage, discipline, and frugality

\(^{12}\) sublime: elevated or lofty in thought or language

\(^{13}\) “glorify...forever”: From the Presbyterian book of beliefs, Westminster Shorter Catechism

\(^{14}\) evitable: avoidable

\(^{15}\) dead reckoning: Nautical term for a method of positioning a ship without using the more reliable method of astronomical observation

\(^{16}\) German Confederacy: In 1815, the first ineffective alliance of German territories.

\(^{17}\) sleepers: Wooden beams to which railway tracks are riveted
one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them.

For my part, I could easily do without the post office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life — I wrote this some years ago — that were worth the postage. The penny post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in the newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter — we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all news as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure — news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy....

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure....

Time is but the stream I go-a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and forepaws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.
About the Author
After witnessing the view from Pike’s Peak in Colorado in 1893, Katharine Lee Bates wrote the words to her most well-known poem, “America the Beautiful.” She was an accomplished poet and professor who founded the New England Poetry Club and taught English literature at Wellesley College.

America, the Beautiful

by Katharine Lee Bates

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain.
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.
America! America!
God mend thine ev’ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

Grammar & Usage
Writers create rhythm and vivid mental pictures by using parallel structure and effective verbs and adjectives. Bates uses parallel structure in the first three lines of “America the Beautiful” with a prepositional phrase that begins with for. The strong adjectives of spacious, amber, purple make a simple phrase vivid, rhythmic, and memorable. Notice how the poem “America” relies on strong verbs: feeds, sinks, tests, sweeps, gaze. Use these techniques to develop your writing.
America, the Beautiful

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,

And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,
And ev’ry gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years.
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears.
America! America!

God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
From sea to shining sea!
by Claude McKay

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Born in 1890 in Jamaica, Claude McKay traveled to America to attend college, where he experienced the harsh realities of racism. He wrote poetry on political and social concerns and became a major writer of the Harlem Renaissance, a movement in the early 1920s.

Although she feeds me bread of bitterness,
And sinks into my throat her tiger’s tooth,
Stealing my breath of life, I will confess
I love this cultured hell that tests my youth!

Her vigor flows like tides into my blood,
Giving me strength erect against her hate.
Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood.
Yet as a rebel fronts a king in state,
I stand within her walls with not a shred
Of terror, malice, not a word of jeer.

Darkly I gaze into the days ahead,
And see her might and granite wonders there,
Beneath the touch of Time’s unerring hand,
Like priceless treasures sinking in the sand.
America, the Beautiful

Poetry

Shine, Perishing Republic

by Robinson Jeffers

While this America settles in the mould of its vulgarity, heavily thickening to empire

And protest, only a bubble in the molten mass, pops and sighs out, and the mass hardens,

I sadly smiling remember that the flower fades to make fruit, the fruit rots to make earth.

Out of the mother; and through the spring exultances, ripeness and decadence; and home to the mother.

You making haste on decay: not blameworthy; life is good, be it stubbornly long or suddenly

A mortal splendor: meteors are not needed less than mountains: shine, perishing republic.

But for my children, I would have them keep their distance from the thickening center; corruption

Never has been compulsory, when the cities lie at the monster’s feet there are left the mountains.

And boys, be in nothing so moderate as in love of man, a clever servant, insufferable master.

There is the trap that catches noblest spirits, that caught – they say – God, when he walked on earth.

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Writing Prompt: Choose which speaker and tone in the previous poems and song most closely resembles your attitude toward America and discuss why. Describe how personal experiences align you with this attitude and any small differences in your viewpoints.
Read “I Hear America Singing,” “I, Too, Sing America,” and “Indian Singing in Twentieth Century America.” Consider how the **diction** communicates the writer’s feelings and then complete the chart for the one(s) assigned to you. Then, as a group, perform your assigned poem for the class. Consider your movements (real and symbolic), voice inflection, and facial expressions in relaying the appropriate **tone** for the piece. While you watch other students perform their poems, fill in the remainder of the chart appropriately.

### Literary Terms

Diction is the writer’s choice of words.

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<th>Feelings About America</th>
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Read the poem “next to of course god america i” and fill in the appropriate chart. On your own paper, write a paragraph that describes the poem’s tone.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Walt Whitman, who did not attend college, worked as a journalist, carpenter, and building contractor before publishing a collection of his poems, *Leaves of Grass*, in 1855. Calling himself the “people’s poet, Whitman wrote poetry in free verse, used common speech patterns, and celebrated the country’s working class and cultural diversity.

I Hear America Singing

by Walt Whitman

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The woodcutter’s song, the plowboy’s on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown.
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else.
The day what belongs to the day — at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Fascinated with jazz rhythms and the lyrics of blues music, Langston Hughes’ first book of poetry, *The Weary Blues*, was published in 1926. A major figure in the Harlem Renaissance, Hughes also wrote novels, short stories, plays, and nonfiction. His works captured and celebrated the colorful culture of black America.

I, Too, Sing America

by Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I’ll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody’ll dare
Say to me,
“Eat in the kitchen,”
Then.

Besides,
They’ll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed —

I, too, am America.
We wake; we wake the day,
the light rising in us like sun —
our breath a prayer brushing
against the feathers in our hands.

We stumble out into streets;
patterns of wires invented by strangers
are strung between eye and sky,
and we dance in two worlds,
inevitable as seasons in one,
exotic curiosities in the other
which rushes headlong down highways,
watches us from car windows, explains
us to its children in words

by Gail Tremblay

About the Author
A Native American poet, visual artist, and professor, Gail Tremblay was born in Buffalo, New York. She received her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Oregon and teaches at Evergreen State College. She has received many awards for her visual art and poetry, both of which reflect Native American motifs.
that no one could ever make sense of. The image obscures the vision, and we wonder whether anyone will ever hear our own names for the things we do. Light dances in the body, surrounds all living things — even the stones sing although their songs are infinitely slower than the ones we learn from trees. No human voice lasts long enough to make such music sound. Earth breath eddies between factories and office buildings, caresses the surface of our skin; we go to jobs, the boss always watching the clock to see that we're on time. He tries to shut out magic and hopes we'll make mistakes or disappear. We work fast and steady and remember each breath alters the composition of the air. Change moves relentless, the pattern unfolding despite their planning — we're always there — singing round dance songs, remembering what supports our life — impossible to ignore.
by e. e. cummings

“next to of course god america i
love you land of the pilgrims’ and so forth oh
say can you see by the dawn’s early my
country ’tis of centuries come and go
and are no more what of it we should worry
in every language even deafanddumb
thy sons acclaim your glorious name by gorry
by jingo by gee by gosh by gum
why talk of beauty what could be more beaut-

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iful than these heroic happy dead
who rushed like lions to the roaring slaughter
they did not stop to think they died instead
then shall the voice of liberty be mute?”

He spoke. And drank rapidly a glass of water.
THE AMERICAN DREAM has defined and reflected what is best in our country. In his new book, a distinguished journalist shares the stories of those who know its power firsthand.

It is the phrase we reach for most often to describe this land of ours. It has reflected what is best in us as a country and a people. It is the American Dream, and it has filled me with awe for as long as I can remember.

Growing up in Houston during the Great Depression, it took shape for me around the radio, as I listened spellbound to Edward R. Murrow’s World War II dispatches and dreamed of becoming a reporter myself. My neighborhood was not a place that led me to think I should be reaching for such a faraway star. Yet — and this still gives me a thrill today — within 20 years, there I was, a correspondent in New York City, meeting Murrow, my childhood hero.

The American Dream, you see, holds me in its grasp because I have been blessed to live my own version of it. There is no typical American and no typical American Dream. For some, the Dream is one of freedom; for others it is of fortune or family or service to one’s fellows. Some place greatest emphasis on the pursuit of happiness or of keeping alive the innovative spirit. But however we define it, it defines us as a people.

The people you’ll meet here are the result of my quest to discover The American Dream as your neighbors are creating it today. I think you will find them inspirational. I know I did.

DELORES KESLER

She started her company just to survive and retired a millionaire.

Delores Kesler’s dream began with a $10,000 loan she used to found a temporary staffing agency in Jacksonville, FL, in 1977. When she retired 20 years later, her company, AccuStaff, had projected revenues of $2 billion. Kesler says she didn’t plan to become a millionaire: Divorced and with a small child, she began her career at 22 with a series of dead-end jobs, struggling to make ends meet.
When she founded her company, there were few women entrepreneurs. But her father had often told Kesler she could do anything she wanted to do, and she was determined to succeed. As time went on, however, Kesler realized it was not just financial gain she was pursuing: She wanted to make a contribution to her community. And, as her business grew, she started requiring her employees to devote time to community service and insisting that her company contribute to local charities. And she didn’t stop there. In time, Kesler’s company was earning $50 million a year, and a large portion was going back into the community.

When Kesler retired, she set a new course for her life. Today, the Delores Pass Kesler Foundation focuses on changing young lives through education, mentoring and children’s programs. In 1997, she gave $1 million to the University of North Florida to provide scholarships to students from Raines High School in Jacksonville. She cried before an audience of thousands when the principal thanked her. She told them that they didn’t know how good it felt to be able to give that money away.” An awful lot of people benefited from what started with a $10,000 loan,” Kesler says.

Wayne Ward Ford believes we all have a destiny – not a predetermined fate but a place that a higher power wants us to go – and he’s proof of it.

WAYNE WARD FORD

A troubled young man, he had an odd premonition about his future.

Wayne Ford was in eighth grade when a teacher asked the class to write their obituaries. How would they like to be remembered? Ford, who lived in a rough area of Washington, D.C., came up with a curious response: He said he would make his mark in the Midwest. He would be active in politics and in charge of a community center.

Wayne Ford would go on to get in trouble in high school.” I was doing drugs, robbing, breaking into apartments,” he recalls. To get away, he accepted a football scholarship to a small, nearly all-white Minnesota college. Once there, however, racism threatened to throw him off course. Instead, he turned his anger to activism and founded the school’s black student union.

“Then,” he says, “it all started to come together. The worst things in my life were the things that had the potential to make me great.” Ford devoted himself to academics. History especially gave him a new perspective.” When I started reading it,” he says, “I thought, ‘My God, the world has gone through hell, not just Wayne Ford.’”
After graduation, Ford turned to politics. Today, he’s living the dream he had as a boy: He’s the only black member of the Iowa State Legislature and the founder and executive director of Urban Dreams, a nonprofit community program for at-risk youth. Last year, he spoke before the Democratic National Convention. It was one of the biggest achievements of his life, but he says, “It wasn’t the cherry on the ice cream. The best is yet to come.”

SHAWN CARLSON

His grandfather’s struggle to be accepted inspired him to encourage others.

Shawn Carlson says his dream and his passion — the Society of Amateur Scientists, which he founded — was inspired by his grandfather. “I’ve been privileged to know some of the greatest scientists alive today,” says Carlson, who has a Ph.D. in nuclear physics. “And no one had a greater raw scientific talent than my grandfather.” But, he adds, his grandfather’s work was consistently rejected “because he didn’t have the letters ‘Ph.D.’ next to his name.

“Amateur scientists,” he says, “are overflowing with passion,” and his aim is to teach them standards and procedures so the larger scientific world will take them seriously. He and his wife, Michelle sank their life savings of $10,000 into starting the Society for Amateur Scientists in 1994 and endured several tough years. Then Carlson was awarded a MacArthur “genius” fellowship, which allowed him to keep the Society afloat.

Although he has been criticized by some in the scientific community, Carlson continues to pursue his dream of opening scientific innovation to everyone. ”The ability to come up with something original and be respected because you are a maverick — that’s very much part of the American tradition,” he says.

OSCAR CARLOS ACOSTA

Everything he wanted was within his grasp. Then, it seemed, it was gone.

As a boy in tiny Elida, NM, Oscar Acosta had a talent for throwing a baseball that brought him a college scholarship and a chance at athletic glory. Getting to the Majors was his dream, and he neglected everything else — his schoolwork, and his wife and children — to get there.” I became consumed,” he says. He made it to the minor leagues, but when a torn rotator cuff ended his pitching career, his life spiraled out of control. His wife took the kids and left. He was broke. He lost any belief in himself.” I’d just given up,” he says.” I thought I was destined to go back and be a cow-puncher the rest of my life.”
When he got a second chance — an offer to coach in the Texas Rangers’ minor league system — Acosta says, he realized it was time to change. His identity, he swore, would never be tied exclusively to baseball. He reconciled with his wife and for the next 11 years built back what he’d lost, taking his blessings as they came. “I told my daughter, if God wants me to be a minor league instructor, that’s what I’m going to do,” he says.

Acosta did make it to the Majors — as a pitching coach for the Chicago Cubs. Now 44, he lives not far from where he grew up. Recently, Acosta watched his son play in the Little League game on the same field where he’d learned to pitch. “This was a big deal,” Acosta says. “It was like watching myself — like my life had started all over.”

EILEEN COLLINS

She found what she wanted to do in life, but how in the world would she get there?

The first woman to pilot the Space Shuttle and to command a Shuttle mission grew up in public housing in Elmira, NY. There wasn’t much money for family outings when she was a child. “One thing my father liked to do,” recalls Eileen Collins, “was take us to the airport to watch the planes take off.” She knew she wanted to fly, so Collins saved up for lessons, and she had enough by the time she attended community college. Once in the pilot’s seat, her future seemed clear: “You know how you find the thing that you like to do in life?” she says. “I found it.”

Collins pursued her dream, joining Air Force ROTC at Syracuse University and being among the first women allowed into the pilot-training program. But she didn’t stop there. Eventually, she set her sights even higher — on NASA.

She recalls an early look out the window of the Shuttle: “Looking back at Earth is just beautiful. It’s blue, it’s white, it’s tan. The jungles are a dark green. There’s so much water. It’s just amazing.” And when Collins got the opportunity to land the Shuttle — the first woman to do so — she says, “I knew all those women pilots out there were watching me and thinking, ‘Eileen, you better make a good landing.’” She did.

“I’m an explorer,” says Collins, now 44. “I want to go places that are new and different, learn new things. I think that’s what being human is all about. It’s what life is all about — exploring and learning.”
CURTIS G. AIKENS SR.

His dream — and his future — were on hold until he finally decided to ask for help.

Curtis Aikens, who grew up in rural Conyers, GA, puts a face to one of those literacy statistics we hear but sometimes cannot believe: He went through high school and five semesters of college without learning how to read. One of the millions who fall through the cracks and keep falling, Aikens believes that he would have disappeared completely if he hadn’t, at 26, finally asked for help. Of his literacy tutors, Aikens says, “They didn’t change my life. They saved my life.”

Aikens put his new skills to good use. A lifelong lover of cooking and food, he started his own produce company in his hometown, became a food columnist and began to focus on his version of The American Dream: “I said to myself, ‘I’m going to become a celebrity.’” But it wasn’t fame alone he was pursuing, he explains. “It was so, when I talk about the fact that I couldn’t read, other nonreading adults will say, ‘If he can do it, I can too!’” Today, Aiken has three cookbooks to his name and appears on Calling All Cooks on the Food Network. But, he says, he hasn’t reached his goal. “I’m still trying to obtain The American Dream, because I want to give everybody the ability to read. I know that sounds hokey, but there it is.”

YOU MAY SENSE A COMMON THREAD running through many of these stories. The American Dream affords us opportunity and the freedom to seize it. It has also created, in my experience, some of the most generous people in the world. Americans who find their own dream make the dreams of their fellow citizens possible as well. For them, and for the rest of us the Dream remains both a hope and a promise, even as we add to its meaning with each new chapter of our lives.
LIFELONG DREAMER
— Vietnam Boat Person

by Mary-Beth McLaughlin

Nancy Pham says that she had been a dreamer most of her life.

Her dreams have taken her from a crowded refugee boat in the choppy seas off war-torn South Vietnam to the quiet confines of a former church in suburban Toledo where she’d opened her own beauty salon.

She’s still navigating choppy seas — any entrepreneur trying to launch a new business in tough economic times knows the going isn’t easy. But she exudes a quiet confidence.

“I’m already a success, because I’ve already done what I wanted to do,” said the owner of the Fifth Avenue beauty salon, which opened three months ago at the corner of Sylvania and McCord Roads.

Such confidence is born from a lifetime of beating the odds, starting at age 13, when the Vietnam War came to the city of Saigon where she lived with her family.

Confidence also comes from having survived a 15-day boat trip with her husband and two small children, one of whom was so sick, she feared she would have to bury the child by tossing her into the sea.

And still more confidence comes from having survived ending up in Oak Harbor, OH, with no job or money, not speaking English, and not even being sure of the size of the United States.

Speaking in soft, accented English, Mrs. Pham retold her story quietly. Only the long pauses and heavy sighs gave away the pain of surviving during wartime. From 1963 on, there were sandbags in the living room where the family ran during bombings that occurred every night.

“I was not afraid of it. Sometimes, I would just sleep in my bed and you could feel the whole house shake. It was really, really noisy,” she said.” And then I would get up in the morning and I was not scared. I would feel wonderful I’m alive. And I would walk around the neighborhood and check and see who is alive and who is dead.”
But life went on and Mrs. Pham did the “normal” things: graduated from high school; learning shorthand, typing, and English, and getting a job as a secretary at Macvee II, a company associated with the U.S. Army.

She met and married Chinh, a man 11 years her elder, who was in the Navy. They had two children, Huy (renamed William) and Trang (renamed Jenny). After Jenny was born in 1973, Mrs. Pham quit Macvee to become a full-time mother.

Although it was nerve-wracking to ride on buses or go to hotels where Americans stayed — both were prime targets for bombs — the South Vietnamese people love the Americans and Saigon thrived with their presence, she said.

But in 1972, the Americans started their withdrawal, and things began to change. By 1975, with Saigon on the verge of falling, all former and current Macvee employees were promised safe passage to the U.S. if they wanted.

Mrs. Pham’s sister, still a Macvee employee, typed up the forms for the whole family to leave.

Their mother, who did not speak English, but already had moved once to escape Communism, was determined to leave. But Mrs. Pham hesitated.

“I worry, what will I do over [in the U.S.]? We have money, and a business and a house, and I thought, I never did anything to the Communists, they won’t do anything to me. So I don’t go,” she said.

So while her sister, mother, and remaining family members headed for the ship in the harbor, Mrs. Pham stayed with her two small children — until her husband arrived the next day and demanded to know why they hadn’t left.

Brushing aside her arguments, he loaded the kids in the car with clothes and borrowed milk, told neighbors they would return the next day after a visit to her aunt, and set off for the harbor.

Mr. Pham ignored the restrictions on service personnel leaving the country and boarded the boat with his family.

On April 29, 1975, the ship pulled out of the harbor as the radio blared news that Ho Chi Minh was now in charge of Saigon.

Pausing while lost deep in memories, Mrs. Pham whispered, “It seems like yesterday.”

They had no idea where they were going or how long it would take to get there, she said.

There was no roof, no room to move, and canned Army rations included raw fish with a worm inside. And there was no milk for 10-month-old Jenny, so they fed her sugar and water. But as days went by, Jenny became weak until she all but stopped moving, and her mother thought she had died.
“I don’t know where I’m at. Even if there had been a coconut floating by, I would have had some idea. My husband was crying and I was running from one room to another but there was no medicine,” she said. “We were just hoping they would stop somewhere.”

“I kept thinking, ‘If she dies in the ship, we’d have to throw her in the ocean,’” Mrs. Pham said.

But in the first of what she called “miracles,” the ship carrying the Phams stopped at Subic Bay, The Philippines, after 15 days at sea.

The family boarded another ship to Guam, and eventually was sent to a camp in Pennsylvania, where they waited for a family or church to sponsor them.

Many families requested sponsors located in sunnier climates like Florida or California, but Mr. Pham couldn’t wait.

“I did not know how big the U.S. is and I was worrying about everything. I wanted to get out and see what outside world is, and so I tell my husband we have to get out and make a living,” she said.

Her mother moved to New Jersey, her sister to California, and the Pham family was sponsored by St. John Lutheran Church, in Rocky Ridge, near Oak Harbor. On July 16, 1975, the Pham family boarded a plane for Ohio.

Nancy said she was anxious, having been told Ohio was full of snow and ice and cold.

“I’m such a worrier, that I looked down, picturing snow and ice and no living thing,” she said. “I look down and everything was so green and there were mountains and rivers. I feel so happy. I feel like I’m a bird, like I’m a fish. Everything is so beautiful and I think, ‘I can make a living.’”

The Phams stayed with an Oak Harbor family for two weeks, then moved when the church found a house for them to rent.

Chihn found a job at Glasstech, Inc., within two weeks, while Nancy took English lessons. But Nancy said she quickly knew that life in a rural community wasn’t for her, and started urging her husband to move the family closer to Toledo.

Eventually, Mrs. Pham borrowed money from her brother and the family bought a small house in east Toledo.

She sewed clothes for a next door neighbor, made and sold egg rolls, cleaned people’s houses, and worked as a lunchtime waitress. Along the way, she had Thomas, now 10.

But always, always she was dreaming.
“There was a lot of things I want to do, but I have no money and I can’t stand it,” she said.

“I’ve always had my dreams. I dream all the time and I think I can do anything,” she says. While working as a waitress she said she dreamed of someday having her own business.

She became a student at Ma Chere Hair Style Academy, and later a manicurist, renting space at Paul & Co.

Louise Hedge, owner of Ma Chere, said she never had any doubt that Nancy Pham would someday have her own shop.

“I’m not surprised because that was her goal. She really wanted it and kept telling me that,” Miss Hedge said. “She was an excellent student because she had a lot of personality. I don’t mind having them when they really want it.” Mrs. Pham remembers having difficulty with the language, and over-compensating by taping lectures and memorizing them while she made egg rolls.

She spent most of the 1980s working at Paul & Co., but always dreaming of her own shop.

“I like to be my own boss and I want to treat employees fair and equal. I like to take and give. I don’t want people who only take and don’t give,” she said.

This year, Mrs. Pham got to be her own boss when her husband noticed that the church at the corner of McCord and Sylvania roads was up for sale.

He wanted to open a restaurant in the old church, but after Mrs. Pham convinced him that would be too much work, she broached the idea of a beauty salon.

Donna Pollex, an agent with Loss Realty Co. who handled the deal, had nothing but praise for the Phams.

“They are fantastic people. They’re very dedicated and very honest and try to please people and I wish them lots of success,” she said. “They just brought themselves up from nothing and I know they will be successful. The hours she puts in are incredible and it’s really a family affair. The husband does the yard and the daughter handles appointments and both sons also help out.”

“They are very, very hard working people,” she said.

With the help of workers, the church was remodeled into a beauty salon which opened about three months ago.

Mrs. Pham said she doesn’t worry about whether her business will be a success.
“What you want to do, you should do. You may lose money, but you do not lose what you want to do,” she said. “I don’t worry about being famous or about being rich. I … want to have a beauty salon for everyone.”

It is an attitude that sits well with her eight employees.

Madonna Fong, a hair stylist at Fifth Avenue, said she has been in the beauty business for 16 years and has worked at a lot of salons that have been “temples of egos.”

“[Nancy] is very kind, very caring,” she said. “And she has such a great sense of peace in herself.”

Mrs. Pham said if she seems peaceful, it’s only because she still has dreams.

“If I stopped dreaming, that means I already died,” she said.

Mary-Beth McLaughlin is a newspaper journalist for the Toledo Blade.
Analyzing sentence structure can help you improve your writing. Analyze the excerpt you read from Dan Rather’s “They Live the Dream” by completing the following chart as your teacher directs. Afterward, reflect on what the chart tells you about this particular text. What might using this chart tell you about your own writing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence Number</th>
<th>First Four Words</th>
<th>Special Features: Figurative Language</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Number of Words per Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>She started her company</td>
<td></td>
<td>started</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Prompt:** What generalizations can you make about the text you are analyzing using the information you have gathered?

Next revisit your one-page response from Activity 1.6 and analyze your sentence structure.
Money Quotes

The love of money is the root of all evil. (from The Bible)

Remember that time is money. (*Benjamin Franklin*)

Put not your trust in money, but your money in trust. (*Oliver Wendell Holmes*)

A good reputation is more valuable than money. (*Pubilius Syrus*)

“If money be not thy servant, it will be thy master. (*Sir Francis Bacon*)

“The safest way to double your money is to fold it over twice and put it in your pocket.” (*Frank McKinney Hubbard*)

“Those who believe money can do everything are frequently prepared to do everything for money.” (*George Savile*)

There’s no money in poetry, but then there’s no poetry in money, either. (*Robert Graves*)

Mammon, n.: The god of the world’s leading religion. (*Ambrose Bierce*)

Money cannot buy happiness. (*Anonymous*)

A fool and his money are soon parted. (*Benjamin Franklin*)

A penny saved is a penny earned. (*Benjamin Franklin*)

Money is like manure. If you spread it around, it does a lot of good, but if you pile it up in one place, it stinks like hell. (*Thornton Wilder*)
Money, the long green,
cash, stash, rhino, jack
or just plain dough.

Chock it up, fork it over,
shell it out. Watch it
burn holes through pockets.

To be made of it! To have it
to burn! Greenbacks, double eagles,
megabucks and Ginnie Maes.

It greases the palm, feathers a nest,
holds heads above water,
makes both ends meet.

Money breeds money.
Gathering interest, compounding daily.
Always in circulation.

Money. You don't know where it's been,
but you put it where your mouth is.
And it talks.
Walter: No — there ain't no woman! Why do women always think there's a woman somewhere when a man gets restless. *(coming to her)*
Mama — Mama — I want so many things…

Mama: Yes, son —

Walter: I want so many things that they are driving me kind of crazy…
Mama — look at me.

Mama: I'm looking at you. You a good-looking boy. You got a job, a nice wife, a fine boy and —

Walter: A job. *(looks at her)* Mama, a job? I open and close car doors all day long. I drive a man around in his limousine and I say, “Yes sir; no, sir; very good, sir; shall I take the Drive, sir?” Mama, that ain't no kind of job… that ain't nothing at all. *(very quietly)* Mama, I don't know if I can make you understand.

Mama: Understand what, baby?

Walter: *(quietly)* Sometimes it's like I can see the future stretched out in front of me — just plain as day. The future, Mama. Hanging over there at the edge of my days. Just waiting for me — a big, looming blank space — full of nothing. Just waiting for me. *(pause)* Mama — sometimes when I'm downtown and I pass them cool, quiet-looking restaurants where them white boys are sitting back and talking 'bout things… sitting there turning deals worth millions of dollars… sometimes I see guys don't look much older than me —

Mama: Son — how come you talk so much 'bout money?
**Walter:** *with immense passion* Because it is life, Mama!

**Mama:** *quietly*. Oh — *very quietly* So now it’s life. Money is life. Once upon a time freedom used to be life — now it’s money. I guess the world really do change…

**Walter:** No — it was always money, Mama. We just didn’t know about it.

**Mama:** No… something has changed. *She looks at him.* You something new, boy. In my time we was worried about not being lynched and getting to the North if we could and how to stay alive and still have a pinch of dignity too… Now here come you and Beneatha — talking ’bout things we ain’t never even thought about hardly, me and your daddy. You ain’t satisfied or proud of nothing we done. I mean that you had a home; that we kept you out of trouble till you was grown; that you don’t have to ride to work on the back of nobody’s streetcar — You my children — but how different we done become.

**Walter:** *a long beat. He pats her hand and gets up.* You just don’t understand, Mama, you just don’t understand.

**Mama:** Son — do you know your wife is expecting another baby? *WALTER stands, stunned, and absorbs what his mother has said.* That’s what she wanted to talk to you about. *Walter sinks down into a chair.* This ain’t for me to be telling — but you ought to know. *She waits.* I think Ruth is thinking ’bout getting rid of that child.

**Walter:** *slowly understanding* No — no — Ruth wouldn’t do that.

**Mama:** When the world gets ugly enough — a woman will do anything for her family. The part that’s already living.

**Walter:** You don’t know Ruth, Mama, if you think she would do that.

*Ruth opens the bedroom door and stands there a little limp.*

**Ruth:** *beaten* Yes I would too, Walter. *pause* I gave her a five-dollar down payment.

*There is total silence as the man stares at his wife and the mother stares at her son.*

**Mama:** *presently* Well — *tightly* Well — son, I’m waiting to hear you say something… I’m waiting to hear how you be your father’s son. Be the man he was… *pause* You wife say she going to destroy your child. And I’m waiting to hear you talk like him and say we a people who give children life, not who destroys them — *She rises.* I’m waiting to see you stand up and look like your daddy and say we done give up one baby to poverty and that we ain’t going to give up nary another one… I’m waiting.

**Walter:** Ruth —

**Mama:** If you a son of mine, tell her! *Walter turns, looks at her and can say nothing. She continues, bitterly.* You… you are a disgrace to your father’s memory. Somebody get me my hat.
Old Anthony Rockwall, retired manufacturer and proprietor of Rockwall’s Eureka Soap, looked out the library window of his Fifth Avenue mansion and grinned. His neighbor to the right — the aristocratic clubman, G. Van Schuylyght-Suffolk Jones — came out to his waiting motor-car, wrinkling a contumelious nostril, as usual, at the Italian renaissance sculpture of the soap palace’s front elevation.

“Stuck-up old statuette of nothing doing!” commented the ex-Soap King. “The Eden Musee’ll get that old frozen Nesselrode yet if he don’t watch out. I’ll have this house painted red, white, and blue next summer and see if that’ll make his Dutch nose turn up any higher.”

And then Anthony Rockwall, who never cared for bells, went to the door of his library and shouted “Mike!” in the same voice that had once chipped off pieces of the welkin on the Kansas prairies.

“Tell my son,” said Anthony to the answering menial, “to come in here before he leaves the house.”

When young Rockwall entered the library the old man laid aside his newspaper, looked at him with a kindly grimness on his big, smooth, ruddy countenance, rumbled his mop of white hair with one hand and rattled the keys in his pocket with the other.

1 contumelious: a humiliating insult
2 menial: servant, maid
3 countenance: facial expression
“Richard,” said Anthony Rockwall, “what do you pay for the soap that you use?”

Richard, only six months home from college, was startled a little. He had not yet taken the measure of this sire of his, who was as full of unexpectednesses as a girl at her first party.

“Six dollars a dozen, I think, dad.”

“And your clothes?”

“I suppose about sixty dollars, as a rule.”

“You’re a gentleman,” said Anthony, decidedly. “I’ve heard of these young bloods spending $24 a dozen for soap, and going over the hundred mark for clothes. You’ve got as much money to waste as any of ’em, and yet you stick to what’s decent and moderate. Now I use the old Eureka — not only for sentiment, but it’s the purest soap made. Whenever you pay more than 10 cents a cake for soap you buy bad perfumes and labels. But 50 cents is doing very well for a young man in your generation, position and condition. As I said, you’re a gentleman. They say it takes three generations to make one. They’re off. Money’ll do it as slick as soap grease. It’s made you one. By hokey! it’s almost made one of me. I’m nearly as impolite and disagreeable and ill-mannered as these two old Knickerbockergents on each side of me that can’t sleep of nights because I bought in between ’em.”

“There are some things that money can’t accomplish,” remarked young Rockwall, rather gloomily.

“Now, don’t say that,” said old Anthony, shocked. “I bet my money on money every time. I’ve been through the encyclopedia down to Y looking for something that you can’t buy with it; and I expect to have to take up the appendix next week. I’m for money against the field. Tell me something money won’t buy.”

“For one thing,” answered Richard, rankling a little, “it won’t buy one into the exclusive circles of society.”

“Oho! won’t it?” thundered the champion of the root of evil. “You tell me where your exclusive circles would be if the first Astor hadn’t had the money to pay for his steerage passage over?”

Richard sighed.

“And that’s what I was coming to,” said the old man, less boisterously. “That’s why I asked you to come in. There’s something going wrong with you, boy. I’ve been noticing it for two weeks. Out with it. I guess I could lay my hands on eleven millions within twenty-four hours, besides the real estate. If it’s your liver, there’s the Rambler down in the bay, coaled, and ready to steam down to the Bahamas in two days.”
“Not a bad guess, dad; you haven’t missed it far.”

“Ah,” said Anthony, keenly; “what’s her name?”

Richard began to walk up and down the library floor. There was enough comradeship and sympathy in this crude old father of his to draw his confidence.

“Why don’t you ask her?” demanded old Anthony. “She’ll jump at you. You’ve got the money and the looks, and you’re a decent boy. Your hands are clean. You’ve got no Eureka soap on ‘em. You’ve been to college, but she’ll overlook that.”

“I haven’t had a chance,” said Richard.

“Make one,” said Anthony. “Take her for a walk in the park, or a straw ride or walk home with her from church. Chance! Pshaw!”

“You don’t know the social mill, dad. She’s part of the stream that turns it. Every hour and minute of her time is arranged for days in advance. I must have that girl, dad, or this town is a blackjack swamp forevermore. And I can’t write it. I can’t do that.”

“Tut!” said the old man. “Do you mean to tell me that with all the money I’ve got you can’t get an hour or two of a girl’s time for yourself?”

“I’ve put it off too late. She’s going to sail for Europe at noon day after tomorrow for a two years’ stay. I’m to see her alone tomorrow evening for a few minutes. She’s at Larchmont now at her aunt’s. I can’t go there. But I’m allowed to meet her with a cab at the Grand Central Station tomorrow evening at the 8:30 train. We drive down Broadway to Wallack’s at a gallop, where her mother and a box party will be waiting for us in the lobby. Do you think she would listen to a declaration from me during that six or eight minutes under those circumstances? No. And what chance would I have in the theatre or afterward? None. No, dad, this is one tangle that your money can’t unravel. We can’t buy one minute of time with cash; if we could, rich people would live longer. There’s no hope of getting a talk with Miss Lantry before she sails.”

“All right, Richard, my boy,” said old Anthony, cheerfully. “You may run along down to your club now. I’m glad it ain’t your liver. But don’t forget to burn a few punk sticks in the joss house to the great god Mazuma from time to time. You say money won’t buy time? Well, of course, you can’t order eternity wrapped up and delivered at your residence for a price, but I’ve seen Father Time get pretty bad stone bruises on his heels when he walked through the gold diggings.”

That night came Aunt Ellen, gentle, sentimental, wrinkled, sighing, oppressed by wealth, in to Brother Anthony at his evening paper, and began discourse on the subject of lovers’ woes.
“He told me all about it,” said Brother Anthony, yawning. “I told him my bank account was at his service. And then he began to knock money. Said money couldn't help. Said the rules of society couldn't be bucked for a yard by a team of ten-millionaires.”

“Oh, Anthony,” sighed Aunt Ellen, “I wish you would not think so much of money. Wealth is nothing where a true affection is concerned. Love is all-powerful. If he only had spoken earlier! She could not have refused our Richard. But now I fear it is too late. He will have no opportunity to address her. All your gold cannot bring happiness to your son.”

At eight o'clock the next evening Aunt Ellen took a quaint old gold ring from a moth-eaten case and gave it to Richard.

“Wear it tonight, nephew,” she begged. “Your mother gave it to me. Good luck in love she said it brought. She asked me to give it to you when you had found the one you loved.”

Young Rockwall took the ring reverently and tried it on his smallest finger. It slipped as far as the second joint and stopped. He took it off and stuffed it into his vest pocket, after the manner of man. And then he phoned for his cab.

At the station he captured Miss Lantry out of the gadding mob at eight thirty-two.

“We mustn't keep mamma and the others waiting,” said she.

“To Wallack's Theatre as fast as you can drive!” said Richard loyally.

They whirled up Forty-second to Broadway, and then down the white-starred lane that leads from the soft meadows of sunset to the rocky hills of morning.

At Thirty-fourth Street young Richard quickly thrust up the trap and ordered the cabman to stop.

“I've dropped a ring,” he apologized, as he climbed out. “It was my mother's and I'd hate to lose it. I won't detain you a minute — I saw where it fell.”

In less than a minute he was back in the cab with the ring.

But within that minute a crosstown car had stopped directly in front of the cab. The cab-man tried to pass to the left, but a heavy express wagon cut him off. He tried the right and had to back away from a furniture van that had no business to be there. He tried to back out, but dropped his reins and swore dutifully. He was blockaded in a tangled mess of vehicles and horses.

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4 *reverently*: deeply respectful
One of those street blockades had occurred that sometimes tie up commerce and movement quite suddenly in the big city.

"Why don't you drive on?" said Miss Lantry impatiently. "We'll be late."

Richard stood up in the cab and looked around. He saw a congested flood of wagons, trucks, cabs, vans, and street cars filling the vast space where Broadway, Sixth Avenue, and Thirty-fourth Street cross one another as a twenty-six inch maiden fills her twenty-two inch girdle. And still from all the cross streets they were hurrying and rattling toward the converging point at full speed, and hurling themselves into the straggling mass, locking wheels and adding their drivers’ imprecations to the clamor. The entire traffic of Manhattan seemed to have jammed itself around them. The oldest New Yorker among the thousands of spectators that lined the sidewalks had not witnessed a street blockade of the proportions of this one.

"I'm very sorry," said Richard, as he resumed his seat, "but it looks as if we are stuck. They won't get this jumble loosened up in an hour. It was my fault. If I hadn't dropped the ring we — "

"Let me see the ring," said Miss Lantry. "Now that it can't be helped, I don't care. I think theatres are stupid, anyway."

At 11 o'clock that night somebody tapped lightly on Anthony Rockwall's door.

"Come in," shouted Anthony, who was in a red dressing-gown, reading a book of piratical adventures.

Somebody was Aunt Ellen, looking like a gray-haired angel that had been left on earth by mistake.

"They’re engaged, Anthony," she said, softly. "She has promised to marry our Richard. On their way to the theatre there was a street blockade, and it was two hours before their cab could get out of it."

"And oh, brother Anthony, don't ever boast of the power of money again. A little emblem of true love — a little ring that symbolized unending and unmercerary affection — was the cause of our Richard finding his happiness. He dropped it in the street, and got out to recover it. And before they could continue the blockade occurred. He spoke to his love and won her there while the cab was hemmed in. Money is dross compared with true love, Anthony."

"All right," said old Anthony. "I'm glad the boy has got what he wanted. I told him I wouldn't spare any expense in the matter if — "

"But, Brother Anthony, what good could your money have done?"
“Sister,” said Anthony Rockwall. “I’ve got my pirate in a devil of a scrape. His ship has just been scuttled, and he’s too good a judge of the value of money to let drown. I wish you would let me go on with this chapter.”

The story should end here. I wish it would as heartily as you who read it wish it did. But we must go to the bottom of the well for the truth.

The next day a person with red hands and a blue polka-dot necktie, who called himself Kelly, called at Anthony Rockwall’s house, and was at once received in the library.

“Well,” said Anthony, reaching for his check-book, “it was a good bilin’ of soap. Let’s see — you had $5,000 in cash.”

“I paid out $300 more of my own,” said Kelly. “I had to go a little above the estimate. I got the express wagons and cabs mostly for $5; but the trucks and two-horse teams mostly raised me to $10. The motormen wanted $10, and some of the loaded teams $20. The cops struck me hardest — $50 I paid two, and the rest $20 and $25. But didn’t it work beautiful, Mr. Rockwall? I’m glad William A. Brady wasn’t onto that little outdoor vehicle mob scene. I wouldn’t want William to break his heart with jealousy. And never a rehearsal, either! The boys was on time to the fraction of a second. It was two hours before a snake could get below Greeley’s statue.”

“Thirteen hundred — there you are, Kelly,” said Anthony, tearing off a check. “Your thousand, and the $300 you were out. You don’t despise money, do you, Kelly?”

“Me?” said Kelly. “I can lick the man that invented poverty.”

Anthony called Kelly when he was at the door.

“You didn’t notice,” said he, “anywhere in the tie-up, a kind of fat boy without any clothes on shooting arrows around with a bow, did you?”

“Why, no,” said Kelly, mystified. “I didn’t. If he was like you say, maybe the cops pinched him before I got there.”

“I thought the little rascal wouldn’t be on hand,” chuckled Anthony. “Good-bye, Kelly.”
Listen While You Work

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Graphic Organizer, Think-Pair-Share, Marking the Text

My Notes

Song

HARLAN MAN

by Steve Earle

I’m a Harlan Man
Went down in the mine when I was barely grown
It was easy then
‘Cause I didn’t know what I know now

But I’m a family man
And it’s the only life that I’ve ever known
But I’m a Harlan Man
Just as long as my luck and lungs hold out

I’m a mountain man

Born in east Kentucky and here I’ll stay
And if it’s the good Lord’s plan
I’ll wake up in the mornin’ and find
I’m lookin’ at the end
Of another long week and I can draw my pay

‘Cause I’m a Harlan Man
Never catch me whinin’ cause I ain’t that kind

I’m a union man
Just like my daddy and all my kin
I took a union stand

No matter what the company said
I got me two good hands
And just as long as I’m able I won’t give in
‘Cause I’m a Harlan Man
A coal minin’ mother ‘til the day I’m dead
Song

The Mountain

by Steve Earle

I was born on this mountain a long time ago
Before they knocked down the timber and strip-mined the coal
When you rose in the mornin’ before it was light
To go down in that dark hole and come back up at night

I was born on this mountain, this mountain’s my home
She holds me and keeps me from worry and woe
Well, they took everything that she gave, now they’re gone
But I’ll die on this mountain, this mountain’s my home

I was young on this mountain but now I am old
And I knew every holler, every cool swimmin’ hole
’Til one night I lay down and woke up to find
That my childhood was over and I went down in the mine

There’s a hole in this mountain and it’s dark and it’s deep
And God only knows all the secrets it keeps
There’s a chill in the air only miners can feel
There’re ghosts in the tunnels that the company sealed
As you listen to the songs and or read the lyrics, fill in the chart in order to get a sense of the speakers’ perspectives on work.

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<th>Title</th>
<th>What is the speaker’s age? What makes you come to this conclusion?</th>
<th>What are the speaker’s feelings about the job? Why?</th>
<th>What is the theme of the song? Support your response.</th>
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**Thesis Statement:** Compose a thesis statement comparing the two speakers. Support your statement with a paragraph of explanation.

Thesis Statement:

Support paragraph:
Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper

by Martín Espada

At sixteen, I worked after high school hours at a printing plant that manufactured legal pads: Yellow paper stacked seven feet high and leaning as I slipped cardboard between the pages, then brushed red glue up and down the stack. No gloves: fingertips required for the perfection of paper, smoothing the exact rectangle. Sluggish by 9 PM, the hands would slide along suddenly sharp paper, and gather slits thinner than the crevices of the skin, hidden. Then the glue would sting, hands oozing till both palms burned at the punchclock.

Ten years later, in law school, I knew that every legal pad was glued with the sting of hidden cuts, that every open lawbook was a pair of hands upturned and burning.
As you read the poem, “Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper,” complete the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choose a statement that reflects what the speaker learned from his work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write out and create a visual of the last image of the poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think the title means?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write an interpretive statement about the speaker’s realization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Complete the following SOAPSTone to analyze the interview “Roberto Acuna Talks About Farm Workers,” recorded by Studs Terkel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>S</strong>peaker</th>
<th>What can you say about the speaker based on references in the text? Is race, gender, class, or age important?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>O</strong>ccasion</td>
<td>What issues may have motivated the speaker to think about the incident or occasion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong>udience</td>
<td>Who is being addressed? Identify some characteristics of the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong>urpose</td>
<td>What is the message and how does the author want the audience to respond?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong>ubject</td>
<td>What is the focus? The subject can be stated by using a few words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong>one</td>
<td>Using textual support, how would you describe the overall tone of the passage?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I walked out of the fields two years ago. I saw the need to change the California feudal system, to change the lives of farm workers, to make these huge corporations feel they’re not above anybody. I am thirty-four years old and I try to organize for the United Farm Workers of America….

If you’re picking lettuce, the thumbnails fall off ‘cause they’re banged on the box. Your hands get swollen. You can’t slow down because the foreman sees you’re so many boxes behind and you’d better get on. But people would help each other. If you’re feeling bad that day, somebody who’s feeling pretty good would help. Any people that are suffering have to stick together, whether they like it or not, whether they be black, brown, or pink….

I began to see how everything was so wrong. When growers can have an intricate watering system to irrigate their crops but they can’t have running water inside the houses of workers. Veterinarians tend to the needs of domestic animals but they can’t have medical care for the workers. They can have land subsidies for the growers but they can’t have adequate unemployment compensation for the workers. They treat him like a farm implement. In fact, they treat their implements better and their domestic animals better. They have heat and insulated barns for the animals but the workers live in beat-up shacks with no heat at all.

Illness in the fields is 120 percent higher than the average rate for industry. It’s mostly back trouble, rheumatism, and arthritis, because of the damp weather and the cold. Stoop labor is very hard on a person. Tuberculosis is high. And now because of the pesticides, we have many respiratory diseases.

The University of California at Davis had government experiments with pesticides and chemicals. They get a bigger crop each year. They haven’t any

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1 subsidy: a grant or contribution of money
2 insulate: To prevent the passage of heat by surrounding or filling with material that prevents
regard as to what safety precautions are needed. In 1964 and '65, an airplane was spraying these chemicals on the fields. Spraying rigs they're called. Flying low, the wheels got tangled in the fence wire. The pilot got up, dusted himself off, and got a drink of water. He died of convulsions. The ambulance attendants got violently sick because of the pesticide he had on his person. A little girl was playing around a sprayer. She stuck her tongue on it. She died instantly.

These pesticides affect the farm worker through the lungs. He breathes it in. He gets no compensation. All they do is say he's sick. They don't investigate the cause.

There were times when I felt I couldn't take it anymore. It was 105 in the shade and I'd see endless rows of lettuce and I felt my back hurting…. I felt the frustration of not being able to get out of the fields. I was getting ready to jump any foreman who looked at me cross-eyed. But until two years ago, my world was still very small.

I would read all these things in the papers about Cesar Chavez and I would denounce him because I still had that thing about becoming a first class patriotic citizen. In Mexicali they would pass out leaflets and I would throw 'em away. I never participated. The grape boycott didn't affect me much because I was in lettuce. It wasn't until Chavez came to Salinas where I was working in the fields, that I saw what a beautiful man he was. I went to this rally, I still intended to stay with the company. But something — I don't know — I was close to the workers. They couldn't speak English and wanted me to be their spokesman in favor of going on strike. I don't know — I just got caught up with it all, the beautiful feeling of solidarity.

You'd see the people on the picket lines at four in the morning, at the camp fires, heating up beans and coffee and tortillas. It gave me a sense of belonging. These were my own people and they wanted change. I knew this is what I was looking for. I just didn't know it before.

My mom had always wanted me to better myself. I wanted to better myself because of her. Now when the strikes started, I told her I was going to join the union and the whole movement. I told her I was going to work without pay. She said she was proud of me. (His eyes glisten. A long, long pause.) See, I told her I wanted to be with my people. If I were a company man, no one would like me anymore. I had to belong to somebody and this was it right here. She said, "I pushed you in your early years to try to better yourself and get a social position. But I see that's not the answer. I know I'll be proud of you."

All kinds of people are farm workers, not just Chicanos. Filipinos started the strike. We have Puerto Ricans and Appalachians too, Arabs, some

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3 **denounce**: to openly condemn or censure  
4 **Mexicali** (mek´ si kal´ ē): Capital of the Mexican state of Baja California Norte  
5 **Salinas** (sa lě´ nas): City in west central California
Japanese, some Chinese. At one time they used us against each other. But now they can't and they’re scared, the growers. They can organize conglomerates. Yet when we try organization to better our lives, they are afraid. Suffering people never dreamed it could be different. Cesar Chavez tells them this and they grasp the idea — and this is what scares the growers.

Now the machines are coming in. It takes skill to operate them. But anybody can be taught. We feel migrant workers should be given the chance. They got one for grapes. They got one for lettuce. They have cotton machines that took jobs away from thousands of farm workers. The people wind up in the ghettos of the cities, their culture, their families, their unity destroyed.

We’re trying to stipulate\(^6\) it in our contract that the company will not use any machinery without the consent of the farm workers. So we can make sure the people being replaced by the machines will know how to operate the machines.

Working in the fields is not in itself a degrading job. It’s hard, but if you’re given regular hours, better pay, decent housing, unemployment, and medical compensation, pension plans — we have a very relaxed way of living. But growers don’t recognize us as persons. That’s the worst thing, the way they treat you. Like we have no brains. Now we see they have no brains. They have only a wallet in their head. The more you squeeze it the more they cry out.

If we had proper compensation we wouldn’t have to be working seventeen hours a day and following the crops. We could stay in one area and it would give us roots. Being a migrant, it tears the family apart. You get in debt. You leave the area penniless. The children are the ones hurt the most. They go to school three months in one place and then on to another. No sooner do they make friends, they are uprooted again. Right here, your childhood is taken away. So when they grow up, they’re looking for this childhood they have lost.

If people could see — in the winter, ice on the fields. We’d be on our knees all day long. We’d build fires and warm up real fast and go back onto the ice. We’d be picking watermelons in 105 degrees all day long. When people have melons or cucumber or carrots or lettuce, they don’t know how they got on their table and the consequences to the people who picked it. If I had enough money, I would take busloads of people out to the fields and into the labor camps. Then they’d know how that fine salad got on their table.

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\(^6\) stipulate: to lay down a condition of an agreement
With Liberty and Access to All?

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Double-Entry Journal, Writing Prompts

Use information from *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* to complete this double-entry journal. Your journal should include at least five quotes from the excerpt that contain something that “grabs” your attention or emotions. On the left side of the journal, copy the text portion, along with the paragraph number. On the right side of the journal, write your response to the quote. Use additional paper if necessary.

### Double-Entry Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quoted Material from the Text</th>
<th>Paragraph Number</th>
<th>The Effect of the Quote on You</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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It is undeniably fall when I find myself being assigned, day after day, to Holly's team. There's fog in the morning now and the farm stands are pushing pumpkins. On the radio in our company car the classic rock station notes the season by playing “Maggie May” several times a day — It's late September and I really should be BACK at school. Other people are going out to their offices or classrooms; we stay behind, Cinderella-like, in their usually deserted homes. On the pop station, it's Pearl Jam's hypnotic “Last Kiss,” so beautifully sad, it makes bereavement seem like an enviable condition. Not that we ever comment on what the radio brings us or on any other part of the world outside The Maids and its string of client houses. In this, the most dutiful and serious of all the teams I have been on, the conversation, at least in the morning, is all about the houses that lie ahead. Murphy — isn't that the one that took four hours the first time? Yeah, but it's OK once you get past the master bath, which you've gotta use mold killer on… And so on. Or we pass around our routing sheet and study the day's owners' “Hot Buttons,” as sketched in by Tammy. Typical “Hot Buttons” are baseboards, windowsills, and ceiling fans — never, of course, poverty, racism, or global warming.

But the relevant point about Holly is that she is visibly unwell — possibly whiter, on a daily basis, than anyone else in the state. We're not just talking Caucasian here; think bridal gowns, tuberculosis, and death. All I know about her is that she is twenty-three, has been married for almost a year, and manages to feed her husband, herself and an elderly relative on $30–$50 a week, which is only a little more than what I spend on food for myself. I'd be surprised if she weighs more than ninety-two pounds.

1 bereavement: mourning or sadness at the death of a loved one
before breakfast, assuming breakfast is even on her agenda. During an eight-to-nine-hour shift, I never see her eat more than one of those tiny cracker sandwiches with peanut butter filling, and you would think she had no use for food at all if it weren’t for the fact that every afternoon at about 2:30 she starts up a food-fantasy conversation in the car. “What did you have for dinner last night, Marge?” she’ll ask, Marge being our oldest and most affluent team member, who — thanks to a working commercial fisherman husband — sometimes brings reports from such fine-dining spots as T.G.I. Friday’s. Or we’ll drive by a Dairy Queen and Holly will say, “They have great Foursquares” — the local name for a sundae — “there, you know. With four kinds of sauce. You get chocolate, strawberry, butterscotch, and marshmallow and any kind of ice cream you want. I had one once and let it get a little melted and, oh my God,” etc.

Today, though, even Marge, who normally chatters on obliviously about the events in her life (“It was the biggest spider” or “So she just puts a little mustard right in with the baked beans…”), notices how shaky Holly looks. “Is it just indigestion or is there nausea?” she asks. When Holly admits to nausea, Marge wants to know if she’s pregnant. No answer. Marge asks again, and again no answer. “I’m talking to you, Holly, answer me.” It’s a tense moment, with Marge prying and Holly just as rudely stonewalling, but Holly, as team leader, prevails.

There are only the three of us — Denise is out with a migraine — and at the first house I suggest that Marge and I do all the vacuuming for the day. Marge doesn’t chime in on my offer, but it doesn’t matter since Holly says no way. I resolve to race through dusting so I can take over as much as possible from Holly. When I finish, I rush to the kitchen, only to find a scene so melodramatic that for a second I think I have walked out of Dusting, the videotape, and into an entirely different movie. Holly is in a distinctly un-team-leader-like position, standing slumped over a counter with her head on her arms. “I shouldn’t be here today,” she says, looking up wanly. “I had a big fight with my husband. I didn’t want to go to work this morning but he said I had to.” This confidence is so completely out of character that I’m speechless. She goes on. The problem is probably that she’s pregnant. It’s been seven weeks and the nausea is out of control, which is why she can’t eat anything and gets so weak, but she wants it to be a secret until she can tell Ted herself.

Very tentatively and mindful of the deep reserve of rural Mainers, as explained to me by a sociologist acquaintance, I touch her arm and tell her she shouldn’t be doing this. Even if she were feeling OK she probably shouldn’t be around the chemicals we use. She should go home. But all I can talk her into is taking the Pure Protein sports bar I always carry in my bag in case my sandwich let me down. At first she refuses it. Then, when

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2 obliviously: unaware or forgetful
3 wanly: weakly; suggesting ill health, fatigue, or unhappiness
I repeat the offer, she says, “Really?” and finally takes it, picking off little chunks with trembling fingertips and cramming them into her mouth. Also, would I mind doing the driving for the rest of the day because she doesn’t trust herself on account of the dizziness? For the first time in my life as a maid I have a purpose more compelling than trying to meet the aesthetic standards of the New England bourgeoisie. I will do the work of two people, if necessary three. The next house belongs to a woman known to Holly and Marge as a “friggin’ bitch,” who turns out to be Martha Stewart or at least a very dedicated acolyte thereof. Everything about it enrages me, and some of it would be irritating even if I were just dropping by for cocktails and not toiling alongside this pale, undernourished child: the brass plaque on the door announcing the date of construction (mid-eighteenth century), the wet bar with its ostentatious alignment of single-malt Scotches, the four-poster king-sized bed with canopy, the Jacuzzi so big you have to climb stairs to get into it and probably safe for diving when filled. I whiz through the bathrooms and even manage to complete the kitchen while the others are still on their initial tasks. Then Marge shows up in the kitchen and points out the row of copper pots and pans hanging from a rack near the ceiling. According to our instructions, she informs me, every one of them has to be taken down and polished with the owner’s special polish.

OK. The only way to get to them is to climb up on the kitchen counter, kneel there, and reach up for them from that position. These are not pots for cooking, I should point out, just decorative pots deployed to catch stray beams of sunlight or reflect the owners’ no doubt expensively buffed and peeled faces. The final pot is unexpectedly heavy — they are arranged in size order — and as I grasp it from my crouching position on the countertop, it slips from my hand and comes crashing down into a fishbowl cunningly furnished with marbles. Fish fly, marbles skitter all over the floor, and water — which in our work is regarded as a dangerous contaminant — soaks everything, including a stack of cookbooks containing Cucina Simpatica, a number of works set in Provence, and, yes, Martha Stewart herself. No one gets mad at me, not even Ted, back in the office, who is bonded for this sort of thing. My punishment is seeing Holly’s face, when she rushes into the kitchen to see what the crash was, completely polarized with fear.

After the accident, Holly decides we can take a convenience store break. I buy myself a pack of cigarettes and sit out in the rain to puff (I haven’t inhaled for years but it helps anyway) while the others drink their Cokes in the car. Have to get over this savior complex, I instruct myself, no one wants to be rescued by a klutz. Even my motives seem murky at the moment. Yes, I want to help Holly and everyone else in need, on

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4 acolyte: a devoted follower or attendant
5 ostentatious: showy; intended to attract notice
With Liberty and Access to All?

My Notes

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a world-wide basis if possible. I am a “good person,” as my demented charges at the nursing home agree, but maybe I’m also just sick of my suddenly acquired insignificance. Maybe I want to “be somebody,” as Jesse Jackson likes to say, somebody generous, competent, brave, and perhaps, above all, noticeable.

Maids, as an occupational group, are not visible, and when we are seen we are often sorry for it. On the way to the Martha Stewart-ish place, when Holly and Marge were complaining about her haughtiness in the past encounter, I had ventured to ask why so many of the owners seem hostile and contemptuous toward us. “They think we’re stupid,” was Holly’s answer. “They think we have nothing better to do with our time.” Marge too looked suddenly sober. “We’re nothing to these people,” she said. “We’re just maids.” Nor are we much of anything to anyone else. Even convenience store clerks, who are $6-an-hour gals themselves, seem to look down on us. In Key West, my waitress’s polo shirt was always a conversation starter: “You at Jerry’s?” a clerk might ask. I used to work at the waffle place just up the boulevard from there.” But a maid’s uniform has the opposite effect. At one place where we stopped for refreshments, an actual diner with a counter, I tried to order iced tea to take out, but the waitress just kept standing there chatting with a coworker, ignoring my “Excuse me’s.” Then there’s the supermarket. I used to stop on my way home from work, but I couldn’t take the stares, which are easily translatable into: What are you doing here? And, No wonder she’s poor, she’s got a beer in her shopping cart! True, I don’t look so good by the end of the day and probably smell like eau de toilet and sweat, but it’s the brilliant green-and-yellow uniform that gives me away, like prison clothes on a fugitive...

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6 This invisibility persists at the macroscopic level. The Census Bureau reports that there were 550,000 domestic workers in 1998, up 10 percent since 1996, but this may be a considerable underestimate, since so much of the servant economy is still underground, or at least very low to the ground, where few data collectors ever venture. In 1993, for example, the year when Zoe Baird lost her chance to be attorney general for paying her undocumented nanny off the books, it was estimated that fewer than 10 percent of those Americans who paid a housecleaner more than $1,000 a year reported these payments to the IRS. Sociologist Mary Romero offers an example of how severe the undercounting can be: the 1980 census found only 1,063 “private household workers” in El Paso, although at the same time that city’s Department of Planning, Research, and Development estimated their numbers at 13,400 and local bus drivers estimated that half of the 28,300 bus trips taken daily were taken by maids going to and returning from work (Main in the U.S.A., p. 92). The honesty of employers has increased since the Baird scandal, but most experts believe the household workers remain largely uncounted and invisible to the larger economy.
The Structure of an Argument

You have been introduced to the structure of an argument. As a review, read through the five key elements that are usually found in a good argument.

1. **The Hook** (Setting readers up to agree with you)
   - The hook grabs the readers’ attention and catches their interest.
   - It often establishes a connection between reader and writer and provides background information.
   - It can be, but is not limited to, an anecdote, an image, a definition, or a quotation.

2. **The Claim** (Your thesis, what you are arguing)
   - Usually comes in the opening section of your paper.
   - States your belief and what it is that you wish to argue.
   - Can be straightforward and clear, i.e.”I believe that…”

3. **Concessions and Refutations** (Build the other side up...then knock them down)
   - The author recognizes the arguments made by the other side.
   - This builds credibility by being able to discuss the other side with (apparent) objectivity.
   - Grant that the other side has some validity, then...
   - Argue at length against the opposing viewpoint by proving your side has MORE validity.

4. **Support** (Start stacking your facts to convince them)
   - Set out the reasoning behind your argument.
   - Provide supporting evidence of your claim (data, quotes, anecdotes).
   - Blend together logical and emotional appeals.

5. **Call to Action** (The final word)
   - Draw your argument to a close and restate your claim.
   - Make a final new appeal to values.
   - Voice a final plea.
   - Try not to repeat information, but sum up your argument with a few final facts and appeals.

**Writing Prompt:** On a separate piece of paper, use these five elements to draft a response to one of the following prompts:

- Compose a letter to the maid service company stating problems the maids face. Provide suggestions of what the company can do to improve conditions.
- Compose a letter to a local newspaper citing a need for a change in the attitudes of people toward those in service occupations, particularly those who are maids and wear uniforms.
Start with this assumption about Americans and money:
American teenagers are more obsessed with money than American adults.
Your job will be to prove or disprove this assumption by creating, conducting, and interpreting a survey. Individually, consider the following questions.

1. What groups of people will you need to survey?

2. What information will you need to gather about your respondents?

In small groups, brainstorm different types of questions that could appear on your survey. When you create a question that you think will be effective, write it on separate paper. When writing questions, remember to:

- Create a question that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” response.
- Write a question that can be answered numerically. For instance, you could ask respondents to rate something on a scale from 1 to 10.
- Write a question that asks respondents to categorize themselves. For instance, a political candidate might ask a respondent to state whether they are likely to vote, not likely to vote, or undecided.
- Write two questions that have open-ended responses — questions that need to be answered with words or phrases of the respondent’s own choosing.

As a class, share your sample questions and with your teacher’s help, come to consensus on the five questions that will give you the best information to prove or disprove the assumption. Be sure that you have asked for the respondent’s age on your survey.

Your teacher will give you copies of your completed survey to distribute. Each student in your small group should plan on getting responses from at least ten people, being sure that half are teenagers and half are adults.
Gathering Data

1. Total number of respondents: _____
   Total number of adults: _____
   Total number of teenagers: _____

2. Calculate the percentage of your “yes” and “no” responses.
   Adults: Yes: ___________ No: ___________
   Teenagers: Yes: ___________ No: ___________
   Overall: Yes: ___________ No: ___________

3. Calculate the average of your numeric responses:
   Adults: ___________
   Teenagers: ___________
   Overall: ___________

4. Calculate the percentages of respondents who identified themselves in particular categories:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Teenagers</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category 1</td>
<td>________</td>
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<td>________</td>
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<td>Category 2</td>
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<td>Category 3</td>
<td>________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category 4</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>________</td>
<td>________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Look through the open-ended responses. Write down words and phrases that seem to be repeated by each group.
   Adults:
   
   Teenagers:
   
   Both groups:
Creating a Survey About the American Dream

Interpreting the Data
1. Summarize your findings in the space below. Did you prove or disprove the assumption about American teenagers and adults and money? Are the results inconclusive? Explain your answer, referring to the specific percentages you calculated on the previous page.

Presenting the Data
2. The circle below represents 100 percent of the respondents to the survey. Write one of your numeric questions above the circle and shade in different colors the percentage of teenagers who responded one way and the percentage of adults who responded the same way.

3. What other methods of presenting data visually might work for your survey?

Reflecting on Survey
4. You and your classmates conducted the exact same survey. Compare your results with the rest of the class. Which questions seemed to work well for your survey and which questions would you change if you could? Why?
Presenting Findings from a Survey

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Think-Pair-Share, Graphic Organizer

Assignment

Working in pairs, your assignment is to develop, conduct, interpret, and present the findings of a survey that is designed to prove or disprove an assumption about the American Dream.

Steps

1. As a class, brainstorm ideas, hypotheses, or assumptions you have about people's attitudes regarding America or the American Dream.
2. Determine a target group for your survey and develop a working hypothesis like the one in the previous activity: “American teenagers are more obsessed with money than American adults.” You may wish to consider race, culture, age, and gender among other variables. Look to texts and ideas from the unit to help you develop your questions.
3. Consider who the targets of your survey will be to prove or disprove your thesis. What are some general questions you might ask?
4. Begin creating your survey questions as you did in the previous activity. Be sure to have questions that will provide both numeric and open-ended responses. Write the most effective questions on separate paper as a rough draft of your survey.
5. Exchange drafts with another pair of students and take each other’s survey. Share thoughts about any questions that might be confusing or ineffective.
6. Create your final survey, typed neatly on one side of a piece of paper. Double check that your survey asks for all of the information about the respondent that you will need: age, gender, race, among others.
7. Hand out your survey to at least 30 people. Be sure that your surveys are widely distributed to a variety of people.
8. Collect your data and categorize it as you did for the previous activity.
9. Begin the process of interpreting your data by asking whether you were able to prove or disprove your assumption. Consider ways that you can present your findings visually.
10. You will present your findings in the manner described by your teacher, but you should include the following:
   a. An introduction that identifies the assumption you made, why you think that this assumption is important to prove or disprove, and what your findings revealed.
   b. Body paragraphs that explain your findings using both numerical responses and words and phrases. Be sure to include your own interpretation of the findings.
   c. At least two visual representations of your findings.
   d. A conclusion that summarizes the implications of your findings (how you want people to respond, what you learned from the project).
## SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Survey</strong></td>
<td>Questions are focused and effective for the stated assumption; they elicit both open-ended and numeric responses. Questions lead to the underlying attitudes of the respondents.</td>
<td>Questions are appropriate for the stated assumption; they elicit both open-ended and numeric responses.</td>
<td>Questions do not appear to be directly related to the stated assumption and/or may not elicit both open-ended and numeric responses.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Explanatory Text</strong></td>
<td>The analysis of the survey demonstrates a perceptive look at the topic. The text is organized in a way that presents a clear thesis supported by thoughtful connections and insightful conclusions. The text demonstrates excellent understanding of standard writing conventions.</td>
<td>The analysis of the survey demonstrates a clear understanding of what the students learned about perceptions of the topic. The text is organized in a way that presents a clear thesis and support, but the reader may have to infer important details. The text demonstrates an overall understanding of basic writing conventions with some deviation.</td>
<td>The analysis of the survey lacks reflection on learning and/or understanding of the topic. Organization is insufficient. The thesis may be unclear and/or there may be limited evidence to support it. There are frequent errors in standard conventions that seriously interfere with the meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
<td>Students craft an engaging, well-organized presentation of their survey and analysis. Visuals effectively enhance findings and engage the audience. All members contribute.</td>
<td>Students craft a well-organized presentation of their survey and analysis. Visuals support presentation of findings. All members contribute.</td>
<td>Students’ presentation may be disorganized. While an attempt to incorporate visuals is made, they may distract or be under-utilized. Not all members contribute equally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Criteria</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Comments:
Learning Focus:
Defining Your American Dream

How will you pursue happiness? What is success? What is the American Dream?

An important task of every critical thinker is to be able to read and understand the thinking of others. But the task doesn’t end there. More importantly, your work is to reflect on the ideas you encounter, to weigh and evaluate the thinking of others, to mull over in your mind the multitude of ideas presented. This hard work sets you on the path to understanding and articulating your own thinking.

You may find yourself having mental conversations with writers whose ideas you respect or admire or disagree with as you struggle to formulate your own ideas. This is important creative work. It is not enough to simply read and agree or disagree, but as a critical thinker you must be able to gather together many ideas and sort through them to find what you can use and what you can discard in formulating your own thinking. This act of synthesis or combining is the creative act of constructing your own definitions of what is important to you.

Synthesizing your own thoughts, your reading, and your research will lead to your own personal understanding of the American Dream. Articulating your own thinking as well as taking ideas from texts and authors and synthesizing them into a thoughtful, personal, and persuasive argument puts you in the role of author of your own American Dream.

Literary Terms
A persuasive argument convinces readers to accept or believe a writer’s perspective on a topic.
Speech

Keynote Address

from the 2004 Democratic National Convention

(Excerpt)

by Barack Obama

On behalf of the great state of Illinois, crossroads of a nation, land of Lincoln, let me express my deep gratitude for the privilege of addressing this convention. Tonight is a particular honor for me because, let’s face it, my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely. My father was a foreign student, born and raised in a small village in Kenya. He grew up herding goats, went to school in a tin-roof shack. His father, my grandfather, was a cook, a domestic servant to the British.

But my grandfather had larger dreams for his son. Through hard work and perseverance my father got a scholarship to study in a magical place, America, that's shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity to so many who had come before him. While studying here, my father met my mother. She was born in a town on the other side of the world, in Kansas. Her father worked on oil rigs and farms through most of the Depression. The day after Pearl Harbor he signed up for duty, joined Patton's army and marched across Europe. Back home, my grandmother raised a baby and went to work on a bomber assembly line. After the war, they studied on the G.I. Bill, bought a house through FHA, and moved west, all the way to Hawaii, in search of opportunity.

And they, too, had big dreams for their daughter, a common dream, born of two continents. My parents shared not only an improbable love; they shared an abiding faith in the possibilities of this nation. They would give me an African name, Barack, or “blessed,” believing that in a tolerant America your name is no barrier to success. They imagined me going to the best schools in the land, even though they weren't rich, because in a generous America you don't have to be rich to achieve your potential. They are both passed away now. Yet, I know that, on this night, they look down on me with pride.

I stand here today, grateful for the diversity of my heritage, aware that my parents' dreams live on in my two precious daughters. I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story, that I owe a debt to all of those who came before me, and that, in no other country on earth, is my story even possible. Tonight, we gather to affirm the greatness of our nation, not
because of the height of our skyscrapers, or the power of our military, or the size of our economy. Our pride is based on a very simple premise, summed up in a declaration made over two hundred years ago, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

That is the true genius of America, a faith in the simple dreams, the insistence on small miracles; that we can tuck in our children at night and know they are fed and clothed and safe from harm; that we can say what we think, write what we think, without hearing a sudden knock on the door; that we can have an idea and start our own business without paying a bribe; that we can participate in the political process without fear of retribution, and that our votes will be counted — or at least, most of the time.

This year, in this election, we are called to reaffirm our values and our commitments, to hold them against a hard reality and see how we are measuring up, to the legacy of our forbearers, and the promise of future generations. And fellow Americans — Democrats, Republicans, Independents — I say to you tonight: we have more work to do. More to do for the workers I met in Galesburg, Illinois, who are losing their union jobs at the Maytag plant that’s moving to Mexico, and now they’re having to compete with their own children for jobs that pay seven bucks an hour; more to do for the father I met who was losing his job and choking back tears, wondering how he would pay $4,500 a month for the drugs his son needs without the health benefits he counted on; more to do for the young woman in East St. Louis, and thousands more like her, who has the grades, has the drive, has the will, but doesn’t have the money to go to college.

Now, don’t get me wrong. The people I meet—in small towns and big cities, in diners and office parks—they don’t expect government to solve all their problems. They know they have to work hard to get ahead and they want to. Go into the collar counties around Chicago, and people will tell you: They don’t want their tax money wasted by a welfare agency or the Pentagon. Go into any inner city neighborhood, and folks will tell you that government alone can’t teach kids to learn. They know that parents have to teach, that children can’t achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white. They know those things. People don’t expect government to solve all their problems. But they sense, deep in their bones, that with just a slight change in priorities, we can make sure that every child in America has a decent shot at life, and that the doors of opportunity remain open to all. They know we can do better. And they want that choice.... John Kerry believes in America. And he knows it’s not enough for just some of us to prosper. For alongside our famous individualism, there’s another ingredient in the American Dream saga, a belief that we are connected as one people. If there’s a child on the south side of Chicago who can’t read, that matters to me, even if it’s not my child. If there’s a senior citizen somewhere who can’t pay for their prescription and...
having to choose between medicine and the rent, that makes my life poorer, even if it’s not my grandmother. If there’s an Arab American family being rounded up without benefit of an attorney or due process, that threatens my civil liberties. It is that fundamental belief — it is that fundamental belief — I am my brother’s keeper, I am my sisters’ keeper — that makes this country work. It’s what allows us to pursue our individual dreams, yet still come together as a single American family. “E pluribus unum,” out of many, one.

Now even as we speak, there are those who are preparing to divide us, the spin masters and negative ad peddlers who embrace the politics of anything goes. Well, I say to them tonight, there’s not a liberal America and a conservative America — there’s the United States of America. There’s not a black America and white America and Latino America and Asian America; there’s the United States of America. The pundits like to slice-and-dice our country into Red States and Blue States; Red States for Republicans, Blue States for Democrats. But I’ve got news for them, too. We worship an awesome God in the Blue States, and we don’t like federal agents poking around our libraries in the Red States. We coach Little League in the Blue States and, yes, we’ve got some gay friends in the Red States. There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq and patriots who supported the war in Iraq. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America.

In the end, that’s what this election is about. Do we participate in a politics of cynicism or a politics of hope? John Kerry calls on us to hope. John Edwards calls on us to hope. I’m not talking about blind optimism here — the almost willful ignorance that thinks unemployment will go away if we just don’t talk about it, or the health care crisis will solve itself if we just ignore it. That’s not what I’m talking about. I’m talking about something more substantial. It’s the hope of slaves sitting around a fire singing freedom songs; the hope of immigrants setting out for distant shores; the hope of a young naval lieutenant bravely patrolling the Mekong Delta; the hope of a mill worker’s son who dares to defy the odds; the hope of a skinny kid with a funny name who believes that America has a place for him, too. Hope in the face of difficulty, hope in the face of uncertainty, the audacity of hope!

In the end, that is God’s greatest gift to us, the bedrock of this nation; the belief in things not seen; the belief that there are better days ahead. I believe we can give our middle class relief and provide working families with a road to opportunity. I believe we can provide jobs to the jobless, homes to the homeless, and reclaim young people in cities across America from violence and despair. I believe that we have a righteous wind at our backs, and that as we stand on the crossroads of history, we can make the right choices, and meet the challenges that face us….
I like “dropout” as an addition to the American Dream language because it’s brief and it’s clear. What I don’t like is that we use it almost entirely as a dirty word.

We only apply it to people under twenty-one. Yet an adult who spends his days and nights watching mindless TV programs is more of a dropout than an eighteen-year-old who quits college, with its frequently mindless courses, to become, say, a VISTA volunteer. For the young, dropping out is often a way of dropping in.

To hold this opinion, however, is little short of treason in America. A boy or girl who leaves college is branded a failure—and the right to fail is one of the few freedoms that this country does not grant its citizens. The American Dream is a dream of “getting ahead,” painted in strokes of gold wherever we look. Our advertisements and TV commercials are a hymn to material success, our magazine articles a toast to people who made it to the top. Smoke the right cigarette or drive the right car—so the ads imply—and girls will be swooning into your deodorized arms or caressing your expensive lapels. Happiness goes to the man who has the sweet smell of achievement. He is our national idol, and everybody else is our national fink.

I want to put in a word for the fink, especially the teen-age fink, because if we give him time to get through his finkdom—if we release him from the pressure of attaining certain goals by a certain age—he has a good chance of becoming our national idol, a Jefferson or a Thoreau, a Buckminster Fuller or an Adlai Stevenson, a man with a mind of his own. We need mavericks and dissenters and dreamers far more than we need junior vice presidents, but we paralyze them by insisting that every step be a step up to the next rung of the ladder. Yet in the fluid years of youth, the only way for boys and girls to find their proper road is often to take a hundred side trips, poking out in different directions, faltering, drawing back, and starting again.
“But what if we fail?” they ask, whispering the dreadful word across the Generation Gap to their parents, who are back home at the Establishment nursing their “middle-class values” and cultivating their “goal oriented society.” The parents whisper back: “Don’t!”

What they should say is “Don’t be afraid to fail!” Failure isn’t fatal. Countless people have had a bout with it and come out stronger as a result. Many have even come out famous. History is strewn with eminent dropouts, “loners” who followed their own trail, not worrying about its odd twists and turns because they had faith in their own sense of direction. To read their biographies is always exhilarating, not only because they beat the system, but because their system was better than the one that they beat. Luckily, such rebels still turn up often enough to prove that individualism, though badly threatened, is not extinct. Much has been written, for instance, about the fitful scholastic career of Thomas P. F. Hoving, New York’s former Parks Commissioner and now director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Hoving was a dropout’s dropout, entering and leaving schools as if they were motels, often at the request of the management. Still, he must have learned something during those unorthodox years, for he dropped in again at the top of his profession.

His case reminds me of another boyhood—that of Holden Caulfield in J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*, the most popular literary hero of the postwar period. There is nothing accidental about the grip that this dropout continues to hold on the affections of an entire American generation. Nobody else, real or invented, has made such an engaging shambles of our “goal-oriented society,” so gratified our secret belief that the “phonies” are in power and the good guys up the creek. Whether Holden has also reached the top of his chosen field today is one of those speculations that delight fanciers of good fiction. I speculate that he has. Holden Caulfield, incidentally, is now thirty-six.

I’m not urging everyone to go out and fail just for the sheer therapy of it, or to quit college just to coddle some vague discontent. Obviously it’s better to succeed than to flop, and in general a long education is more helpful than a short one. (Thanks to my own education, for example, I can tell George Eliot from T. S. Eliot, I can handle the pluperfect tense in French, and I know that Caesar beat the Helvetii because he had enough frumentum.) I only mean that failure isn’t bad in itself, or success automatically good.

Fred Zinnemann, who has directed some of Hollywood’s most honored movies, was asked by a reporter, when *A Man for All Seasons* won every prize, about his previous film, *Behold a Pale Horse*, which was a box-office disaster. “I don’t feel any obligation to be successful,” Zimmerman replied. “Success can be dangerous—you feel you know it all. I’ve learned a great deal from my failures.” A similar point was made by Richard Brooks about his ambitious money loser, *Lord Jim*. Recalling the three years of his life that
went into it, talking almost with elation about the troubles that befell his unit in Cambodia, Brooks told me that he learned more about his craft from this considerable failure than from his many earlier hits.

It’s a point, of course, that applies throughout the arts. Writers, playwrights, painters and composers work in the expectation of periodic defeat, but they wouldn’t keep going back into the arena if they thought it was the end of the world. It isn’t the end of the world. For an artist—and perhaps for anybody—it is the only way to grow.

Today’s younger generation seems to know that this is true, seems willing to take the risks in life that artists take in art. “Society,” needless to say, still has the upper hand—it sets the goals and condemns as a failure everybody who won’t play. But the dropouts and the hippies are not as afraid of failure as their parents and grandparents. This could mean, as their elders might say, that they are just plumb lazy, secure in the comforts of an affluent state. It could also mean, however, that they just don’t buy the old standards of success and are rapidly writing new ones.

Recently it was announced, for instance, that more than two hundred thousand Americans have inquired about service in VISTA (the domestic Peace Corps) and that, according to a Gallup survey, “more than 3 million American college students would serve VISTA in some capacity if given the opportunity.” This is hardly the road to riches or to an executive suite. Yet I have met many of these young volunteers, and they are not pining for traditional success. On the contrary, they appear more fulfilled than the average vice-president with a swimming pool.

Who is to say, then, if there is any right path to the top, or even to say what the top consists of? Obviously the colleges don’t have more than a partial answer—otherwise the young would not be so disaffected with an education that they consider vapid. Obviously business does not have the answer—otherwise the young would not be so scornful of its call to be an organization man.

The fact is, nobody has the answer, and the dawning awareness of this fact seems to me one of the best things happening in America today. Success and failure are again becoming individual visions, as they were when the country was younger, not rigid categories. Maybe we are learning again to cherish this right of every person to succeed on his own terms and to fail as often as necessary along the way.
Complete the following SOAPSTone to analyze the essay “The Right to Fail,” by William Zinsser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>What can you say about the speaker based on references in the text? Is race, gender, class, or age important?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Occasion</td>
<td>What issues may have motivated the speaker to think about the incident or occasion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Who is being addressed? Identify some characteristics of the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>What is the message and how does the author want the audience to respond?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>What is the focus? The subject can be stated by using a few words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>Using textual support, how would you describe the overall tone of the passage?</td>
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Defining the Dream

Defining the “American Dream”

In a synthesis essay, it is paramount to define important terms at the beginning of your text. In the case of this prompt, the definition you create becomes a vehicle for establishing your thesis. Consider defining important terms using the following ideas.

Define by Function (What does the “American Dream” do?):

Define by Classification (What groups belong to or have access to the “American Dream”?):

Define by Example: (What are some examples of the “American Dream”?)

Define by Negation: (What is the “American Dream” not?)

Return to the readings and work you have done in this unit. Review them to determine whether and how you can use these readings or writings as sources to support your thinking.
Synthesizing the American Dream

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Rereading, Notetaking, Prewriting, Drafting, Self-Editing/Peer Editing, Sharing and Responding

Assignment

Your assignment is to synthesize at least three to five sources and your own observations to defend, challenge, or qualify the statement that America still provides access to the American Dream, to the “tired, the poor, and the huddled masses.” This question requires you to integrate a variety of sources (3–5) into a coherent, well-written argumentative essay. Be sure to refer to the sources and employ your own observations to support your position. Your argument should be central; the sources and your observations should support this argument.

Steps

Planning

1. As a class or in small groups, review the elements of a strong synthesis paper.
2. Revisit and carefully consider the various texts (sources) from the unit to identify three to five sources that might be relevant to your position.

Creating

3. Draft your own position on the issue. Consider two or three possible positions you could take and then decide which of those positions you really want to take. Be careful not to generalize, but instead consider the nuances and complexities of the topic.
4. Imagine presenting your position on the issue to each of the authors of your sources. Create an imaginary conversation between you and the author of the source discussing the following questions and record your findings.
   ▶ Would the author/creator agree with your position? Disagree? Why?
   ▶ Would the author creator want to qualify your position? Why and how?
   ▶ Does the author make a specific claim about your issue?
   ▶ What assumptions or beliefs are either spoken or unspoken (implicit or explicit)?
5. On the basis of this imagined conversation, revise and refine the point that you would like to make about the issue so it can serve as your central thesis. Draft your opening paragraph in which this thesis is introduced relatively quickly after a sentence or two that contextualizes the topic for the reader.
6. Compose your essay considering the elements of argumentation. Be sure to develop the case for your position by incorporating within your own thinking the conversations you had with the primary sources.
You should feel free to say things like “Source A would disagree with my viewpoint, but here is why I still maintain my position” or “Source B would agree with the majority of my position but would offer a slightly different perspective in this area.”

Don’t forget to cite your sources appropriately in the text itself.

Presenting and Revision

7. Review your paper considering the two syntactical lessons from this unit (connotation and sentence openings). Make sure your sentences are varied and your word choice is appropriate for your argument. Use the S.O.S. chart for additional support.

8. Review your paper for effective elements of the argument. Do you have a hook, claim, support, concessions/refutations, and a call to action?

9. Complete your final draft.

10. Present your argument to your peers. Consider the various viewpoints and reflect on your own thinking about your claim. Has your view changed? Did other members of your group have similar views? Different? Record your reflections.
## SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Ideas            | The essay effectively synthesizes the sources and the writer’s position to defend, challenge, or qualify the central claim of the prompt. The cohesive, sustained argument includes:  
• a thesis that contextualizes the issue and captures its complexity;  
• support that convincingly goes beyond the citation of a variety of source material to analyzing the sources’ significance to the writer’s position;  
• a conclusion that goes beyond a summary of the thesis by illuminating how the writer’s position will continue to influence the reader. | The essay adequately synthesizes the sources and the writer’s position to defend, challenge, or qualify the central claim of the prompt. The sound argument includes:  
• a straightforward thesis that briefly contextualizes the issue;  
• support that clearly connects and comments on the various source material to the writer’s position;  
• a conclusion that is logical yet may be somewhat repetitive to the thesis. | The essay tries to synthesize the sources and the writer’s position yet inadequately defends, challenges, or qualifies the central claim of the prompt. The attempted argument includes:  
• a weak thesis or one that is lost in a summary of sources;  
• support that paraphrases source material with no commentary or analysis to the writer’s position; sources may be misunderstood;  
• a conclusion that returns directly to the attempted thesis or that is missing. |
| Organization     | The essay’s effective organization aptly reinforces the ideas of the argument. Ideas move smoothly and comfortably with successful use of transitions enhancing the essay’s coherence. | The essay’s clear organization supports the ideas of the argument. Ideas are easy to follow. Transitions are used to move between ideas. | The essay’s lack of organization detracts from argument, making the ideas difficult to follow. It may jump too rapidly between ideas and lack transitions. |
| Use of Language  | The essay demonstrates a mature style that advances the writer’s ideas. Precise diction and skillful use of syntax, with keen attention to varied sentence openings, help to create a convincing voice. Standard writing conventions (including accurate citation of sources) are followed. | The essay demonstrates a style that adequately supports the writer’s ideas. Logical diction and syntax, with some attention to varied sentence openings, help to create a suitable voice. Standard writing conventions (including accurate citation of sources) are followed; errors do not seriously impede readability. | The essay demonstrates a limited style that ineffectively supports the writer’s ideas. Lapses in diction or syntax may not allow a suitable voice to sustain throughout the essay. Sentence openings may be repetitive. Errors in standard writing conventions impede readability and sources may be inaccurately cited. |
# SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Emerging</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td>The reflection perceptively analyzes how the writer has considered various viewpoints and thoroughly reveals the writer’s thinking about his/her claim.</td>
<td>The reflection explains how the writer has considered various viewpoints and addresses the writer’s thinking about his/her claim.</td>
<td>The reflection does little to analyze how the writer has considered various viewpoints or to show the writer’s thinking about his/her claim.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Criteria**

Comments:
Reflection

An important aspect of growing as a learner is to reflect on where you have been, what you have accomplished, what helped you to learn, and how you will apply your new knowledge in the future. Use the following questions to guide your thinking and to identify evidence of your learning. Use separate notebook paper.

Thinking about Concepts
1. Using specific examples from your unit, respond to the Essential Questions:
   • In what ways does the American Dream manifest itself in American life?
   • How does one create a personal definition of the American Dream?
2. Consider the new academic vocabulary from this unit (Survey, Primary Source, Secondary Source) as well as academic vocabulary from previous units and select 3–4 terms of which your understanding has grown. For each term, answer the following questions:
   • What was your understanding of the word prior to the unit?
   • How has your understanding of the word evolved throughout the unit?
   • How will you apply your understanding in the future?

Thinking about Connections
3. Review the activities and products (artifacts) you created. Choose those that most reflect your growth or increase in understanding.
4. For each artifact that you choose, record, respond, and reflect on your thinking and understanding, using the following questions as a guide:
   a. What skill/knowledge does this artifact reflect, and how did you learn this skill/knowledge?
   b. How did your understanding of the power of language expand through your engagement with this artifact?
   c. How will you apply this skill or knowledge in the future?
5. Create this reflection as Portfolio pages—one for each artifact you choose. Use the following model for your headings and commentary on questions.

Thinking About Thinking
Portfolio Entry

Concept:

Description of Artifact:

Commentary on Questions: