



# Cultural Perspectives

**Visual Prompt:** Thousands of athletes and spectators from many different countries and cultures participate in the Olympic Games. What are some ways that participants might show their individual cultures?

## Unit Overview

If our culture helps to shape our personal identities, how does our culture influence the ways we view and interact with others and the ways in which we perceive our world? In this unit, you will examine the role that culture plays in forming a personal identity and how that personal identity can be supported or challenged by encounters with other cultures through real or imagined experiences.

You will also consider several issues that are commonly shared among very different cultures, and you will analyze the cultural perspectives represented by the stories that arise from those experiences. Finally, you will bring your study of cultural identities full circle as you revisit your own perspective on cultural issues and create a persuasive text to convince an audience.

**GOALS:**

- To construct a narrative that recounts issues of cultural identity
- To recognize the role that culture plays in defining ourselves as individuals
- To examine perspectives of justice across cultures and over time
- To understand and apply the elements of argument
- To develop an argument on an issue for a specific audience, using an effective genre

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

- stereotype
- artifact
- allusion
- empirical evidence
- logical evidence
- anecdotal evidence
- fallacy

**Literary Terms**

- memoir
- dialogue tags
- narrative pacing
- persona

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### Language & Writer’s Craft

- Clauses (2.6)
- Sentence Types and Structure (2.7)
- Outlining and Organizing an Argument (2.14)

# Previewing the Unit

## LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Predicting, Skimming/  
Scanning, Graphic Organizer

## INDEPENDENT READING LINK

In the first part of this unit, you will be reading nonfiction narratives by writers who share aspects of their lives. For outside reading, you may want to choose autobiographies or other narratives by authors of interest to you. To make your choice, examine narratives that reflect your own or other cultures.

## My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Preview the big ideas and vocabulary for the unit.
- Identify and analyze the skills and knowledge needed to complete Embedded Assessment 1 successfully.

## Making Connections

In Unit 1, you learned that all of us have a cultural identity. Writers express their cultural experiences through multiple narrative genres in both fiction and nonfiction. In this unit, you will further examine cultural influences by reading narratives expressing elements of culture. You will also look at issues of justice and how culture influences perceptions of justice. Finally, you will write an argument about an issue of justice.

## Essential Questions

1. How can cultural experiences and perspectives be conveyed through memorable narratives?
2. What issues resonate across cultures, and how are arguments developed in response?

## Developing Vocabulary

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 Key Terms on the Contents page.

## Unpacking Embedded Assessment 1

Read the following assignment for Embedded Assessment 1:

Your assignment is to write a narrative about an incident, either real or imagined, that conveys a cultural perspective. Throughout this unit, you have studied narratives in multiple genres, and you have explored a variety of cultural perspectives. You will now select the genre you feel is most appropriate to convey a real or fictional experience that includes one or more elements of culture.

Summarize in your own words what you will need to know for this assessment. With your class, create a graphic organizer to identify the skills and knowledge needed to complete the assessment successfully. Strategize how to complete the assignment. To help you and your classmates complete the graphic organizer, review the criteria in the Scoring Guide on page 137.



# Images of Cultural Identity

## GRAMMAR & USAGE Anaphora

Notice the writer's use of **anaphora**—the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of a line. Lyon repeats “I am from” (or “I’m from”) in each stanza. This repetition creates a pattern that emphasizes her thematic idea—her origins and history. Each use of the phrase “I am from” reveals something about her identity.

## My Notes

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Ella Lyon (1949 - ) is the author of award-winning children's books, including *Catalpa*, a book of poetry that won the Appalachian Book of the Year award, and the novel *With a Hammer for My Heart*. Lyon is often asked about her unusual first name. On her website, she explains that she was named after her uncle George and her aunt Ella.

## Poetry

# Where I'm From

by George Ella Lyon

- I am from clothes-pins  
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.<sup>1</sup>  
I am from the dirt under the back porch.  
(Black, glistening,  
5 it tasted like beets.)  
I am from the forsythia bush,  
the Dutch Elm  
whose long gone limbs I remember  
as if they were my own.
- 10 I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,  
from Imogene and Alafair.  
I'm from the know-it-alls  
and the pass-it-ons,  
from Perk up! and Pipe down!

<sup>1</sup> **carbon tetrachloride:** a chemical used for dry cleaning





**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**  
Marking the Text

My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze a narrative and identify key narrative components.
- Identify and analyze aspects of culture presented in literature.

## Elements of Narrative

You have most likely written several narratives by now in your various courses. As you recall, writers use the narrative writing mode for personal narrative—in which the writer shares something from his or her own experience—as well as fictional narrative, which is a made-up story. Whether fiction or nonfiction, writers use some common narrative techniques in telling their stories, such as creating a **setting**, a **sequence of events**, a **point of view**, a **theme**, and, of course, **characters**—real or imagined—who populate the narrative.

The following text is a memoir, which is a type of personal narrative. In her memoir, Dumas writes about her experience as a newcomer to the United States and how she and her family adjust to a different culture.

## Before Reading

1. All narratives share some key elements. Think about what makes a story interesting, and then brainstorm at least three things that all stories have in common.

## During Reading

2. As you read the text, annotate it and make notes in the My Notes space as you find important narrative elements. What narrative elements make this **memoir** a compelling read?

## Literary Terms

A **memoir** is an account of the personal experiences of the author. It is also an autobiographical account.



## WORD CONNECTIONS

### Multiple Meaning Words

The word *account* has different meanings. As a noun, *account* can mean a narrative of events, which is its use in describing a memoir as an account. It may also mean a financial record, such as a bank account or a credit card account. As a verb, *account* means to give an explanation, as in this sentence: “How would you account for the missing footballs?”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in Abadan, Iran, writer Firoozeh Dumas spent much of her childhood living in California. She credits her father—a Fulbright scholar and engineer who attended Texas A&M University—and his fondness for humorous storytelling with inspiring her to write stories of her own. After the events of September 11, 2001, friends urged Dumas to publish her stories as a way to remind readers of the humor and humanity of Middle Eastern cultures.



## Memoir

from **Funny  
in Farsi**

by Firoozeh Dumas

When I was seven, my parents, my fourteen-year-old brother, Farshid, and I moved from Abadan, Iran, to Whittier, California. Farid, the older of my two brothers, had been sent to Philadelphia the year before to attend high school. Like most Iranian youths, he had always dreamed of attending college abroad and, despite my mother's tears, had left us to live with my uncle and his American wife. I, too, had been sad at Farid's departure, but my sorrow soon faded—not coincidentally, with the receipt of a package from him. Suddenly, having my brother on a different continent seemed like a small price to pay for owning a Barbie complete with a carrying case and four outfits, including the rain gear and mini umbrella.

Our move to Whittier was temporary. My father, Kazem, an engineer with the National Iranian Oil Company, had been assigned to consult for an American firm for about two years. Having spent several years in Texas and California as a graduate student, my father often spoke about America with the eloquence and wonder normally reserved for a first love. To him, America was a place where anyone, no matter how humble his background, could become an important person. It was a kind and orderly nation full of clean bathrooms, a land where traffic laws were obeyed and where whales jumped through hoops. It was the Promised Land. For me, it was where I could buy more outfits for Barbie.

We arrived in Whittier shortly after the start of second grade; my father enrolled me in Leffingwell Elementary School. To facilitate my adjustment, the principal arranged for us to meet my new teacher, Mrs. Sandberg, a few days before I started school. Since my mother and I did not speak English, the meeting consisted of a dialogue between my father and Mrs. Sandberg. My father carefully explained that I had attended a prestigious kindergarten where all the children were taught English. Eager to impress Mrs. Sandberg, he asked me to demonstrate my knowledge of the English language. I stood up straight and proudly recited all that I knew: “White, yellow, orange, red, purple, blue, green.”

The following Monday, my father drove my mother and me to school. He had decided that it would be a good idea for my mother to attend school with me for a few weeks. I could not understand why two people not speaking English would be better than one, but I was seven, and my opinion didn't matter much.

Until my first day at Leffingwell Elementary School, I had never thought of my mother as an embarrassment, but the sight of all the kids in the school staring at us before the bell rang was enough to make me pretend I didn't know her. The bell finally rang and Mrs. Sandberg came and escorted us to class. Fortunately, she had figured out that we were precisely the kind of people who would need help finding the right classroom.

GRAMMAR & USAGE  
Syntax

If you examine the writer's syntax, you will notice her use of subordinate structures, such as subordinate clauses and appositives. The opening sentence, for example, contains an introductory adverbial clause and an appositive, in which she includes details related to the point of the sentence. The opening complex sentence is also a periodic sentence, one in which the main clause comes last, requiring the reader to complete the whole sentence to get the meaning. Consider the effect of the writer's syntactical choices on the flow, rhythm, and content of this essay.

## My Notes

## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Writers establish setting by using the narrative technique of description, such as details about location or a cultural backdrop to portray a world where characters live and interact. How does the setting for this memoir contribute to your understanding of the narrator?

# Cultural Narrative

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How does Dumas sequence her narrative? How does she use transitions to link events and signal shifts in time or location?

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

From what point of view does Dumas tell this story? How would the story change if it were told from a different point of view?

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How does Dumas create a sympathetic characterization of her mother that shows her culture without being clichéd or stereotypical?

My mother and I sat in the back while all the children took their assigned seats. Everyone continued to stare at us. Mrs. Sandberg wrote my name on the board: F-I-R-O-O-Z-E-H. Under my name, she wrote “I-R-A-N.” She then pulled down a map of the world and said something to my mom. My mom looked at me and asked me what she had said. I told her that the teachers probably wanted her to find Iran on the map.

The problem was that my mother, like most women of her generation, had been only briefly educated. In her era, a girl’s sole purpose in life was to find a husband. Having an education ranked far below more desirable attributes such as the ability to serve tea or prepare baklava. Before her marriage, my mother, Nazireh, had dreamed of becoming a midwife. Her father, a fairly progressive man, had even refused the two earlier suitors who had come for her so that his daughter could pursue her dream. My mother planned to obtain her diploma, then go to Tabriz to learn midwifery from a teacher whom my grandfather knew. Sadly, the teacher died unexpectedly, and my mother’s dreams had to be buried as well.

Bachelor No. 3 was my father. Like the other suitors, he had never spoken to my mother, but one of his cousins knew someone who knew my mother’s sister, so that was enough. More important, my mother fit my father’s physical requirements for a wife. Like most Iranians, my father preferred a fair-skinned woman with straight, light-colored hair. Having spent a year in America as a Fulbright scholar, he had returned with a photo of a woman he found attractive and asked his older sister, Sedigeh, to find someone who resembled her. Sedigeh had asked around, and that is how at age seventeen my mother officially gave up her dreams, married my father, and had a child by the end of the year.

As the students continued staring at us, Mrs. Sandberg gestured to my mother to come up to the board. My mother reluctantly obeyed. I cringed. Mrs. Sandberg, using a combination of hand gestures, started pointing to the map and saying, “Iran? Iran? Iran?” Clearly, Mrs. Sandberg had planned on incorporating us into the day’s lesson. I only wished she had told us that earlier so we could have stayed home.

After a few awkward attempts by my mother to find Iran on the map, Mrs. Sandberg finally understood that it wasn’t my mother’s lack of English that was causing a problem, but rather her lack of world geography. Smiling graciously, she pointed my mother back to her seat. Mrs. Sandberg then showed everyone, including my mother and me, where Iran was on the map. My mother nodded her head, acting as if she had known the location all along but had preferred to keep it a secret. Now all the students stared at us, not just because I had come to school with my mother, not because we couldn’t speak their language, but because we were stupid. I was especially mad at my mother, because she had negated the positive impression I had made previously by reciting the color wheel. I decided that starting the next day, she would have to stay home.

The bell finally rang and it was time for us to leave. Leffingwell Elementary was just a few blocks from our house and my father, grossly underestimating our ability to get lost, had assumed that my mother and I would be able to find our way home. She and I wandered aimlessly, perhaps hoping for a shooting star or a talking animal to help guide us back. None of the streets or houses looked familiar. As we stood pondering our predicament, an enthusiastic young girl came leaping out of her house and said something. Unable to understand her, we did what we had done all day: we smiled.

The girl's mother joined us, then gestured for us to follow her inside. I assumed that the girl, who appeared to be the same age as I, was a student at Leffingwell Elementary; having us inside her house was probably akin to having the circus make a personal visit.

Her mother handed us a telephone, and my mother, who had, thankfully, memorized my father's work number, called him and explained our situation. My father then spoke to the American woman and gave her our address. This kind stranger agreed to take us back to our house.

Perhaps fearing that we might show up at their doorstep again, the woman and her daughter walked us all the way to our front porch and even helped my mother unlock the unfamiliar door. After making one last futile attempt at communication, they waved good-bye. Unable to thank them in words, we smiled even more broadly.

After spending an entire day in America, surrounded by Americans, I realized that my father's description of America had been correct. The bathrooms were clean and the people were very, very kind.

### After Reading

- Use this graphic organizer to record specific details from the text for each of the narrative elements.

Narrative Elements	Details from the Narrative
Setting(s)	
Character(s)	
Point of View	
Sequence of Events	
Theme	

### Check Your Understanding

**Timed Writing:** In this excerpt from the memoir, Firoozeh Dumas chooses specific incidents to make a point about American culture. What point does she make, and how do the incidents she chooses to include make that point?

#### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What is the theme or controlling idea of this narrative?

#### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

A **stereotype** is an overly simple and often inaccurate belief about a group of people. **Stereotypical** is an adjective that might be used to describe a character.

#### My Notes



#### WORD CONNECTIONS

##### Foreign Words

Originally from French, the word  **clichéd** has become part of our English vocabulary. Something that is  **clichéd** is overused or without any originality.

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

Marking the Text, Paraphrasing, Graphic Organizer

My Notes

**Literary Terms**

**Dialogue tags** are the phrases that attribute the quotation to the speaker; for example, *she said* or *he bellowed*.

**Learning Targets**

- Analyze the narrative technique of dialogue.
- Write a narrative using direct and indirect dialogue.

Authors use a variety of techniques to create narratives that make their stories come alive on the page. Authors use dialogue to provide the reader with information about a character, to provide background information, and to advance the plot. You may have noticed that the previous narrative contained almost no dialogue, which served to emphasize the confusion and embarrassment, as well as the humor, of the situation. Three techniques you will examine in this unit for a stylebook focus are **dialogue**, **pacing**, and **description**.

Dialogue may be either direct or indirect. Indirect dialogue is a paraphrase of what is said by a character or narrator. This dialogue does not need quotation marks.

Example: When my mother began dropping hints that I would soon be going to school, I vowed never to go to school because it was a waste of time.

Direct dialogue is the exact words spoken by a person. This dialogue uses quotation marks and dialogue tags.

Example: "This time next fall, you will be in school," hinted my mother.  
"Why would I go to school? You'll never see me wasting my time at school!" I vowed.

**Before Reading**

1. Take a moment and think about a person you know who tells great stories. What is it about their storytelling that makes it so good? One thing that they probably do is change the *way* that they say things as they tell the story. With a partner, quickly generate a list of **dialogue tags** other than "said" that good storytellers use.

**During Reading**

2. As you read the story for the elements of a narrative, also annotate the story, noting the impact of the dialogue and dialogue tags on the story and the characters.



# Author's Stylebook: Dialogue

## GRAMMAR & USAGE Punctuating Quotations

Use quotation marks to enclose direct dialogue from characters or the narrator. Note that punctuation marks are generally placed inside the quotation marks. For example:

“Are you ready?” Granny asked my mother.

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What is the effect of dialogue on this story? Is it used to speed up or to slow down the pacing? How does it convey the action of this scene?

“I said get into that tub!” My mother shook her finger in my face.

Reluctantly, I obeyed, yet wondered why all of a sudden I had to take a bath. My mother, armed with a scropbrush and a piece if Lifebouy soap, purged me of years and years of grime till I ached and bled. As I howled, feeling pain shoot through my limbs as the thistles of the brush encountered stubborn callouses, there was a loud knock at the door.

Instantly my mother leaped away from the tub and headed, on tiptoe, toward the bedroom. Fear seized me as I, too, thought of the police. I sat frozen in the bathtub, not knowing what to do.

“Open up, Mujaji [my mother’s maiden name],” Granny’s voice came shrilling through the door. “It’s me.”

My mother heaved a sigh of relief; her tense limbs relaxed. She turned and headed to the kitchen door, unlatched it and in came Granny and Aunt Bushy.

“You scared me half to death,” my mother said to Granny. “I had forgotten all about your coming.”

“Are you ready?” Granny asked my mother.

“Yes—just about,” my mother said, beckoning me to get out of the washtub.

She handed me a piece of cloth to dry myself. As I dried myself, questions raced through my mind: What’s going on? What’s Granny doing at our house this ungodly hour of the morning? And why did she ask my mother, “Are you ready?” While I stood debating, my mother went into the bedroom and came out with a stained white shirt and a pair of faded black shorts.

“Here,” she said, handing me the togs, “put these on.”

“Why?” I asked.

“Put them on I said!”

I put the shirt on; it was grossly loose-fitting. It reached all the way down to my ankles. Then I saw the reason why: it was my father’s shirt!

“But this is Papa’s shirt,” I complained. “It don’t fit me.”

“Put it on,” my mother insisted. “I’ll make it fit.”

“The pants don’t fit me either,” I said. “Whose are they anyway?”

“Put them on,” my mother said. “I’ll make them fit.”

Moments later I had the garments on; I looked ridiculous. My mother started working on the pants and shirt to make them fit. She folded the short in so many intricate ways and stashed it inside the pants, they too having been folded several times at the waist. She then chocked the pants at the waist with a piece of sisal rope to hold them up. She then lavishly smeared my face, arms and legs with a mixture of pig’s fat



and Vaseline. “This will insulate you from the cold,” she said. My skin gleamed like the morning star and I felt as hot as the centre of the sun and smelled God knows like what. After embalming me, she headed to the bedroom.

“Where are we going, Gran’ma?” I said, hoping that she would tell me what my mother refused to tell me. I still had no idea I was about to be taken to school.

“Didn’t your mother tell you?” Granny said with a smile. “You’re going to start school.”

“What!” I gasped, leaping from the chair where I was sitting as if it were made of hot lead. “I am not going to school!” I blurted out and raced toward the kitchen door.

My mother had just reappeared from the bedroom and guessing what I was up to, she yelled, “Someone get the door!”

Aunt Bushy immediately barred the door. I turned and headed for the window. As I leaped for the windowsill, my mother lunged at me and brought me down. I tussled, “Let go of me! I don’t want to go to school! Let me go!” but my mother held fast onto me.

“It’s no use now,” she said, grinning triumphantly as she pinned me down. Turning her head in Granny’s direction, she shouted, “Granny! Get a rope quickly!”

Granny grabbed a piece of rope nearby and came to my mother’s aid. I bit and clawed every hand that grabbed me, and howled protestations against going to school; however, I was no match for the two determined matriarchs.<sup>1</sup> In a jiffy they had me bound, hand and feet.

“What’s the matter with him?” Granny, bewildered, asked my mother. “Why did he suddenly turn into an imp when I told him you’re taking him to school?”

“You shouldn’t have told him that he’s being taken to school,” my mother said. “He doesn’t want to go there. That’s why I requested you come today, to help me take him there. Those boys in the streets have been a bad influence on him.”

As the two matriarchs hauled me through the door, they told Aunt Bushy not to go to school but stay behind and mind the house and the children.

## After Reading

- Using details from the narratives that you have read so far, add to your thinking about the Essential Question, “How can cultural experiences and perspectives be conveyed through memorable narratives?”

### My Notes

#### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

In this short passage, the scene comes to life. Describe how the author uses active verbs to develop his characters.

<sup>1</sup> **matriarch:** a woman who rules or dominates a family, group, or state

# Author's Stylebook: Dialogue

## My Notes

4. Look back through the text you just read and find examples of direct and indirect dialogue. List and label them in the chart that follows. Practice the two methods of writing dialogue by paraphrasing the examples of direct dialogue and rewriting indirect dialogue as direct dialogue, being sure to punctuate it correctly.

Dialogue	Practice Writing Dialogue
<p>When my mother began dropping hints that I would soon be going to school, I vowed never to go to school because it was a waste of time.</p>	<p>“This time next fall, you will be in school,” hinted my mother. “Why would I go to school? You’ll never see me wasting my time at school!” I vowed.</p>

### Check Your Understanding

**Narrative Writing Prompt:** Using the excerpt from *Kaffir Boy* as inspiration, write a narrative that illustrates a scene from your childhood. Be sure to:

- Portray the culture of family in your narrative.
- Provide a well-structured sequence of events.
- Include both direct and indirect dialogue.

## Learning Targets

- Analyze the narrative elements writers use to create a sense of pacing in a narrative.
- Apply pacing to my own writing.

## Before Reading

**Narrative pacing** is an important part of telling a good story. A writer controls the rhythm of a narrative with specific choices in sentence length, word choice, and details. For example, a series of short sentences can heighten suspense and increase the pace, while a series of long sentences may slow the pace.

1. **Free writing:** Think about an event in your life that you might describe using either fast or slow pacing. Write about the incident. With a partner, share your free write and discuss the pacing you used in your description.

## During Reading

2. As you read the following essay, mark the text and write notes about where the pacing or rhythm of the narrative changes and how these changes in pacing affect you as a reader.

### Essay

# Pick One

by David Matthews  
*The New York Times*

In 1977, when I was nine, my father and I moved away from the protected Maryland suburbs of Washington—and away from his latest wife, my latest stepmother—to my grandmother’s apartment in inner-city Baltimore. I had never seen so many houses connected to one another, block after block, nor so many people on streets, marble stoops and corners. Many of those people, I could not help noticing, were black. I had never seen so many black people in all my life.

I was black, too, though I didn’t look it; and I was white, though I wasn’t quite. My mother, a woman I’d never really met, was white and Jewish, and my father was a black man who, though outwardly hued like weak coffee, was—as I grew to learn—stridently black nationalist in his views and counted Malcolm X and James Baldwin among his friends. I was neither blessed nor cursed, depending on how you looked at it, with skin milky enough to classify me as white or swarthy enough to render me black. But before moving from our integrated and idyllic neighborhood, I really knew nothing of “race.” I was pretty much just a kid, my full-time gig. And though I was used to some measure of instability—various apartments, sundry stepmothers and girlfriends—I had always gone to the same redbrick single-level school. Nothing prepared me for walking into that public-school classroom, already three weeks into fourth grade. I had never felt so utterly on my own.

### LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Free Writing, Think-Pair-Share, Mark the Text, Rereading

### My Notes

### Literary Terms

**Narrative pacing** refers to the speed at which a narrative moves. A writer slows pacing with more details and longer sentences. Fewer details and shorter sentences have the effect of increasing the pace.

### GRAMMAR & USAGE Semicolon

Use a **semicolon** to join **independent clauses** when the second clause restates the first or when the two clauses are of equal emphasis. For example:

- I was black, too, though I didn’t look it; and I was white, though I wasn’t quite.
- I didn’t contemplate the segregation; it was simply part of the new physical geography, and I was no explorer; I was a weak-kneed outsider, a yellowed freak.

# Author's Stylebook: Pacing

## GRAMMAR & USAGE Dash

Use a **dash** to set off or emphasize the content enclosed within dashes or the content that follows a dash. Dashes places more emphasis on this content than parentheses. Example:

The choice was both necessary and impossible: identify myself or have it done for me. I froze, and said nothing—for the time being.

## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Although this text is an essay, the author uses narrative elements. How does the author incorporate narrative, and how is this narrative element important to the author's purpose?

## My Notes

Mrs. Eberhard, my new homeroom teacher, made an introduction of sorts, and every student turned around to study me. The black kids, who made up more than 80 percent of the school's population, ranged in shades from butterscotch to Belgian chocolate, but none had my sallow complexion, nor my fine, limp hair. And the white kids, a salting of red and alabaster faces, had noses that were tapered and blunted, free of the slightly equine flare of my own, and lips that unobtrusively parted their mouths, in contrast to the thickened slabs I sucked between my teeth.

In the hallway, on the way to class, black and white kids alike herded around me. Then the question came: "What are you?"

I was stumped. No one had ever asked what I was before. It came buzzing at me again, like a hornet shaken from its hive. The kids surrounded me, pressing me into a wall of lockers. What are you? Hey, he won't answer us. Look at me. What are you? He's black. He looks white! No way, he's too dark. Maybe he's Chinese!

They were rigidly partisan. The only thing that unified them was their inquisitiveness. And I had a hunch, based on their avidity,<sup>1</sup> that the question had a wrong answer. There was black or white. Pick one. Nowhere in their ringing questions was the elastic clause, mixed. The choice was both necessary and impossible: identify myself or have it done for me. I froze, and said nothing—for the time being.

At lunchtime that first day, teetering on the edge of the cafeteria, my eyes scanned the room and saw an island of white kids in a sea of black faces. I didn't contemplate the segregation; it was simply part of the new physical geography, and I was no explorer; I was a weak-kneed outsider, a yellowed freak.

In some way I wasn't fully aware of, urban black people scared me. I didn't know how to play the dozens or do double Dutch. I didn't know the one about how your mama's so dumb she failed her pap test. I didn't know that with the wrong intonation, or the wrong addressee, any mention of one's mama could lead to a table-clearing brawl. The black kids at school carried a loose, effortless charge that crackled through their interactions. They were alive and cool. The only experience I had with cool had been vicarious, watching my father and his bebop-era revolutionary friends, and feeling their vague sense of disappointment when I couldn't mimic their behavior. The black kids reminded me of home, but the white kids reminded me of myself, the me I saw staring back in the mirror. On that day, I came to believe that if I had said I was black, I would have had to spend the rest of my life convincing my own people.

Lunch tray in hand, I made a final and (at least I like to tell myself) psychologically logical choice, one I would live with, and wrestle with, for a full decade to come: I headed toward the kids who looked most like me. Goofy bell-bottoms and matching Garanimals? Check. Seventies mop-top? Check. Then a ruddy boy with blond bangs lopped off at the eyebrows looked up from his Fantastic Four comic book, caught my eye across the cafeteria, scooped over in his seat and nodded me over.

That was it. By the code of the cafeteria table, which was just as binding in that time and place as the laws of Jim Crow or Soweto, I was white.

<sup>1</sup> **avidity**: extreme eagerness or enthusiasm

### After Reading

- After reading and annotating the essay, discuss your notes with a partner. Did you mark the same spots in the texts? Did you have the same reactions to the text?
- With a partner, reread the narrative looking for an example of each of the following sentence types.

<b>Simple</b> (one independent clause)	
<b>Compound</b> (two or more independent clauses)	
<b>Complex</b> (one independent and at least one dependent clause)	
<b>Compound-Complex</b> (two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause)	

**Narrative Writing Prompt:** Write a narrative about a time when you made an important decision about yourself. Vary the pacing in your narrative by working in simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. Be sure to:

- Use descriptive details to help the reader understand your story.
- Provide a smooth progression of experiences or events, using transitions to move through the story.
- Vary the pacing through the use of details and sentence types and lengths

### Check Your Understanding

After completing your narrative, work with a partner and share your stories. Identify the change in pacing and the sentence types each of you used in your stories.

#### GRAMMAR & USAGE Sentence Variety

A variety of sentence types gives prose a natural rhythm. Examine the variety of sentence structures in this essay.

**Complex Sentence:** “I was neither blessed nor cursed, depending on how you looked at it, with skin milky enough to classify me as white or swarthy enough to render me black.”

**Simple Sentence:** “I had never felt so utterly on my own.”

**Compound Sentence:** “Mrs. Eberhard, my new homeroom teacher, made an introduction of sorts, and every student turned around to study me.”

#### My Notes

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**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

Think-Pair-Share, Marking the Text, Rereading

**GRAMMAR & USAGE**

**Colon**

Use a colon after an independent clause when it is followed by a list, a quotation, an appositive or other idea directly related to the independent clause.

**Example:**

I want to eat what the kids at school eat: bologna, hot dogs, salami—foods my parents find repugnant because they contain pork and meat by-products, crushed bone and hair glued together by chemicals and fat.

My Notes

**Learning Targets**

- Identify and evaluate the use of sensory details and figurative language.
- Compose a description of a culturally relevant artifact from my life, using vivid language and telling details.

Description creates the world within which a narrative lives. Writers use sensory details and figurative language to craft the people, places, and things in a narrative piece of writing. These details allow a reader to see the story and to interact with the real or imagined world of the narrative.

**Before Reading**

1. How does the food that you and your family eat reflect your culture and heritage? Are there things that show up every holiday or items that you turn to for comfort? What do these foods reveal about you and your culture? In a quickwrite, share how your culture is reflected in food or an activity.

**During Reading**

2. In the following excerpt from “If You Are What You Eat, Then What Am I?” author Geeta Kothari creates an image of a can of tuna with vivid language and telling details. As you read the passage for sensory details, highlight the descriptions that speak to your senses.

**Essay**

from **If You Are What You Eat,  
Then What Am I?**

by Geeta Kothari

“To belong is to understand the tacit codes of the people you live with.”—Michael Ignatieff

The first time my mother and I open a can of tuna, I am nine years old. We stand in the doorway of the kitchen, in semi-darkness, the can tilted toward daylight. I want to eat what the kids at school eat: bologna, hot dogs, salami—foods my parents find repugnant because they contain pork and meat by-products, crushed bone and hair glued together by chemicals and fat. Although she has never been able to tolerate the smell of fish, my mother buys the tuna, hoping to satisfy my longing for American food.

Indians, of course, do not eat such things.

The tuna smells fishy, which surprises me because I can't remember anyone's tuna sandwich actually smelling like fish. And the tuna in those sandwiches doesn't look like this, pink and shiny, like an internal organ. In fact, this looks similar to the bad foods my mother doesn't want me to eat. She is silent, holding her face away from the can while peering into it like a half-blind bird.



“What’s wrong with it?” I ask.

She has no idea. My mother does not know that the tuna everyone else’s mothers made for them was tuna salad.

“Do you think it’s botulism?”

I have never seen botulism, but I have read about it, just as I have read about but never eaten steak and kidney pie.

There is so much my parents don’t know. They are not like other parents, and they disappoint me and my sister. They are supposed to help us negotiate the world outside, teach us the signs, the clues to proper behavior: what to eat and how to eat it.

We have expectations, and my parents fail to meet them, especially my mother, who works full time. I don’t understand what it means, to have a mother who works outside and inside the home; I notice only the ways in which she disappoints me. She doesn’t show up for school plays. She doesn’t make chocolate-frosted cupcakes for my class. At night, if I want her attention, I have to sit in the kitchen and talk to her while she cooks the evening meal, attentive to every third or fourth word I say.

We throw the tuna away. This time my mother is disappointed. I go to school with tuna eaters. I see their sandwiches, yet cannot explain the discrepancy between them and the stinking, oily fish in my mother’s hand. We do not understand so many things, my mother and I.



### My Notes

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### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

The author uses sensory details throughout this essay. Underline or highlight five words or phrases that refer to one of the five senses. Make a list of more positive synonyms you could use for these words or phrases. In what ways would your substitutions change the impressions Kothari’s description makes?

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### After Reading

3. What sense of pacing do you get when you read this essay? Give some examples for your response.
4. How does this writer share elements of her culture through her descriptive details? Give examples.

**Writing Prompt:** In the passage, a simple can of tuna becomes a stinking glob that represents a barrier between cultures. Write a description of an **artifact** that represents an aspect of your culture. Be sure to:

- Use vivid language and telling details to create images in the reader’s mind.
- Consider the pacing of your description.
- Vary sentences and punctuation for effect

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

An **artifact** is an object made by a person, typically an item of cultural or historical interest. You might also see this word in historical writing and scientific areas such as archeology.

# Author's Stylebook: Description

My Notes

## Language and Writer's Craft: Clauses

Clauses add variety to writing as well as help to convey meaning. Writers use a variety of clauses to enhance their writing. Reread the essay and find where the author uses the following clauses. How do these clauses affect the narrative?

Type of Clause	Example from the Text	Impact on the Narrative
<p><b>Adverbial clauses</b> (after, as far as, before, even though, if, no matter how, that, while, where) describe a verb in the sentence's main clause. An adverbial clause answers questions such as "when?", "why?", "how?" or "to what degree?"</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> At night, if I want her attention, I have to sit in the kitchen and talk to her <u>while she cooks the evening meal</u>, attentive to every third or fourth word I say.</p>	
<p><b>Noun clauses</b> perform the same functions in a sentence as nouns. A noun clause answers such questions as "who?", "whom?" or "what?"</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> I don't understand <u>what it means</u>, to have a mother who works outside and inside the home; I notice only the ways in which she disappoints me.</p>	
<p><b>Adjectival clauses</b> (that, which, who, whom, whose) describe a noun in the sentence's main clause. An adjectival clause answers questions such as "which one?" or "what kind?"</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> I don't understand what it means, to have a mother <u>who works outside and inside the home</u>; I notice only the ways in which she disappoints me.</p>	

## Check Your Understanding

Reread the description of your artifact and find one place where a clause could enhance your writing. Revise your description with an adverbial, noun, or adjectival clause.

## Learning Targets

- Examine and analyze types of sentence structures.
- Revise writing to incorporate syntactical variety

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**  
Revising

## Language and Writer's Craft: Sentence Types and Structure

In previous activities, you examined how phrases and clauses help to vary syntax and enhance an author's style. A variety of structures gives prose a natural rhythm. For each sentence type, write an example in the space below.

Sentence Type	Example
<b>Simple</b> (one independent clause)	
<b>Compound</b> (two or more independent clauses)	
<b>Complex</b> (one independent clause and at least one dependent clause)	
<b>Compound-Complex</b> (two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause)	

1. Go back to the texts you have read so far, and try to find examples of each type of sentence. Write the examples in the My Notes space.
2. Read the sentences around the examples you found. How does the writer vary his or her sentence types?

### My Notes

# Author's Stylebook: Syntactical Variety

My Notes

## Varying Sentence Beginnings

3. Sentences need not always begin with the subject. Beginning with other structures not only provides variety and interest, but can also give emphasis to an important detail or point. With a partner, review the three examples of sentence beginnings and find examples of each in the texts from the unit.

Sentence Beginnings	Example	Example from Texts
Beginning with a word	<u>Stunned</u> , Gretchen burst into tears.	
Beginning with a phrase	<u>Unable to believe her eyes</u> , Gretchen burst into tears.	
Beginning with a clause	<u>Because she was not expecting a surprise party</u> , Gretchen burst into tears.	

**Revision Writing Prompt:** Writers who use varied syntax effectively incorporate multiple sentence types in their writing. Select one piece of writing you have completed in this unit to revise for syntactical variety. Be sure to:

- Use at least three different types of sentences.
- Incorporate a variety of sentence beginnings, including beginning with a word, beginning with a phrase, and beginning with a clause.

## Learning Targets

- Examine the narrative elements of a graphic novel.
- Relate aspects of cultural perspective to literature.
- Create a graphic panel with dialogue.

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**  
Graphic Organizer,  
Summarizing, Rereading

## Before Reading

1. All narratives share key narrative elements: setting, character, point of view, sequence of events, and theme. How do you think a graphic novel tells a story through those elements?

## During Reading

2. As you read a chapter from *Persepolis*, complete the chart below with details of the key narrative elements of the story. Also generate a list of the characteristics of a graphic novel that the author uses to create the narrative.

Narrative Elements	Details from the Narrative	Characteristics of the Graphic Novel
Setting		
Character		
Point of View		
Sequence of Events		
Theme		

# Elements of a Graphic Novel

## My Notes

# Graphic Novel

by Marjane Satrapi

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marjane Satrapi grew up in Tehran, Iran. As a child, she observed the increasing loss of civil liberties in her country. At the age of 14, her parents sent her to Austria to escape the turmoil in Iran. After returning to Iran for a brief period as an adult, Satrapi moved to France, where she works as an illustrator and author of children's books.

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How does a child's point of view or perspective mirror the reader's challenge with the story of the Iranian revolution?







# Elements of a Graphic Novel

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Why is the grandmother trying to give background information about the Shah before she answers her granddaughter's questions about why her grandfather is in prison?







# Elements of a Graphic Novel

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What is the effect of this page of illustrations?





My Notes

**KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS**  
What mistake do the demonstrators make about the corpse? Why is this ironic?

**KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS**  
How do the events of the narrative influence the narrator's perspective on her world?

# Elements of a Graphic Novel

## ACTIVITY 2.8 continued

### My Notes

#### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What conclusion did the narrator come to about the apparent humor of the situation described by the father?







**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

TP-CASTT, Marking the Text, Close Reading, Drafting, Sharing and Responding

My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze a poem for the author’s use of details, diction, and imagery to convey a cultural perspective.
- Write an original poem.

## Before Reading

1. In this activity, you will read two narrative poems and then compare how each writer uses narrative elements. How do you expect the narrative elements and techniques you have studied in the prose texts to be the same or different in poetry?

## During Reading

2. As you read the following poems, look for cultural references and perspectives. Make connections to the memoirs and short story you have read.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (1956–) was born in India, but she has spent much of her life in the United States. Her writing has won numerous awards, including the American Book Award for her short story collection *Arranged Marriage*. Divakaruni sets her works primarily in India and the United States. Divakaruni began her writing career as a poet, but she has branched out into other genres such as short stories and novels.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rita Dove (1952–) was born in Akron, Ohio. She is a gifted poet and writer who has won numerous prestigious awards. In 1976, she won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for her collection of poems *Thomas and Beulah*, which are roughly based on her grandparents’ lives. Ms. Dove has served as the nation’s Poet Laureate, read her poetry at the White House under different Presidents, and appeared on several television programs. She taught creative writing for many years and currently is a professor of English at the University of Virginia.

Poetry

# Woman with kite

by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

Meadow of crabgrass, faded dandelions,  
querulous child-voices. She takes  
from her son's disgruntled hands the spool  
of a kite that will not fly.  
Pulls on the heavy string, ground-glass rough  
between her thumb and finger. Feels the kite,  
translucent purple square, rise in a resistant arc,  
flapping against the wind. Kicks off her chappals,  
tucks up her kurta so she can run with it,  
light flecking off her hair as when she was  
sexless-young. Up, up  
past the puff-cheeked clouds, she  
follows it, her eyes slit-smiling at the sun.  
She has forgotten her tugging children, their  
*give me, give me* wails. She sprints  
backwards, sure-footed, she cannot  
fail, connected to the air, she  
is flying, the wind blows through her, takes  
her red dupatta, mark of marriage.  
And she laughs like a woman should never laugh  
so the two widows on the park bench  
stare and huddle their white-veiled heads  
to gossip-whisper. The children have fallen,  
breathless, in the grass behind.  
She laughs like wild water, shaking  
her braids loose, she laughs  
like a fire, the spool a blur  
between her hands,  
the string unraveling all the way  
to release it into space, her life,  
into its bright, weightless orbit.

My Notes

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**KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS**

What descriptions does the poet use to create the setting and to describe the characters in this narrative poem?

**KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS**

All narrative, including narrative poems, have a sequence of events. List the sequence of events in the poem.

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## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

In this poem, Rita Dove uses punctuation to achieve a stylistic effect. Try reading the poem without the punctuation, or with different punctuation. How does that affect the meaning?

## Poetry

# Grape Sherbet

by Rita Dove

The day? Memorial.  
After the grill  
Dad appears with his masterpiece—  
swirled snow, gelled light.  
We cheer. The recipe's  
a secret, and he fights  
a smile, his cap turned up  
so the bib resembles a duck.  
That morning we galloped  
through the grassed-over mounds  
and named each stone  
for a lost milk tooth. Each dollop  
of sherbet, later,  
is a miracle,  
like salt on a melon that makes it sweeter.

Everyone agrees—it's wonderful!  
It's just how we imagined lavender  
would taste. The diabetic grandmother  
stares from the porch, a torch  
of pure refusal.

We thought no one was lying  
there under our feet,  
we thought it  
was a joke. I've been trying  
to remember the taste,  
but it doesn't exist.

Now I see why  
you bothered,  
father.





# Struggling with Identity: Rethinking Persona

## LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Marking the Text, Rereading, Socratic Seminar, Discussion Groups

## Literary Terms

**Persona** is the voice assumed by a writer. It is not necessarily his or her own voice.

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

An **allusion** is a reference to a well-known person, event, or place from history, music, art, or another literary work.

## WORD CONNECTIONS

### Allusions

In the first line, Rodriguez refers to “Caliban’s advice,” which is a literary allusion to the character of Caliban in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Caliban wants to steal the books and magic of another character to gain power. Rodriguez uses the allusion to refer to education, which can confer power. How do literary and other allusions help you to understand text?

## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What does the allusion suggest about the topic of Rodriguez’s essay?

## Learning Targets

- Analyze how an author’s persona relates to audience and purpose.
- Identify allusions and connect them to the writer’s purpose.
- Practice effective speaking and listening in a Socratic Seminar discussion.

## Before Reading

1. **Persona** is a literary device that writers create in their stories. A persona allows an author to express ideas and attitudes that may not reflect his or her own. Think about your own personas. What is your persona with your family versus your persona with friends and at school?

## During Reading

2. Listen as your teacher reads the memoir aloud. Then, as you read it the second time, underline unfamiliar vocabulary, and use context clues and reference materials as needed to diffuse the text. Mark the text for **allusions**, and use metacognitive markers by placing a ? when you have a question, a ! when you have a strong reaction, and a \* when you have a comment.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Richard Rodriguez has written extensively about his own life and his struggles to reconcile his origins as the son of Mexican immigrants and his rise through American academia. In his memoir, *The Hunger of Memory*, written in English, his second language, Rodriguez examines how his assimilation into American culture affected his relationship to his Mexican roots.

## Memoir

# Excerpt from **The Hunger of Memory**

by Richard Rodriguez

I have taken Caliban’s advice. I have stolen their books. I will have some run of this isle.

Once upon a time, I was a “socially disadvantaged” child. An enchantedly happy child. Mine was a childhood of intense family closeness. And extreme public alienation.

Thirty years later I write this book as a middle-class American man. Assimilated.

Dark-skinned. To be seen at a Belgravia dinner party. Or in New York. Exotic in a tuxedo. My face is drawn to severe Indian features which would pass notice on the page of a *National Geographic*, but at a cocktail party in Bel Air somebody wonders: “Have



you ever thought of doing any high-fashion modeling? Take this card.” (In Beverly Hills will this monster make a man.)

A lady in a green dress asks, “Didn’t we meet at the Thompsons’ party last month in Malibu?”

And, “What do you do, Mr. Rodriguez?”

I write: I am a writer.

A part-time writer. When I began this book, five years ago, a fellowship bought me a year of continuous silence in my San Francisco apartment. But the words wouldn’t come. The money ran out. So I was forced to take temporary jobs. (I have friends who, with a phone call, can find me well-paying work.) In past months I have found myself in New York. In Los Angeles. Working. With money. Among people with money. And at leisure—a weekend guest in Connecticut; at a cocktail party in Bel Air.

Perhaps because I have always, accidentally, been a classmate to children of rich parents, I long ago came to assume my association with their world; came to assume that I could have money, if it was money I wanted. But money, big money, has never been the goal of my life. My story is not a version of Sammy Glick’s. I work to support my habit of writing. The great luxury of my life is the freedom to sit at this desk.

“Mr? . . .”

Rodriguez. The name on the door. The name on my passport. The name I carry from my parents—who are no longer my parents, in a cultural sense. This is how I pronounce it: Rich-heard Road-re-guess. This is how I hear it most often.

The voice through the microphone says, “Ladies and gentlemen, it is with pleasure that I introduce Mr. Richard Rodriguez.”

I am invited very often these days to speak about modern education in college auditoriums and in Holiday Inn ballrooms. I go, still feel a calling to act the teacher, though not licensed by the degree. One time my audience is a convention of university administrators; another time high school teachers of English; another time a women’s alumnae group.

“Mr. Rodriguez has written extensively about contemporary education.”

Several essays. I have argued particularly against two government programs—affirmative action and bilingual education.

“He is a provocative speaker.”

I have become notorious among certain leaders of America’s Ethnic Left. I am considered a dupe, an ass, the fool—Tom Brown, the brown Uncle Tom, interpreting the writing on the wall to a bunch of cigar-smoking pharaohs.

A dainty white lady at the women’s club luncheon approaches the podium after my speech to say, after all, wasn’t it a shame that I wasn’t able to ‘use’ my Spanish in school. What a shame. But how dare her lady-fingered pieties extend to my life!

There are those in White America who would anoint me to play out for them some drama of ancestral reconciliation. Perhaps because I am marked by indelible color they

### My Notes

#### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Notice how Rodriguez controls the narrative pacing with his sentence lengths. How does the pacing of the selection affect you as reader?

#### GRAMMAR & USAGE Punctuation for Effect

Writers may place quotation marks around a word to suggest irony or sarcasm. Rodriguez does this when he ironically reports a listener’s comment to him: “... wasn’t it a shame that I wasn’t able to ‘use’ my Spanish in school.”

#### GRAMMAR & USAGE Sentence Types

An effective way to create rhythm and emphasis in prose is to vary sentence types and lengths. Notice that Rodriguez uses declarative sentences, rhetorical questions, and sentence fragments. These syntactical choices reflect his flow of thoughts and produce sentence variety.

# Struggling with Identity: Rethinking Persona

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Earlier Rodriguez says, “They are no longer my parents, in a cultural sense.” Here, he discusses loss in terms of his parents. Why are these statements true for him?

easily suppose that I am unchanged by social mobility, that I can claim unbroken ties with my past. The possibility! At a time when many middle-class children and parents grow distant, apart, no longer speak, romantic solutions appeal.

But I reject the role. (Caliban won't ferry a TV crew back to his island, there to recover his roots.)

Aztec ruins hold no special interest for me. I do not search Mexican graveyards for ties to unnamable ancestors. I assume I retain certain features of gesture and mood derived from buried lives. I also speak Spanish today. And read Garcia Lorca and García Márquez at my leisure. But what consolation can that fact bring against the knowledge that my mother and father have never heard of Garcia Lorca or García Márquez?

What preoccupies me is immediate; the separation I endure with my parents is loss. This is what matters to me; the story of the scholarship boy who returns home one summer from college to discover bewildering silence, facing his parents. This is my story. An American story. Consider me, if you choose, a comic victim of two cultures. This is my situation; writing these pages, surrounded in the room I am in by volumes of Montaigne and Shakespeare and Lawrence. They are mine now.

A Mexican woman passes in a black dress. She wears a white apron; she carries a tray of hors d'oeuvres. She must only be asking if there are any I want as she proffers the tray like a wheel of good fortune. I shake my head. No. Does she wonder how I am here? In Bel Air.

It is education that has altered my life. Carried me far.

## After Reading

3. Reread the text, using the guiding questions below to deepen your understanding of Rodriguez's purpose. In groups of four, divide the questions among yourselves. Jot down answers to the questions, and then share your notes with each other.

- **Allusions:** What allusions are made? How does Rodriguez draw on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, as well as other literary works, to add depth and meaning to his text (who are Caliban, Uncle Tom, and García Márquez)?
- **Conflicts:** What forces (either internal or external) are pulling Rodriguez in different directions?
- **Diction:** What words have strong connotations and which images paint a vivid picture?
- **Syntax:** Note the use of abrupt, choppy sentence fragments. What effect do they have on your reading?
- What universal ideas about life and society does Rodriguez convey in this text?



# Changes in Perspective

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

Quickwrite, Graphic Organizer, Marking the Text, Think-Pair-Share, Close Reading

My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze tone and diction to track changes in narrative perspective.
- Examine how both internal changes and external changes can affect perspective on experiences.

## Before Reading

1. **Quickwrite:** In your Reader/Writer Notebook, describe how Thanksgiving is celebrated either in your home or by characters you have seen in films or on television. How is Thanksgiving an example of your culture?

## Perspective

Choose a holiday or celebration and describe how your perspective on or attitude toward the holiday may have changed over time, from childhood to adolescence. Then describe how you think it might change as you get older.

### Holiday/Celebration:

### Childhood Perspective:

### Adolescent Perspective:

### Future Perspective:

### During Reading

2. Complete the following graphic organizer as you read “Thanksgiving: A Personal History.”

Time Period	Tone toward the Thanksgiving Holiday with Textual Evidence	Words or Phrases Used to Indicate a Transition to This Time Period
Childhood		“When I was a kid . . .”

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What does the author struggle with as her perspective of Thanksgiving changes?

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jennifer New lives in Iowa City, Iowa, and writes regularly for online and other publications. She describes herself as a dedicated writer whose “mind is forever on the page, playing with language and new ideas for books or articles.”

### Essay

# Thanksgiving: A Personal History

by Jennifer New

*From the mythic Midwest of my childhood to the mesmerizing Chicago of later years, this holiday has always evoked a place.*

**1** In trying to explain what was missing from her life, how it felt hollow, a friend recently described to me a Thanksgiving she'd once had. It was just two friends and her. They had made dinner and had a wonderful time. “Nothing special happened,” she explained, “But we were all funny and vibrant. I thought life would always be like that.”

**2** This is the holiday mind game: the too-sweet memory of that one shining moment coupled with the painful certainty that the rest of the world must be sitting at a Norman Rockwell table feeling loved. It only gets worse when you begin deconstructing the purpose of such holidays. Pondering the true origins of Thanksgiving, for example, always leaves me feeling more than a bit ashamed and not the least bit festive. Don't even get me started on Christmas.

**3** Every year, I think more and more of divorcing myself from these blockbuster holidays. I want to be free from both the material glut<sup>1</sup> and the Pandora's box of emotions that opens every November and doesn't safely close until Jan. 2. Chief among these is the longing for that perfect day that my friend described, the wishful balance of tradition, meaning and belonging. But as an only child in a family that has never been long on tradition, I've usually felt my nose pressed against the glass, never part of the long, lively table and yet not quite able to scrap it all to spend a month in Zanzibar.

**4** When I was a kid, of course, there was none of this philosophizing. I was too thrilled by the way the day so perfectly matched the song we'd sung in school. You know the one: “Over the river and through the woods . . .” Across the gray Midwestern landscape, driving up and down rolling hills, my parents and I would go to my grandmother's house. From the back seat, I'd peer out at the endless fields of corn, any stray stalks now standing brittle and bleached against the frostbitten black soil. Billboards and gas stations occasionally punctuated the landscape. Everything seemed unusually still, sucked dry of life by winter and the odd quiet of a holiday weekend.

### WORD CONNECTIONS

The author uses an allusion to “Pandora's box” as a metaphor for unforeseen troubles. The term comes from a Greek myth about Pandora, a woman whose act of opening a sealed jar released various evils or misfortune into the world. Look at paragraph 3 and use context to determine the denotative and connotative meanings of “Pandora's box” as the author uses it.

<sup>1</sup> **glut:** an excessive amount



5 In less than an hour, we'd turn off the interstate, entering more familiar territory. My child's mind had created mythic markers for the approach to my grandparents'. First came the sign for a summer campground with its wooden cartoon characters, now caught alone and cold in their faded swimsuits. Farther up the road, a sentry-like<sup>2</sup> boulder stood atop a hill, the final signpost before we pulled into my grandparents' lane. Suddenly, the sky was obscured by the long, reaching branches of old-growth oak and elm trees. A thick underbrush, a collage of grays and browns, extended from the road and beyond to the 13 acres of Iowa woodland on which their house was situated. A frozen creek bisected the property at the bottom of a large hill. The whole kingdom was enchanted by deer, a long orange fox, battalions of squirrels and birds of every hue.



6 Waiting at the end of the lane was not the house from the song, that home to which the sleigh knew the way. A few years earlier my grandparents had built a new house, all rough-hewn, untreated wood and exposed beams, in lieu of the white clapboard farmhouse where they had raised their children. I vaguely understood that this piece of contemporary architecture, circa 1974, was a twist on that traditional tune, but to me it was better: a magical soaring place full of open spaces, surprises and light.

7 Upon entering the house, I'd stand and look up. Floating above were windows that seemed impossibly high, their curtains controlled by an electric switch. On another wall was an Oriental rug so vast it seemed to have come from a palace. Hidden doors, a glass fireplace that warmed rooms on both sides and faucets sprouting water in high arcs fascinated me during each visit. In the basement, I'd roam through a virtual labyrinth of rooms filled with the possessions of relatives now gone. Butter urns, antique dolls and photo albums of stern-faced people competed fantastically with the intercoms and other gadgetry of the house.

8 I see now that it would have been a great setting for gaggles<sup>3</sup> of cousins: having pillow fights, trudging through the snowy woods, dressing up in my grandmother's old gowns and coonskin hat. Instead, I recall holidays as having a museum-like hush. Alone with the friends I'd created in my mind and the belongings of deceased generations, I was content. Upstairs, a football game hummed from the TV, a mixer whirred in the kitchen and the stereo piped one of my grandmother's classical music 8-tracks from room to room. But the house, with its carpeting and wallpaper, absorbed it all. As I'd seen in an illustration from one of my books, I could picture the house as a cross-section, looking into each room where, alone, my family members, read, cooked, watched TV and napped. Pulling the camera farther away, the great house glowed in the violet of early nightfall, as smoke from the chimney wafted through the woodland and then over the endless dark fields, a scattering of tiny, precise stars overhead.

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How do the external forces in the author's life (moving, getting older, influence of others) cause internal conflict?

### My Notes

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### WORD CONNECTIONS

**Philosophizing** contains two roots. The root *-soph-* comes from the Greek word *sophos*, meaning "wise." This root also appears in *sophistry*, *sophisticated*, and *sophomore*. The root *-phil-* comes from the Greek *philos*, which means "love of something." It also appears in *philology*, *philanthropy*, *philately*, and *Philharmonic*.

**Empathy** contains the root *-path-*, from the Greek word *pathos*, meaning "feeling, suffering, or disease." This root also appears in *pathology*, *pathetic*, and *sympathy*. The suffix *-y* indicates that the word is a noun. The prefix *em-* means "with."

Notice the words defined in footnotes. Use these definitions (the denotation) and context clues to determine the connotation of the words as the author uses them.

<sup>2</sup> **sentry**: a guard

<sup>3</sup> **gaggles**: groups or clusters; also, flocks of geese

# Changes in Perspective

## GRAMMAR & USAGE

A writer's diction evokes feelings and images in the reader. Jennifer New chooses vivid verbs and powerful adjectives not only for their meanings but also for their connotations. Notice the verb and adjectives in this sentence:

"From the back seat, I'd **peer** out at the **endless** fields of corn, any **stray** stalks now standing **brittle** and **bleached** against the **frostbitten black** soil."

What tone does the verb *peer* create? What color and feeling do the adjectives *brittle*, *bleached*, and *frostbitten* suggest?

## My Notes

## WORD CONNECTIONS

Jennifer New uses the word "niche" to describe secret places in her house. *Niche* is a French word that may also describe a special market or one's special skills. Try to incorporate this word into your writing.

9 The moment that brought us there together—my grandparents, mom and dad, my uncle and his partner, and my great-grandmother—was perhaps the most quiet moment of all. Thanksgiving supper, held in the dim light of late afternoon, was a restrained meal, as though it were a play and we had all lost our scripts. Only the clank of silverware, the passing of dishes and the sharing of small talk seemed to carry us around and through it.

10 If I could go back in time and enter the minds of everyone at that table, I would not be surprised if only my great-grandmother and I were really happy to be there. My grandfather: walking in his fields, calculating numbers from stocks and commodities, fixing a piece of machinery. My parents: with friends in a warmer climate, "The White Album" on the stereo and some unexpected cash in their wallets. My uncle and his partner Bob: willing themselves back home and beyond this annual homage. (Bob himself was a mystery to me, a barrel-chested man who laughed a lot and wore—at least in the one mental snapshot I have of him—a wild patterned smock top and a gold medallion. No one had explained Bob's relationship to our family, so I assigned him a role in my own universe, much like the cartoon characters at the campground or the sentinel rock. I made sense of him and marveled at his ebullience.) And then my grandmother: thinking she should enjoy this, but tired from the cooking and management of the meal, more looking forward to a game later in the evening.

11 That left my great-grandmother and me. Both of us were happy to have this time with family, this mythic meal in which we both believed. And, really, everyone else was there for us: to instill tradition in me, to uphold it for her. Isn't that what most holidays are about? Everyone in the middle gets left holding the bag, squirming in their seats, while the young and old enjoy it. Within a few years, though, by the time I hit adolescence, I'd had my fill of tradition. Not the boulder, the huge house with its secret niches<sup>4</sup> nor even the golden turkey served on an antique platter that my grandmother unearthed every year from the depths of a buffet held any appeal. Gone was my ability to see the world through the almost psychedelic rose-colored glasses of childhood. I also hadn't gained any of the empathy that comes with age. Instead, I was stuck with one foot in cynicism and the other in hypersensitivity. The beloved, magical house now looked to me like a looming example of misspent money and greed. My great-grandmother, so tiny and helpless at this point, now struck me as macabre and frightening, her papery white skin on the verge of tearing.

12 Perhaps my parents took my behavior, moody and unkind as it was, as a sign that traditions are sometimes meant to be broken. I'm not sure whether they were using me to save themselves from the repetition of the annual holiday, or if they were saving the rest of the family from me. Either way, we stopped pulling into the wooded lane that fourth Thursday in November. For the next few years, we'd drive instead to Chicago. My mind managed to create similar mythic land markers: the rounded pyramids near Dekalb, Ill., which I've since realized are storage buildings; the office parks of the western suburbs where I imagined myself working as a young, single woman, à la Mary Tyler Moore; the large neon sign of a pair of lips that seemed to be a greeting especially for us, rather than the advertising for a dry cleaner that they actually were. About this point, at the neon lips, the buildings around us grew older and darker, and on the horizon the skyscrapers blinked to life in the cold twilight air. The slow enveloping by these mammoth structures was as heady as the approach down my grandparents' lane had been years earlier.

<sup>4</sup> **niches**: ornamental recesses in a wall for the display of decorative objects



# Changes in Perspective

## GRAMMAR & USAGE

When you want to emphasize parenthetical information, you may use dashes rather than commas (or parentheses). Jennifer New uses this technique in her sentence “This family—suburban, Jewish, bursting with noise and stories—so unlike my own, . . .”

## My Notes

## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What is the role of reflection in understanding the effect of changing circumstances?

**16** In years since, I’ve cobbled together whatever Thanksgiving is available to me. After college, friends and I, waylaid on the West Coast without family, would whip up green-bean casserole and cranberries, reinventing the tastes of childhood with varying success. There were always broken hearts and pining for home at these occasions, but they were full of warmth and camaraderie. Then, for several years, my husband and I battled a sea of crowds in various airports, piecing together flights from one coast to the other in order to share the day with his family.

**17** On my first visit, I was startled by the table set for more than 20 people. This was a family in which relatives existed in heaps, all appearing in boldface and underlined with their various eccentricities<sup>6</sup>. Neuroses and guarded secrets, petty jealousies and unpaid debts were all placed on the back burner for this one day while people reacquainted themselves, hugging away any uneasiness. This family—suburban, Jewish, bursting with noise and stories—so unlike my own, made me teeter between a thrilling sense of finally having a place at a long table, and a claustrophobic yearning for a quiet spot in a dark café. Or, better yet, in a dark and quiet woodland.

**18** This year for Thanksgiving, I will rent movies, walk with the dog down still streets and have a meal with my parents and husband. Throughout the day, I’ll imagine myself moving through the big house in the woods that my grandparents sold years ago. Padding down carpeted hallways, I’ll rediscover hidden doorways and unpack that platter from the buffet. A bag of antique marbles will open its contents to me as the grandfather clock chimes. Counting “12,” I’ll look outside onto the lawn and watch a family of deer make their nightly crossing through the now barren vegetable garden, jumping over the fence that my husband and I put in their path, and into the neighbor’s yard. I’ll press my nose against the cold glass and wish myself outside and beyond the still of the house.



<sup>6</sup> **eccentricity**: a behavioral oddity or peculiarity





# Writing a Narrative

## My Notes

### Assignment

Your assignment is to write a narrative about an incident, either real or imagined, that conveys a cultural perspective. Throughout this unit, you have studied narratives in multiple genres, and you have explored a variety of cultural perspectives. You will now select the genre you feel is most appropriate to convey a real or fictional experience that includes one or more elements of culture.

#### Prewriting/Planning: Take time to plan your narrative.

- Have you reviewed your notes about your culture and the groups (subcultures) to which you belong, in order to focus on cultural perspectives?
- How will you select personal experiences related to culture that you could classify as stories worth telling?
- What strategies will you use to help create a sequence of events, specific details, and images to convey your experience?
- How will you choose a narrative genre that will best suit your writing needs?
- How can you use your writing group to help you select a genre type and story idea that would be worth telling?

#### Drafting: Choose the structure of your narrative and create a draft.

- How will you include important narrative techniques, such as sequencing of events, dialogue, pacing, and description to develop experiences and characters?
- How can you use the mentor texts of your narrative genre to help guide your drafting?

#### Evaluating and Revising: Create opportunities to review and incorporate changes to make your narrative better.

- How can you use the Scoring Guide to ensure your narrative reflects the expectations for narrative techniques and use of language?
- How can you use your writing groups to solicit helpful feedback and suggestions for revision?

#### Editing/Publishing: Confirm that your final draft is ready for publication.

- What resources can you consult to correct mistakes and produce a technically sound document?

### Reflection

After completing this Embedded Assessment, think about how you completed the assignment. Write a reflection responding to the following questions:

1. What have you learned about how an author controls the way an audience responds to his or her writing?
2. What new narrative techniques did you include in your narrative to create an effect in your reader's response to the narrative?



## SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Incomplete
<b>Ideas</b>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engages the reader through interesting lead-in and details</li> <li>uses narrative techniques (dialogue, pacing, description) to develop experiences and characters</li> <li>provides a conclusion that resolves issues and draws the story to a close.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describes an incident and orients the reader</li> <li>uses narrative techniques effectively to develop characters and experiences</li> <li>provides a clear conclusion to the story.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not describe a cultural perspective or lacks essential details to orient the reader</li> <li>includes few narrative techniques to develop characters</li> <li>provides an unsatisfying conclusion that does not resolve the story.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not contain essential details to establish a cultural perspective</li> <li>does not effectively use narrative techniques to develop the story</li> <li>does not provide a conclusion.</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows the structure of the genre with well-sequenced events</li> <li>clearly orients the reader and uses effective transitions to link ideas and events</li> <li>demonstrates a consistent point of view.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows the structure of the genre and includes a sequence of events</li> <li>orients the reader and uses transitions to create a coherent whole</li> <li>uses a mostly consistent point of view.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may follow only parts of the structure of the genre</li> <li>presents disconnected events and limited coherence</li> <li>contains a point of view that is not appropriate for the focus of the narrative.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not follow the structure of the genre</li> <li>includes few if any events and no coherence</li> <li>contains inconsistent and confusing points of view.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Language</b>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>purposefully uses descriptive language, telling details, and vivid imagery</li> <li>uses meaningful dialogue when appropriate to advance the narrative</li> <li>demonstrates error-free spelling and use of standard English conventions.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses descriptive language and telling details</li> <li>uses direct and/or indirect dialogue when appropriate</li> <li>demonstrates general command of conventions and spelling; minor errors do not interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses limited descriptive language or details</li> <li>contains little or no dialogue</li> <li>demonstrates limited command of conventions and spelling; errors interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>	<p>The narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses no descriptive language or details</li> <li>contains no effective use of dialogue</li> <li>contains numerous errors in grammar and conventions that interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>

# Previewing Embedded Assessment 2 and Thinking About Argument

## LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Marking the Text, Summarizing, Graphic Organizer

## My Notes

### Learning Targets

- Identify the knowledge and skills needed to complete Embedded Assessment 2 successfully and reflect on prior learning that supports the knowledge and skills needed.
- Explore the issue of justice as a potential topic of an argument.

### Making Connections

In the first part of this unit, you explored a variety of narratives and told a memorable story that conveyed a cultural perspective. In this part of the unit, you will expand on your writing skills by writing an argumentative essay to persuade an audience to agree with your position on an issue.

### Essential Questions

Based on your learning from the first part of this unit, how would you respond to the Essential Questions now?

1. How can cultural experiences and perspectives be conveyed through memorable narratives?
2. What issues resonate across cultures, and how are arguments developed in response?

### Developing Vocabulary

Look at your Reader/Writer Notebook and review the new vocabulary you learned in the first part of this unit. Which words do you know in depth, and which words do you need to learn more about?

### Unpacking Embedded Assessment 2

Read the assignment for Embedded Assessment 2: Writing an Argumentative Essay.

Your assignment is to develop an argument about an issue that resonates across cultures. You will choose a position, target audience, and effective genre to convey your argument to a wide audience.

In your own words, summarize what you will need to know to complete this assessment successfully. With your class, create a graphic organizer to represent the skills and knowledge you will need to complete the tasks identified in the embedded assessment.

### Arguing for Justice

An argument usually focuses on a topic that is of interest to many people. The topic may be one with many different sides, or it may be one with two sides: for and against. In this last part of the unit, you will explore issues of justice as an example of a topic on which people take definite positions.

## INDEPENDENT READING LINK

In this part of the unit, you will be reading informational texts as well as some well-known speeches. Speeches are often made to persuade an audience about a topic. You might consider reading famous speeches or informational texts about issues on which you have a definite position.

Societies create systems of justice to maintain order by establishing rules and laws that reasonable people understand and abide by. Even in well-organized systems, though, there are differences of opinion about what is just, what is fair, and what is right. Instances of injustice often provoke strong emotional reactions that give rise to conflicts. Examining important social issues relating to justice demands that you examine multiple perspectives and evaluate arguments for all sides of an issue.

1. Think about the following terms and write associations you have with them.

Term	What words come to mind when you see or hear these terms?	What has influenced your opinion of these terms?
Justice, justice system		
Laws, rules, codes, constitution		
Judge, jury, lawyers, witnesses, prosecutor, defendant, victim		
Ethics, morality		
Punishment, rehabilitation		

2. Now, using the ideas you have recorded, write a personal definition of the word “justice.” What does justice mean to you? How does your culture affect your views on justice? You can develop your definition of justice with a series of brief examples or with a narrative that illustrates your point.

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

Quickwrite, Think-Pair-Share, Close Reading, Marking the Text, Note-taking, Graphic Organizer

**My Notes**

**Learning Targets**

- Analyze and synthesize details from three texts about justice.
- Create an argument on an issue of justice using valid reasoning, addressing claims and counterclaims, and incorporating an effective organizational plan in a written argument.

When presenting their support for a particular point of view, writers use persuasive language to make their cases about unjust treatment or situations. A powerful argument is crafted using emotional, logical, and ethical appeals to those who have the power to take action on an issue. To take a stand against an injustice and provide a passionate and persuasive argument that convinces others of your point of view is the responsibility and right of every effective communicator.

**Before Reading**

1. Think about these situations and how you might react.
  - Imagine that you, an American teenager, went out one night with some friends and vandalized a car and street signs. Imagine then that you were arrested by the police. What do you expect your punishment would be? Would it involve jail time, repairing the damage, or some other penalty? How do you think justice would be best served?
  - What is the attitude in your family toward vandalism of this nature? In your school? In your community?
2. The leap from making your point on a personal issue of fairness to delivering a convincing argument on an issue of injustice to a broader, more demanding audience is part of expanding your personal influence into a wider arena. Respond to the following in a quickwrite; then discuss your responses with a partner before participating in a class discussion.
  - What happens when different cultures have varying perspectives on issues of justice? What do you think might be the response to this kind of vandalism in another country?

**During Reading**

3. Read the background information on the Michael Fay controversy, and discuss the questions with a partner or small group. Read the articles carefully, taking notes on the elements of an argument, including whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient. Mark the text, indicating words and phrases that indicate the writer’s stance: for or against. Take notes in the My Notes space about any biases you detect. At the top of the page, write *For* or *Against*.





## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What is the most compelling claim that the author makes in the first paragraph about the cultural conflict in values illustrated by this case of vandalism? How does it support the author's argument?

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Identify the concessions the writer makes about the conflicting values and how he refutes them.

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How is the author's cultural perspective reflected in the argument and writing?

## Editorial

# Time to Assert American Values

from The New York Times

Singapore's founding leader, Lee Kuan Yew, returned to a favorite theme yesterday in defending the threatened caning of Michael Fay, an 18-year-old American found guilty of vandalism. Western countries value the individual above society; in Asia, he said, the good of society is deemed more important than individual liberties. This comfortable bit of sophistry<sup>1</sup> helps governments from China to Indonesia rationalize abuses and marginalize courageous people who campaign for causes like due process and freedom from torture. Western nations, it is asserted, have no right to impose their values on countries that govern themselves successfully according to their own values.

So, the argument goes, when Americans express outrage over a punishment that causes permanent scarring—in this case, caning—they are committing an act of cultural arrogance, assuming that American values are intrinsically superior to those of another culture.

There is a clear problem with this argument. It assumes that dissidents, democrats and reformers in these countries are somehow less authentic representatives of their cultures than the members of the political elite who enforce oppressive punishments and suppress individual rights.

At times like this, Americans need to remember that this country was also founded by dissidents—by people who were misfits in their own society because they believed, among other things, that it was wrong to punish pilferage with hanging or crimes of any sort with torture.

These are values worth asserting around the world. Americans concerned with the propagation<sup>2</sup> of traditional values at home should be equally energetic in asserting constitutional principles in the international contest of ideas. There are millions of acts of brutality that cannot be exposed and combated. A case like Michael Fay's is important because it provides a chance to challenge an inhumane practice that ought not to exist anywhere.

While this country cannot dictate to the government of Singapore, no one should fail to exhort it to behave mercifully. President Clinton provided a sound example when he called for a pardon. Principled private citizens ought now to call for American companies doing business in Singapore to bring their influence to bear.

Our colleague William Safire is right to call upon American corporations with subsidiaries in Singapore to press President Ong Teng Cheong to cancel Mr. Fay's punishment. According to Dun & Bradstreet and the U.S.-Asean Business Council, some CEOs and companies in this category are: Riley P. Bechtel of the Bechtel Group

<sup>1</sup> **sophistry**: false or misleading argument

<sup>2</sup> **propagation**: the spreading of something, dissemination

Inc.; John S. Reed of Citicorp; Roberto C. Goizueta of the Coca-Cola Company Inc.; Edgar S. Woolard Jr. of E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company; Lee R. Raymond of Exxon Corporation; John F. Welch Jr. of the General Electric Company; Michael R. Bonsignore of Honeywell Inc.; Louis V. Gerstner Jr. of the International Business Machines Corporation; and Ralph S. Larsen of Johnson & Johnson Inc.

Singapore needs such people as friends. Now is the time for them to make their voices heard. The Fay case provides a legitimate opening for American citizens and companies to bring political and economic pressure to bear in the propagation of freedom and basic rights. Former President Bush can lead the effort by using his speech at a Citibank seminar in Singapore Thursday to call for clemency for Michael Fay.

## Article

# Rough Justice

## A Caning in Singapore Stirs Up a Fierce Debate About Crime and Punishment

by Alejandro Reyes

The Vandalism Act of 1966 was originally conceived as a legal weapon to combat the spread of mainly political graffiti common during the heady days of Singapore's struggle for independence. Enacted a year after the republic left the Malaysian Federation, the law explicitly mandates between three and eight strokes of the cane for each count, though a provision allows first offenders to escape caning "if the writing, drawing, mark or inscription is done with pencil, crayon, chalk or other delible substances and not with paint, tar or other indelible substances...."

Responding to reporters' questions, U.S. chargé d'affaires Ralph Boyce said: "We see a large discrepancy between the offense and the punishment. The cars were not permanently damaged; the paint was removed with thinner. Caning leaves permanent scars. In addition, the accused is a teenager and this is his first offense."

By evening, the Singapore government had its reply: "Unlike some other societies which may tolerate acts of vandalism, Singapore has its own standards of social order as reflected in our laws. It is because of our tough laws against anti-social crimes that we are able to keep Singapore orderly and relatively crime-free." The statement noted that in the past five years, fourteen young men aged 18 to 21, twelve of whom were Singaporean, had been sentenced to caning for vandalism. Fay's arrest and sentencing shook the American community in Singapore. Schools advised parents to warn their children not to get into trouble. The American Chamber of Commerce said "We simply do not understand how the government can condone the permanent scarring of any 18-year-old boy—American or Singaporean—by caning for such an offense." Two dozen American senators signed a letter to Ong on Fay's behalf.

But according to a string of polls, Fay's caning sentence struck a chord in the U.S. Many Americans fed up with rising crime in their cities actually supported the tough punishment. Singapore's embassy in Washington said that the mail it had received was

### GRAMMAR & USAGE Semicolons and Colons

Joining two independent clauses with a semicolon implies that the two clauses are related and/or equal, or perhaps that one restates the other.

#### Example

*The cars were not permanently damaged; the paint was removed with thinner.*

When introducing a quotation after an independent clause, a colon may be used.

#### Example

*By evening, the Singapore government had its reply: "Unlike some other societies which may tolerate acts of vandalism, Singapore has its own standards of social order as reflected in our laws. It is because of our tough laws against anti-social crimes that we are able to keep Singapore orderly and relatively crime-free."*



# Justice and Culture

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How does the author use concessions and refutations to strengthen his argument?

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Each society has a different reaction to the incident. How do these reactions reflect their culture's view of justice?

overwhelmingly approving of the tough sentence. And a radio call-in survey in Fay's hometown of Dayton, Ohio, was strongly pro-caning.

It wasn't long before Singapore patriarch Lee Kuan Yew weighed in. He reckoned the whole affair revealed America's moral decay. "The U.S. government, the U.S. Senate and the U.S. media took the opportunity to ridicule us, saying the sentence was too severe," he said in a television interview. "[The U.S.] does not restrain or punish individuals, forgiving them for whatever they have done. That's why the whole country is in chaos: drugs, violence, unemployment and homelessness. The American society is the richest and most prosperous in the world but it is hardly safe and peaceful."

The debate over caning put a spotlight on Singapore's legal system. Lee and the city-state's other leaders are committed to harsh punishments. Preventive detention laws allow authorities to lock up suspected criminals without trial. While caning is mandatory in cases of vandalism, rape and weapons offenses, it is also prescribed for immigration violations such as overstaying visas and hiring of illegal workers. The death penalty is automatic for drug trafficking and firing a weapon while committing a crime. At dawn on May 13, six Malaysians were hanged for drug trafficking, bringing to seventeen the number executed for such offenses so far this year, ten more than the total number of prisoners executed in all of 1993.

Most Singaporeans accept their brand of rough justice. Older folk readily speak of the way things were in the 1950s and 1960s when secret societies and gangs operated freely. Singapore has succeeded in keeping crime low. Since 1988, government statistics show there has been a steady decline in the crime rate from 223 per 10,000 residents to 175 per 10,000 last year. Authorities are quick to credit their tough laws and harsh penalties for much of that. . . .

"If there is a single fundamental difference between the Western and Asian worldview, it is the dichotomy between individual freedom and collective welfare," said Singapore businessman and former journalist Ho Kwon Ping in an address to lawyers on May 5, the day Fay was caned. "The Western cliché that it would be better for a guilty person to go free than to convict an innocent person is testimony to the importance of the individual. But an Asian perspective may well be that it is better that an innocent person be convicted if the common welfare is protected than for a guilty person to be free to inflict further harm on the community."

There is a basic difference too in the way the law treats a suspect. "In Britain and in America, they keep very strongly to the presumption of innocence," says Walter Woon, associate professor of law at the National University of Singapore and a nominated MP. "The prosecution must prove that you are guilty. And even if the judge may feel that you are guilty, he cannot convict you unless the prosecution has proven it. So in some cases it becomes a game between the defense and the prosecuting counsel. We would rather convict even if it doesn't accord with the purist's traditions of the presumption of innocence."

Singapore's legal system may be based on English common law, but it has developed its own legal traditions and philosophy since independence. The recent severance of all appeals to the Privy Council in London is part of that process. In fundamental ways, Singapore has departed from its British legal roots. The city-state eliminated jury trials years ago—the authorities regard them as error-prone. Acquittals can be appealed and are sometimes overturned. And judges have increased sentences on review. Recently an acquittal was overturned and a bus driver was sentenced to death for murder based



# Justice and Culture

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

A **fallacy** is a mistaken belief or a false or misleading statement based on unsound evidence. Fallacious reasoning is illogical because it relies on a fallacy.

## Reasoning and Evidence

When evaluating claims made about a topic, it is important to determine whether a writer's reasoning is valid and if the evidence provided sufficiently supports a claim. Writers may make false statements that are not fully supported by logic or evidence.

**Fallacies** are common errors in reasoning that undermine the logic of an argument. Fallacies may be based on irrelevant points, and are often identified because they lack evidence to support their claim. Some common fallacies are given below.

## Examples of Common Fallacies

Hasty Generalization	A conclusion that is based on insufficient or biased evidence; in other words, rushing to a conclusion before all the relevant facts are available.	Example: Even though it's only the first day, I can tell this is going to be a boring course.
Either/Or	A conclusion that oversimplifies the argument by reducing it to only two sides or choices.	Example: We can either stop using cars or destroy the earth.
Ad Populum	An emotional appeal that speaks to positive (such as patriotism, religion, democracy) or negative (such as terrorism or fascism) feelings rather than the real issue at hand.	Example: If you were a true American, you would support the rights of people to choose whatever vehicle they want.
Moral Equivalence	A comparison of minor misdeeds with major atrocities.	Example: That parking attendant who gave me a ticket is as bad as Hitler.
Red Herring	A diversionary tactic that avoids the key issues, often by avoiding opposing arguments rather than addressing them.	Example: The level of mercury in seafood may be unsafe, but what will fishers do to support their families?

- With a partner, reread the previous texts about Michael Fay and look for evidence of fallacious reasoning. Provide evidence for why you think the reasoning is fallacious, and discuss how the writers could have changed their text to avoid these problems.

## Check Your Understanding

What fallacies are commonly used in arguments? Explain how anecdotal evidence could be an example of false or fallacious reasoning.







## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Who is Gandhi's audience?  
What in the text tells you this?

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How might Gandhi advise you  
to respond to an unjust law?  
Use evidence from the text to  
support your reasoning.

## Speech

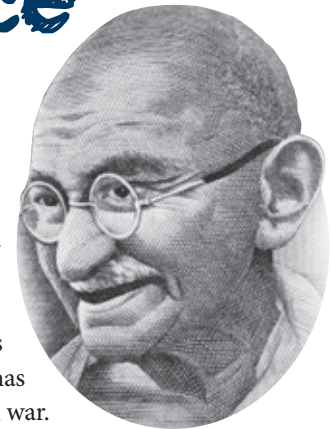
# Excerpt from On Civil Disobedience

by Mohandas K. Gandhi

July 27, 1916

There are two ways of countering injustice. One way is to smash the head of the man who perpetrates injustice and to get your own head smashed in the process. All strong people in the world adopt this course. Everywhere wars are fought and millions of people are killed. The consequence is not the progress of a nation but its decline. . . . No country has ever become, or will ever become, happy through victory in war. A nation does not rise that way; it only falls further. In fact, what comes to it is defeat, not victory. And if, perchance, either our act or our purpose was ill-conceived, it brings disaster to both belligerents<sup>1</sup>.

But through the other method of combating injustice, we alone suffer the consequences of our mistakes, and the other side is wholly spared. This other method is *satyagraha*<sup>2</sup>. One who resorts to it does not have to break another's head; he may merely have his own head broken. He has to be prepared to die himself suffering all the pain. In opposing the atrocious laws of the Government of South Africa, it was this method that we adopted. We made it clear to the said Government that we would never bow to its outrageous laws. No clapping is possible without two hands to do it, and no quarrel without two persons to make it. Similarly, no State is possible without two entities, the rulers and the ruled. You are our sovereign, our Government, only so long as we consider ourselves your subjects. When we are not subjects, you are not the sovereign either. So long as it is your endeavour to control us with justice and love, we will let you to do so. But if you wish to strike at us from behind, we cannot permit it. Whatever you do in other matters, you will have to ask our opinion about the laws that concern us. If you make laws to keep us suppressed in a wrongful manner and without taking us into confidence, these laws will merely adorn the statute books<sup>3</sup>. We will never obey them. Award us for it what punishment you like; we will put up with it. Send us to prison and we will live there as in a paradise. Ask us to mount the scaffold<sup>4</sup> and we will do so laughing. Shower what sufferings you like upon us; we will calmly endure all and not hurt a hair of your body. We will gladly die and will not so much as touch you. But so long as there is yet life in these our bones, we will never comply with your arbitrary<sup>5</sup> laws.



<sup>1</sup> **belligerents:** participants in a war

<sup>2</sup> **satyagraha:** (Sanskrit) insistence on truth; a term used by Gandhi to describe his policy of seeking reform by means of nonviolent resistance

<sup>3</sup> **statute books:** books of law

<sup>4</sup> **scaffold:** in this use, a platform on which people are executed by hanging

<sup>5</sup> **arbitrary:** illogical, unreasonable



**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**  
Marking the Text, Close Reading

My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze the use of rhetorical appeals in argument.
- Compare and contrast how different writers approach a subject or an issue.

## Using Rhetorical Appeals

You have learned how writers use ethos, pathos, and logos to appeal to readers. In argumentative texts, reasoning should primarily be based on ethos and logos. However, pathos can be a strong appeal as part of an argument.

## Before Reading

1. Read the following quote from Chief Joseph. What rhetorical appeal is he using?

“Let me be a free man, free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to talk, think and act for myself—and I will obey every law or submit to the penalty.”

## During Reading

2. As you read the short speech, think about its brevity yet great impact.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chief Joseph (1840–1904) was the leader of a band of the Nez Percé people, originally living in the Wallowa Valley in what is now Oregon. During years of struggle against whites who wanted their lands, and broken promises from the federal government, Chief Joseph led his people in many battles to preserve their lands. On a desperate retreat toward Canada, Chief Joseph and his band were fighting the Army and the weather, and he finally surrendered in the Bear Paw Mountains of Montana.

### Speech

## ON SURRENDER AT BEAR PAW MOUNTAIN, 1877

by Chief Joseph

Tell General Howard that I know his heart. What he told me before I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking Glass is dead, Tu-hul-hil-sote is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who now say yes or no. He who led the young men [Joseph's brother Alikut] is dead. It is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people—some of them have run away to the hills and have no blankets and no food. No one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs, my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.







# Taking a Stand on Legal Issues

## My Notes

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It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union. And we formed it, not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure them; not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity, but to the whole people—women as well as men. And it is a downright mockery to talk to women of their enjoyment of the blessings of liberty while they are denied the use of the only means of securing them provided by this democratic-republican government—the ballot.

For any state to make sex a qualification that must ever result in the disfranchisement of one entire half of the people, is to pass a bill of attainder, or, an ex post facto law, and is therefore a violation of the supreme law of the land. By it the blessings of liberty are forever withheld from women and their female posterity.

To them this government has no just powers derived from the consent of the governed. To them this government is not a democracy. It is not a republic. It is an odious aristocracy; a hateful oligarchy of sex; the most hateful aristocracy ever established on the face of the globe; an oligarchy of wealth, where the rich govern the poor. An oligarchy of learning, where the educated govern the ignorant, or even an oligarchy of race, where the Saxon rules the African, might be endured; but this oligarchy of sex, which makes father, brothers, husband, sons, the oligarchs over the mother and sisters, the wife and daughters, of every household—which ordains all men sovereigns, all women subjects, carries dissension, discord, and rebellion into every home of the nation. Webster, Worcester, and Bouvier all define a citizen to be a person in the United States, entitled to vote and hold office.

The only question left to be settled now is: Are women persons? And I hardly believe any of our opponents will have the hardihood to say they are not. Being persons, then, women are citizens; and no state has a right to make any law, or to enforce any old law, that shall abridge their privileges or immunities. Hence, every discrimination against women in the constitutions and laws of the several states is today null and void, precisely as is every one against Negroes.

## After Reading

5. Cite evidence that Anthony uses to support her claim.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What rhetorical appeals does Anthony use in this speech? Give examples.

## Check Your Understanding

Explain how each of the rhetorical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos might be used to create an effective argument.

## Learning Targets

- Identify an author’s purpose and analyze an argument presented.
- Synthesize information from print and non-print persuasive texts.
- Conduct research and present findings in a brief presentation to peers.

## Before Reading

1. Imagine a country whose culture has always had a deep-seated fear of red hair. The rulers of the country pass a law that says that all red-haired children are to be banished when they turn 10. Is this a just law? How do you determine a law’s justness? Can you remove it from culture, time, and place and still have it be relevant? How are laws established in a state? In a country? How would you go about changing our country’s laws?

## During Reading

2. The United Nations is an organization that tries to determine issues of justice that transcend individual cultures and societal rules. What do you know about the United Nations? Are there any laws to which all nations on the planet would agree?
3. Think about children (defined as any person under the age of 18, unless an earlier age of majority is recognized by a country’s law) around the world. If all nations could agree on a set of laws that concern the treatment of children, what kinds of laws do you think would appear in such a set?
4. As you read the next three texts (“Declaration of the Rights of the Child,” an informational text, and an essay by Anna Quindlen), mark the text to identify key elements of an argument and the evidence supporting claims.

## Proclamation

# Declaration of the Rights of the Child

PROCLAIMED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 1386(XIV)  
OF 20 NOVEMBER 1959

*Whereas* the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

*Whereas* the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

*Whereas* the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth,

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**  
Brainstorming, Paraphrasing, Previewing, Think-Pair-Share, Note-taking, Discussion Groups, Marking the Text

## My Notes

## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Why does this declaration separate the essential rights of adults from those of children?



# Taking a Stand Against Hunger

## GRAMMAR & USAGE Verb Tenses

Verbs have **active** and **passive voice** in all six **tenses**. A passive-voice verb always contains a form of *be* followed by the past participle of the verb.

The voice of a verb (active or passive) indicates whether the subject performs (active) or receives (passive) the action.

Active voice, future tense:

The child **shall enjoy** all the rights . . .

Passive voice, future tense: Every child **shall be entitled** . . .

Generally, it is preferable to use the active voice in your writing. The active voice is more direct and concise. However, sometimes the passive voice is more appropriate when the doer of the action is unknown or doesn't matter. This formal document effectively uses the passive voice to emphasize that the recipient of actions (the child) is more important than those who do the actions (parents, government, voluntary organizations, etc.).

## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How does this declaration reflect the idea of justice?

*Whereas* the need for such special safeguards has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924, and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the statutes of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

*Whereas* mankind owes to the child the best it has to give,

*Now therefore,*

*The General Assembly*

*Proclaims* this Declaration of the Rights of the Child to the end that he may have a happy childhood and enjoy for his own good and for the good of society the rights and freedoms herein set forth, and calls upon parents, upon men and women as individuals, and upon voluntary organizations, local authorities and national Governments to recognize these rights and strive for their observance by legislative and other measures progressively taken in accordance with the following principles:

### *Principle 1*

The child shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration. Every child, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family.

### *Principle 2*

The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

### *Principle 3*

The child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality.

### *Principle 4*

The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end, special care and protection shall be provided both to him and to his mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care. The child shall have the right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.

### *Principle 5*

The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.







# Taking a Stand Against Hunger

## My Notes

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### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Would the author say that the United States is meeting the principle outlined in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child?

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### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How is the author's culture reflected in the text?

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### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What evidence does the author provide to support her thesis?

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And some kids don't get enough to eat, no matter what people want to tell themselves. Do the math: During the rest of the year fifteen million students get free or cut-rate lunches at school, and many of them get breakfast, too. But only three million children are getting lunches through the federal summer lunch program. And hunger in the United States, particularly since the institution of so-called welfare reform, is epidemic. The numbers are astonishing in the land of the all-you-can-eat buffet. The Agriculture Department estimated in 1999 that twelve million children were hungry or at risk of going hungry. A group of big-city mayors released a study showing that in 2000, requests for food assistance from families increased almost 20 percent, more than at any time in the last decade. And last Thanksgiving a food bank in Connecticut gave away four thousand more turkeys than the year before—and still ran out of birds.

But while the Christmas holidays make for heartrending copy, summer is really ground zero in the battle to keep kids fed. The school lunch program, begun in the 1970s as a result of bipartisan<sup>1</sup> federal legislation, has been by most measures an enormous success. For lots of poor families it's become a way to count on getting at least one decent meal into their children, and when it disappears it's catastrophic. Those who work at America's Second Harvest, the biggest nonprofit supply source for food banks, talk of parents who go hungry themselves so their kids can eat, who put off paying utility and phone bills, who insist their children attend remedial summer school programs simply so they can get a meal. The parents themselves are loath to talk: Of all the humiliations attached to being poor in a prosperous nation, not being able to feed your kids is at the top of the list.

In most cases these are not parents who are homeless or out of work. The people who run food banks report that most of their clients are minimum-wage workers who can't afford enough to eat on their salaries. "Families are struggling in a way they haven't done for a long time," says Brian Loring, the executive director of Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County, Iowa, which provides lunches to more than two hundred kids at five locations during the summer months. For a significant number of Americans, the cost of an additional meal for two school-age children for the eight weeks of summer vacation seems like a small fortune. Some don't want or seek government help because of the perceived stigma<sup>2</sup>; some are denied food stamps because of new welfare policies. Others don't know they're eligible, and none could be blamed if they despaired of the exercise. The average length of a food stamp application is twelve often impenetrable pages; a permit to sell weapons is just two.

The success of the school lunch program has been, of course, that the food goes where the children are. That's the key to success for summer programs, too. Washington, D.C., has done better than any other city in the country in feeding hungry kids, sending fire trucks into housing projects to distribute leaflets about lunch locations, running a referral hotline and radio announcements. One food bank in

<sup>1</sup> **bipartisan:** supported by both major political parties

<sup>2</sup> **stigma:** a sign of shame or disgrace





# Taking a Stand on Truth and Responsibility

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

Guided Reading, Metacognitive Markers, Note-taking, Marking the Text, Close Reading, Socratic Seminar

My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze two complex speeches by Nobel Prize winners.
- Synthesize textual evidence by participating actively in a Socratic Seminar.
- Emulate the model speeches by drafting the opening paragraph of an argumentative speech.

## Before Reading

1. Read the biographical information about Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in the About the Author section. Based on what you have learned about Solzhenitsyn, why do you think he would be able to make a strong argument for speaking the truth in the face of adversity?
  
2. Next, read the biographical information about Elie Wiesel. What do you think Solzhenitsyn and Wiesel might have in common? How might their life experiences add to their ethos in the context of their arguments?

## During Reading

3. Read Solzhenitsyn’s speech by participating actively in the guided reading led by your teacher. Use metacognitive markers and take notes as you follow your teacher’s directions.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) became a worldwide figure when he was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1974 for publishing a historical account of the wretched system of Soviet prison camps known as gulags. Solzhenitsyn had been imprisoned as a young soldier during World War II for writing a letter critical of Stalin, the Soviet dictator. His experiences in a Siberian prison became the basis for his best-known work, *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch*. For years afterward, Solzhenitsyn was forced to publish his works secretly and often abroad because of the threat of further incarceration. Solzhenitsyn lived in the United States for twenty years, but when he regained his Soviet citizenship in 1994, he returned home and continued writing until his death in 2008.

Speech

from  
**One Word of Truth  
Outweighs the World**

by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

I THINK THAT WORLD LITERATURE has the power in these frightening times to help mankind see itself accurately despite what is advocated by partisans and by parties. It has the power to transmit the condensed experience of one region to another, so that different scales of values are combined, and so that one people accurately and concisely knows the true history of another with a power of recognition and acute awareness as if it had lived through that history itself—and could thus be spared repeating old mistakes. At the same time, perhaps we ourselves may succeed in developing our own WORLD-WIDE VIEW, like any man, with the center of the eye seeing what is nearby but the periphery of vision taking in what is happening in the rest of the world. We will make correlations and maintain world-wide standards.

Who, if not writers, are to condemn their own unsuccessful governments (in some states this is the easiest way to make a living; everyone who is not too lazy does it) as well as society itself, whether for its cowardly humiliation or for its self-satisfied weakness, or the lightheaded escapades of the young, or the youthful pirates brandishing knives?

We will be told: What can literature do against the pitiless onslaught of naked violence? Let us not forget that violence does not and cannot flourish by itself; it is inevitably intertwined with LYING. Between them there is the closest, the most profound and natural bond: nothing screens violence except lies, and the only way lies can hold out is by violence. Whoever has once announced violence as his METHOD must inexorably choose lying as his PRINCIPLE. At birth, violence behaves openly and even proudly. But as soon as it becomes stronger and firmly established, it senses the thinning of the air around it and cannot go on without befogging itself in lies, coating itself with lying's sugary oratory. It does not always or necessarily go straight for the gullet; usually it demands of its victims only allegiance to the lie, only complicity in the lie.

The simple act of an ordinary courageous man is not to take part, not to support lies! Let *that* come

My Notes

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KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

How does the author describe the power of literature?

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KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What conclusion does the author draw about truth?

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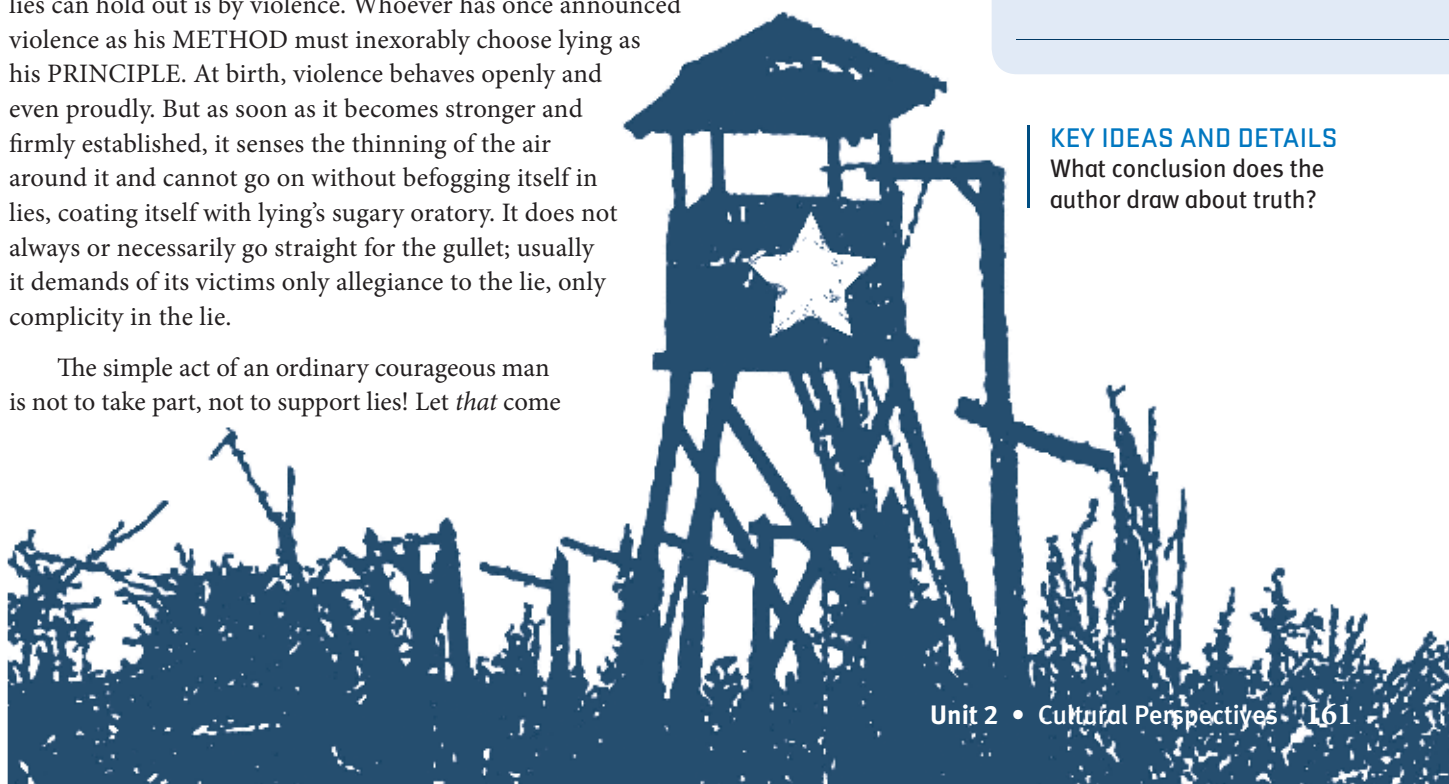
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# Taking a Stand on Truth and Responsibility

## My Notes

into the world and even reign over it, but not through me. Writers and artists can do more: they can VANQUISH LIES! In the struggle against lies, art has always won and always will.

Conspicuously, incontestably for everyone. Lies can stand up against much in the world, but not against art.

Once lies have been dispelled, the repulsive nakedness of violence will be exposed—and hollow violence will collapse.

That, my friend, is why I think we can help the world in its red-hot hour: not by the nay-saying of having no armaments, not by abandoning oneself to the carefree life, but by going into battle!

In Russian, proverbs about TRUTH are favorites. They persistently express the considerable, bitter, grim experience of the people, often astonishingly:

ONE WORD OF TRUTH OUTWEIGHS THE WORLD.

On such a seemingly fantastic violation of the law of the conservation of mass and energy are based both my own activities and my appeal to the writers of the whole world.

### During Reading

4. Follow the same close reading process you used with “One Word of Truth” to read Wiesel’s “Hope, Despair, and Memory.” Be sure to mark the text for evidence of his argument, counterarguments, evidence, and reasoning.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elie Wiesel (1928–) was born in the town of Sighet, now part of Romania. During World War II, he and his family were deported to the German concentration and extermination camps. His parents and little sister perished, while Wiesel and his two older sisters survived. Liberated from Buchenwald in 1945 by Allied troops, Wiesel went to Paris where he studied at the Sorbonne and worked as a journalist. In 1958, he published his first book, *La Nuit*, a memoir of his experiences in the concentration camps. He has since authored nearly thirty books, some of which use these events as their basic material. In his many lectures, Wiesel has concerned himself with the situation of the Jews and other groups who have suffered persecution and death because of their religion, race, or national origin. Wiesel has made his home in New York City, and is now a United States citizen. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986.

#### Speech

Excerpt from

## Hope, Despair, and Memory

by Elie Wiesel, December 11, 1986

... Just as man cannot live without dreams, he cannot live without hope. If dreams reflect the past, hope summons the future. Does this mean that our future can be built on a rejection of the past? Surely such a choice is not necessary. The two

are incompatible. The opposite of the past is not the future but the absence of future; the opposite of the future is not the past but the absence of past. The loss of one is equivalent to the sacrifice of the other.

A recollection. The time: After the war. The place: Paris. A young man struggles to readjust to life. His mother, his father, his small sister are gone. He is alone. On the verge of despair. And yet he does not give up. On the contrary, he strives to find a place among the living. He acquires a new language. He makes a few friends who, like himself, believe that the memory of evil will serve as a shield against evil; that the memory of death will serve as a shield against death.

This he must believe in order to go on. For he has just returned from a universe where God, betrayed by His creatures, covered His face in order not to see. Mankind, jewel of his creation, had succeeded in building an inverted Tower of Babel, reaching not toward heaven but toward an anti-heaven, there to create a parallel society, a new “creation” with its own princes and gods, laws and principles, jailers and prisoners. A world where the past no longer counted—no longer meant anything.

Stripped of possessions, all human ties severed, the prisoners found themselves in a social and cultural void. “Forget,” they were told. “Forget where you came from; forget who you were. Only the present matters.” But the present was only a blink of the Lord’s eye. The Almighty himself was a slaughterer: it was He who decided who would live and who would die; who would be tortured, and who would be rewarded. Night after night, seemingly endless processions vanished into the flames, lighting up the sky. Fear dominated the universe. Indeed this was another universe; the very laws of nature had been transformed. Children looked like old men, old men whimpered like children. Men and women from every corner of Europe were suddenly reduced to nameless and faceless creatures desperate for the same ration of bread or soup, dreading the same end. Even their silence was the same for it resounded with the memory of those who were gone. Life in this accursed universe was so distorted, so unnatural that a new species had evolved. Waking among the dead, one wondered if one were still alive . . .

. . . Of course, we could try to forget the past. Why not? Is it not natural for a human being to repress what causes him pain, what causes him shame? Like the body, memory protects its wounds. When day breaks after a sleepless night, one’s ghosts must withdraw; the dead are ordered back to their graves. But for the first time in history, we could not bury our dead. We bear their graves within ourselves.

For us, forgetting was never an option. . . .

. . . And yet it is surely human to forget, even to want to forget. The Ancients saw it as a divine gift. Indeed the memory helps us to survive, forgetting allows us to go on living. How could we go on with our daily lives, if we remained constantly aware of the dangers and ghosts surrounding us? The Talmud tells us that without the ability to forget, man would soon cease to learn. Without the ability to forget, man would live in a permanent, paralyzing fear of death. Only God and God alone can and must remember everything.

How are we to reconcile our supreme duty towards memory with the need to forget that is essential to life? No generation has had to confront this paradox with such urgency. The survivors wanted to communicate everything to the living: the victim’s solitude and sorrow, the tears of mothers driven to madness, the prayers of the doomed beneath a fiery sky.

### My Notes

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### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Identify where the author uses narration. Why is narration important to Wiesel’s argument?

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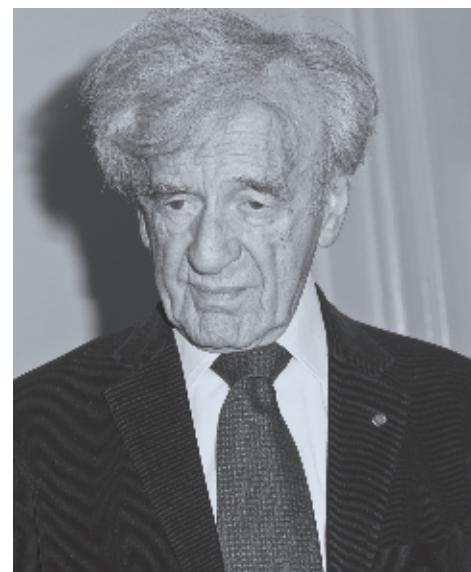
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# Taking a Stand on Truth and Responsibility

## My Notes

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

With the world as his audience, what argument is Wiesel making in his speech?

They needed to tell of the child who, in hiding with his mother, asked softly, very softly: “Can I cry now?” They needed to tell of the sick beggar who, in a sealed cattle-car, began to sing as an offering to his companions. And of the little girl who, hugging her grandmother, whispered: “Don’t be afraid, don’t be sorry to die . . . I’m not.” She was seven, that little girl who went to her death without fear, without regret.

Each one of us felt compelled to record every story, every encounter. Each one of us felt compelled to bear witness. Such were the wishes of the dying, the testament of the dead. Since the so-called civilized world had no use for their lives, then let it be inhabited by their deaths. . . .

. . . After the war we reassured ourselves that it would be enough to relate a single night in Treblinka, to tell of her cruelty, the senselessness of murder, and the outrage born of indifference: it would be enough to find the right word and the propitious moment to say it, to shake humanity out of its indifference and keep the torturer from torturing ever again. We thought it would be enough to read the world a poem written by a child in the Theresienstadt ghetto to ensure that no child anywhere would ever again have to endure hunger or fear. It would be enough to describe a death-camp “Selection,” to prevent the human right to dignity from ever being violated again.

We thought it would be enough to tell of the tidal wave of hatred which broke over the Jewish people for men everywhere to decide once and for all to put an end to hatred of anyone who is “different”—whether black or white, Jew or Arab, Christian or Moslem—anyone whose orientation differs politically, philosophically, sexually. A naive undertaking? Of course. But not without a certain logic.

We tried. It was not easy. At first, because of the language; language failed us. We would have to invent a new vocabulary, for our own words were inadequate, anemic. And then too, the people around us refused to listen; and even those who listened refused to believe; and even those who believed could not comprehend. Of course they could not. Nobody could. The experience of the camps defies comprehension. . . .

. . . I remember the killers, I remember the victims, even as I struggle to invent a thousand and one reasons to hope.

There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest. The Talmud tells us that by saving a single human being, man can save the world. We may be powerless to open all the jails and free all prisoners, but by declaring our solidarity with one prisoner, we indict all jailers. None of us is in a position to eliminate war, but it is our obligation to denounce it and expose it in all its hideousness. War leaves no victors, only victims. I began with the story of Besht. And, like the Besht, mankind needs to remember more than ever. Mankind needs peace more than ever, for our entire planet, threatened by nuclear war, is in danger of total destruction. A destruction only man can provoke, only man can prevent.

Mankind must remember that peace is not God’s gift to his creatures, it is our gift to each other.







**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**  
Marking the Text, Revising

My Notes

## Learning Targets

- Analyze the structure and content of two argumentative essays.
- Create a revision plan to strengthen an essay’s elements of argumentation.

## Before Reading

1. In Activity 2.17, Elie Wiesel made a strong argument for the importance of remembrance. In light of his experiences during the Holocaust, Wiesel can speak authoritatively on whether or not remembering is of vital importance. What about you? If you had to take a stand on the importance of memories, what might your position be?

## During Reading

2. The two essays that you will read next were written by students during the writing section of the SAT Reasoning Test. As you read, mark the text to indicate elements of argumentation.

Both essays received a 6, the highest possible score. Students had 25 minutes to respond in writing to a prompt, so the essays are not expected to be free from errors. You may notice errors as well as segments in need of revision. SAT essays are recognized as first drafts. The students responded to the following prompt:

## Essay Prompt

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

*Many persons believe that to move up the ladder of success and achievement, they must forget the past, repress it, and relinquish it. But others have just the opposite view. They see old memories as a chance to reckon with the past and integrate past and present.*

(Adapted from Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, *I’ve Known Rivers: Lives of Loss and Liberation*)

**Assignment:** Do memories hinder or help people in their effort to learn from the past and succeed in the present? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observation.



# Taking a Stand on Remembrance

## My Notes

Because memory is such a mystery to us, many authors have toyed with it in literature. Lois Lowry, in *The Giver*, describes a futuristic society in which one man, the Giver, holds the memories, both good and bad, of an entire community. Jonas, his successor, can only feel complete when he has been given both the good and the bad memories, both those of color and love as well as those of war and pain. The book's ultimate moral is that perhaps these memories are painful enough that one wants to suppress them; however, their absence makes the lessons they teach all the more meaningful—and left unlearned.

They say that history repeats itself, and it is absolutely true. History teachers constantly drill the horrors of slavery and segregation into our heads, to illustrate how far our race has come. However, World War II and Hitler's Holocaust took place less than a century ago. Japanese Americans were sent into concentration camps less than a century ago. After 9/11, anti-Arab prejudice reached new peaks. Yes, history does repeat itself. Still, with the diversity of today's world, perhaps the memories of the past can teach us once and for all—never again. These horrific memories, sadly, are necessary if we are to learn that lesson.

Many of today's celebrities and world leaders have had some sort of problem growing up. Some had learning disabilities, some physical conditions, some difficult childhoods or a hard family life. Yet they rose above it to become who they are today . . . perhaps the memories were necessary for them to become better people. I myself never knew the real, harsh pain of losing a loved one until my uncle died from lung cancer two years ago. Though I still miss him and deeply regret his death, I believe it has made me stronger and because of him, I will never smoke.

Memories are the past—no more, no less. They are hazy recollections your mind keeps of what has happened, what cannot be changed. Good or bad, beneficial or painful, they are simply memories. What you make of them, what you get from them, is entirely up to you.

## After Reading

3. Compare your notes with a partner, and add additional notes based on your discussion. With your partner, determine a revision plan for one of the two essays. Remember that even though these were top-scoring essays, the writers had only 25 minutes to complete them.

What revisions would you recommend to strengthen the arguments? Consult your notes from throughout the unit for guidance. Work with your partner to apply your revision plan to your selected essay.



# Creating an Argument

## SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Incomplete
<b>Ideas</b>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>skillfully presents a claim and provides background and a clear explanation of the issue</li> <li>synthesizes evidence from a variety of sources that strongly support the claim</li> <li>summarizes and refutes counterclaims with relevant reasoning and clear evidence</li> <li>concludes by clearly summarizing the main points and reinforcing the claim.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supports a claim that is clearly presented with appropriate background details</li> <li>synthesizes evidence from multiple sources that support the claim</li> <li>develops claims and counterclaims fairly and uses valid reasoning, relevant and sufficient evidence, and a variety of rhetorical appeals</li> <li>concludes by revisiting the main points and reinforcing the claim.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>states a claim but does not adequately explain the issue or provide background details</li> <li>attempts to synthesize evidence from several sources that support the claim</li> <li>develops some counterclaims, but reasoning may not be completely relevant or sufficient for the evidence cited</li> <li>concludes by listing the main points of the thesis.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>states a vague or unclear claim and does not explain the issue or provide background details</li> <li>contains no synthesis of evidence from different sources to support the claim</li> <li>may or may not develop counterclaims, and reasoning may not be relevant or sufficient for the evidence cited</li> <li>concludes without restating the main points of the claim.</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>follows a logical progression of ideas that establish relationships between the essential elements of hook, claim, evidence, counterclaims, and conclusion</li> <li>links main points with effective transitions that establish coherence.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establishes clear relationships between the essential elements of hook, claim, evidence, counterclaims, and conclusion</li> <li>uses transitions to link the major sections of the essay and create coherence.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates an awkward progression of ideas, but the reader can understand them</li> <li>uses some elements of hook, claim, evidence, and conclusion</li> <li>spends too much time on some irrelevant details and uses few transitions.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not follow a logical organization</li> <li>includes some details and elements of an argument, but the writing lacks clear direction and uses no transitions to help readers follow the line of thought.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Language</b>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a formal style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose</li> <li>smoothly integrates textual evidence from multiple sources, with correct citations</li> <li>shows excellent command of standard English capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar, and usage.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a formal style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose</li> <li>correctly cites textual evidence from at least three sources</li> <li>follows conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar, and usage.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mixes informal and formal writing styles</li> <li>cites some textual evidence but citations may be missing or inaccurate</li> <li>includes some incorrect capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar, or usage that interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>	<p>The argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses mostly informal writing style</li> <li>uses some textual evidence but does not include citations</li> <li>includes incorrect capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar, or usage that interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>