The American Dream
Introduction

If you could describe the essence and spirit of America, you would probably refer to “The American Dream.” First coined as a phrase in 1931, the phrase “The American Dream” characterizes the unique promise that America has offered immigrants and residents for nearly 400 years. People have come to this country for adventure, opportunity, freedom, and the chance to experience the particular qualities of the American landscape. Consequently, different groups of people have left their imprint on the philosophical foundations of this country and contributed to what has become a modern American Dream.

In this unit you will explore the foundations of the American Dream and some of its modern representations. The unit will prepare you for a wide body of literature that continues to incorporate this concept. In fact, one of the goals of this unit is to expose students to the wide variety of genres that they will need to become proficient in analyzing through the course of the year. In addition to the O.Henry short story, “Mammon and the Archer,” and the excerpt from A Raisin in the Sun, the following texts are included in this unit:

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<tr>
<th>Poetry</th>
<th>Essays</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
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<td>“Ellis Island,” Joseph Bruchac</td>
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<td>“Indian Singing in Twentieth Century America,” Gail Tremblay</td>
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<td>“next to of course god america i,” e. e. cummings</td>
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<td>“Money,” Dana Gioia</td>
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<td>“Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper,” Martín Espada</td>
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<td>Excerpt from Fighting Rebels with One Hand, Frederick Douglass</td>
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## Unit Template: The American Dream

### Priority Standards:

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>11.02</td>
<td>Analyze an author’s unstated ideas and meanings and analyzing evidence that supports those unstated ideas. <em>(11.6.4)</em></td>
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<td>11.03</td>
<td>Draw conclusions about the author’s purpose, basic beliefs, perspectives, and philosophical assumptions. <em>(11.7.1)</em></td>
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<td>11.06</td>
<td>Demonstrate familiarity with major literary periods, authors, subjects of U.S. literature.</td>
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<td>11.07</td>
<td>Use textual evidence to develop/support an interpretation of a work from U.S. literature. <em>(11.9.3)</em></td>
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<td>11.11</td>
<td>Describe and evaluate the author’s tone.</td>
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<td>11.12</td>
<td>Analyze the way in which a work of U.S. literature is related to the themes, issues, political movements, and events of its historical period. <em>(11.10.17)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.13.1</td>
<td>Adjust tone and style as necessary to engage the interest of the reader. <em>(11.12.1)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.13.3</td>
<td>Use organizational structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15.5</td>
<td>Draw from both primary and secondary sources.</td>
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### Understandings:

*Students will understand that…*

- The American Dream has many facets
- There are philosophical underpinnings to the American Dream

*Students will know:*

- Major periods of early American history and literature: Puritans, Revolutionaries, Transcendentalism, and Slavery.

### Essential Questions:

- What is the American Dream?
- What influences perceptions of the American Dream?
- How does the dream change over time and due to race, gender, and other factors?

*Students will be able to:*

- Write effective interview questions
- Write effective introductions and conclusions
- Synthesize the words of others into their writing

### Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

**Culminating Assessment –**

Students will identify and interview a person over the age of 18 in order to determine his or her attitude about America and the American Dream. The interview will be presented in essay form.

**Other Evidence:**

- Surveys
- Dialectical journals
- Group presentations
- Research
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Lesson #1: Essential Question -- What Is the American Dream?

Duration: 40 minutes

Priority standards: 11.03

Brief overview of lesson: Students will have an opportunity to explore the concepts behind the phrase “The American Dream.”

Materials needed: anticipation guide

Addressing Essential Question(s): What is the American Dream?

Steps/Procedures:
1. Explain to students that they will be introduced to the idea of the American Dream. As part of that introduction, they will complete an anticipation guide that will provide a focus for the ideas and concepts that permeate the texts and assignments within the unit.
2. Have students fill out the anticipation guide. After it is completed, direct students to share their answers with a partner or group. Ask some volunteers to share with the whole class.
3. Ask students to write a reflection on their reactions to their responses and the discussion. You will direct students to revisit this activity as they proceed through the unit.

Closure:
As students exit, ask them to write one phrase that best captures their notion of the American Dream.
What Is the American Dream?

As you read each statement below, write A beside statements with which you agree and D beside the ones with which you disagree.

1. Education is important primarily to increase one’s self-knowledge.
2. Individuals’ rights are superior to the needs of society.
3. God exists in all life forms.
4. Mankind is basically evil.
5. Education is important primarily to get a job.
6. Truth is found in faith.
7. Human beings are basically good and getting better.
8. Individual liberties must always be controlled by government authority.
9. God is all-powerful and wrathful.
10. Truth can be found in science.
11. The American Dream means making lots of money.
12. The American Dream includes getting married and having children.
13. The American Dream is more true for some than others.

Reflect on the statements with which you agree and those with which you disagree. Share your responses with a partner or a small group. You might choose to share your responses with the whole class. Consider the class discussion and select one or two statements above. Describe your position in reaction to the statement(s) and explain the rationale for your thinking.
Lesson #2: Coming to America

Duration: 90 minutes

Priority standards: 11.03, 11.06, 11.07, 11.11, 11.12

Brief overview of lesson: Students will deepen their knowledge of The American Dream by considering the early 20th century immigration experience.

Materials needed:
Clip from The Godfather, Part II
“Ellis Island”
Bio Sketch Worksheet
“Europe and America”

Addressing Essential Question(s): What role does immigration play in The American Dream?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
1. Ask students to brainstorm a list of characteristics or traits they believe are part of the American Dream.
2. Instruct students to select one trait from their list and complete a quickwrite about that trait. Ask students to share their quickwrites in small groups.
3. Ask volunteers to share their ideas about the American Dream with the whole class.

Steps/Procedures:
1. Show the clip from Godfather II (the clip begins 7 minutes from the beginning of the video and ends 10 minutes from the beginning of the video). As they watch, direct students to look for images that relate somehow to their idea of the American Dream. Discuss what they saw as relevant to the American Dream.
2. Ask students to think for a moment about their own ancestors. What do they know about where they came from? Have them discuss their responses with a partner. Have a couple of volunteers share with the whole class.
3. Read “Ellis Island” silently. Ask for volunteers to read the poem aloud two or three times. As the poem is read, ask students to mark the text by underlining the dreams of the people as they are expressed in the poem. Discuss the underlined passages as a class. Ask students to think back about their own ancestors. Are they aware of any of their dreams, successes, or failures when they were either coming to or growing up in America? Students should share with a partner.
4. Ask students to complete the Bio Sketch Worksheet and share with a partner or small group. Explain that they will look at their own background and dreams in order to compare with others.

5. Read “Europe and America,” first silently then aloud. Look at the chart Denotation and Connotation in “Europe and America.” Explain to students the difference between denotation (dictionary definition of a word) and connotation (idea or meaning suggested by or associated with a word or thing). Students should determine the denotation and connotation of each word or phrase in the poem and be prepared to explain. Direct them to discuss their responses in small groups or with the whole class.

6. Tell students to create and complete a Venn diagram (or some other type of graphic organizer) to compare and contrast the differences and similarities between past and present generations’ ideas and dreams. They should use information from the two poems as well as their Bio Sketch.

7. Explain to students that the words writers choose have a big impact on the reader. Ask them to manipulate “Europe and America” by changing certain words and then have them evaluate how the changes might affect how the reader interprets the poem.

8. Ask students to find an article that deals with contemporary immigration. What are the current issues and how are they similar or different from the themes raised in these poems?

Closure:
Ask students to write a question they have about The American Dream

Strategies for ELL students:
Read the poems aloud. Be sure that they have copies of the text on which they can mark notes.

Strategies for TAG students:
Instead of the connotation/denotation portion of the lesson, ask them to conduct and share a brief internet research on the differences between American and Europe during the first part of the 20th century.

Modifications for students with special needs:
Be sure that the film clip is equipped with subtitles for hearing impaired and that you have an alternative for those who are vision impaired.
Coming to America
Watch the clip from *The Godfather, Part II*. Discuss what is going on in the clip and its relevance to the American Dream.

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

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

Bio Sketch
Before reading the poem “Europe and America” complete the Bio Sketch questions. Share your Bio Sketch with another student.

On a separate sheet of paper, complete the following information regarding you.
- Place of birth
- Places lived
- Schools attended
- Significant adults or people in your life
- Favorite film and/or book
- Favorite place you have visited and/or dream place you would like to visit
- Goal you have before completing high school
- Goal you have after completing high school

“Europe and America”
Read the poem to yourself or listen while your teacher reads the poem aloud to the class. Complete the Student Page Denotation and Connotation in “Europe and America.”

Create a graphic organizer that compares and contrast the ideas and dreams of past and present generations.
Ellis Island
by Joseph Bruchac

Beyond the red brick of Ellis Island
where the two Slovak children
who became my grandparents
waited the long days of quarantine,
after leaving the sickness,
the old Empires of Europe,
a Circle Line ship slips easily
on its way to the island
of the tall woman, green
as dreams of forests and meadows
waiting for those who’d worked
a thousand years
yet never owned their own.

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

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

My father brought the emigrant bundle
of desperation and worn threads,
that in anxiety as he stumbles
tumble out distractedly;
while I am bedded upon soft green money
that grows like grass.
Thus, between my father
who lives on a bed of anguish for his daily bread,
and I who tear money at leisure by the roots,
where I lie in sun or shade,
a vast continent of breezes, storms to him,
shadows, darkness to him, small lakes, rough channels
to him, and hills, mountains to him, lie between us.

My father comes of a small hell
where bread and man have been kneaded and baked
together.
You have heard the scream as the knife fell;
while I have slept
as guns pounded offshore.
**Coming to America: Denotation and Connotation in “Europe and America”**

Denotation refers to the dictionary definition of a word. Connotation involves the idea or meaning suggested by or associated with a word or thing. Connotation usually has a more powerful effect on the reader. It may be a visual image or an idea to ponder. Look at the examples listed. Then state the denotation and connotation of key phrases from the poem “Europe and America.” Discuss the effect that those particular words have on the reader.

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

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

Imagine that instead of “bedded on soft green money,” the poet were to have written “surrounded by lots of dead presidents.” How does that change affect the reader?

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word or Phrase</th>
<th>New Word or Phrase</th>
<th>Effect on Reader</th>
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</table>
Lesson #3: Pre-assessment for The American Dream

**Duration:** 90 minutes

**Priority standards:** 11.03, 11.11, 11.13.1, 11.13.3

**Brief overview of lesson:** Students will conduct an interview with a classmate in order to identify their attitudes about America and the American Dream. They will synthesize the interview into essay form.

**Addressing Essential Question(s):**

**Hook/Anticipatory Set:**
Ask students write about interviews they’ve read, seen, or listen to. In general, what is the purpose of an interview? Who could be the audiences of an interview?

**Steps/Procedures:**
1. Break students into pairs and ask them first to gather general biographical information -- name, age, cultural background, birthplace, etc. -- from each other.
2. Next, direct students to ask questions of each other in order to determine their partner’s feelings and attitudes toward America and the American Dream. They should take careful notes as their partners answers to be able to include quotations in their write up of the interview.
3. Individually, students should write up their interviews, not in Q and A form, but in essay format with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. The goal should be to present their subject’s attitudes about America to an audience unfamiliar with the subject and the American Dream.
4. Be sure that students have an opportunity to self-assess their work before submitting it and to reflect on their scores when their pieces are returned. Remind them that the goal of this – and any – pres-assessment is to give the teacher and themselves a sense of where their currently abilities are. Ideally, the pre-assessment should be scored, but not graded and put into the grade book.
Pre-assessment -- Part One: Conducting the Interview

Your name: ________________________  Partner’s name: ________________________

Biographical information about partner (age, cultural background, birthplace, etc)

_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Questions for partner about America and the American Dream. Space is for answers:

1. _______________________________________________________________________

2. _______________________________________________________________________

3. _______________________________________________________________________

4. _______________________________________________________________________

Pre-assessment – Part Two: Writing up the Interview

In essay form (introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion), write an explanation of your partner’s views of America and the American Dream. Be sure to use direct quotations from the interview whenever possible.
### Pre-assessment Scoring Guide: Interview about the American Dream

<table>
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<th>Standards</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Does Not Yet Meet Expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.03.</strong> Draw conclusions about the author’s purpose, basic beliefs, perspectives, and philosophical assumptions.</td>
<td>The interview effectively captures and presents the interview subject’s tone and beliefs about America and the American Dream.</td>
<td>The interview summarizes the interview subject’s tone and beliefs about America and the American Dream.</td>
<td>The interview does not present the interview subject’s tone and beliefs about America and the American Dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.11.</strong> Describe and evaluate the author's tone</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.06.</strong> Demonstrate familiarity with major literary periods, authors, subjects of U.S. literature.</td>
<td>The interview demonstrates a thorough and insightful understanding of the American Dream.</td>
<td>The interview demonstrates some understanding of the American Dream.</td>
<td>The interview does not demonstrate an understanding of the American Dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.13.1</strong> Adjust tone and style as necessary to engage the interest of the reader.</td>
<td>The writing in the piece is lively and engaging for the reader with an effective introduction and conclusion paragraph.</td>
<td>The writing in the piece is mostly engaging for the reader and includes an introduction and conclusion paragraph.</td>
<td>The writing in the piece is not engaging for the reader and may be lacking an effective introduction and/or conclusion paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.13.3</strong> Use organizational structures</td>
<td>The organization of the piece is clear and effective for the purpose.</td>
<td>The organization of the piece is clear.</td>
<td>The piece is difficult to follow because the organizational structures are inappropriate or ineffective.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson #4: Historic Pathways to the American Dream

Duration: 270 minutes

Priority standards: 11.03, 11.06, 11.07, 11.11, 11.12

Brief overview of lesson: In order to fully understand the American Dream, students need to recognize some of the historical and philosophical aspects of America.

Materials needed:
- The New England Primer
- “The Trial of Martha Carrier”
- “Moral Perfection”
- “Sayings of Poor Richard”
- Excerpt from “Self-Reliance”
- Excerpt from Walden
- Excerpt from “Atlantic Voyage”
- Excerpt from Fighting Rebels with One Hand

Key vocabulary:
Puritanism, Revolutionary, Transcendentalism, Romanticism

Addressing Essential Question(s): What are the historical and philosophical underpinnings of the American Dream?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
Have students write and share with a peer their response to the following: what do you know about early American History (before the Civil War) and what role do you think this history might play in the American Dream?

Steps/Procedures:
1. Place three pieces of construction paper on your wall or bulletin board. On the first piece write Puritans/Theists. On the second piece write Revolutionaries/Deists. On the third piece write Transcendentalists/Pantheists. As your class proceeds through this unit and year, whenever you encounter an example of the influence of one of the philosophical trends, apply a note in relation to that particular philosophy. Students will begin to see these influences in the various works they read in class as well as in what they encounter in everyday life.

2. Explain that each student will be part of a group that will study a particular philosophical trend in American thought (jigsaw). Each person will have individual responsibilities as well as group responsibilities. Each person will keep a dialectical journal in which he or she will
write quotes that grab his or her attention. He or she will then document the source underneath each quote in the left hand column of the paper. In the right hand column the student will write his or her response to the quote in connection to the philosophy the group is studying. Ask them to note any modern connections. Each student must have three to five quotes from each source they read.

3. Divide students into groups of three to four. Assign each group a trend. Each group will choose a leader who is responsible for keeping the group focused.

4. Point out how each group focuses on a particular philosophy and remind students they are responsible only for the assignments within their particular philosophy.

5. Provide opportunity for your students to research a primary source in the library or computer lab. Explain that they may use an excerpt only as long as it adequately reflects the philosophy’s identified characteristics.

6. Explain that each group will create a concept map in response to the reading, research, and reflection. The group will create the map on either chart paper or poster board. The map will use words, pictures, and symbols to show the characteristics of the philosophy, major writings, historical and modern connections, key people, and additional insights.

7. Allow time for each group to share its concept map (presentation). Direct students to take notes on each philosophy, since they will need to be familiar with the material as they proceed through the unit and year.

8. It is important that students also have an opportunity to explore a much different side of the early expression of the American Dream: the forced immigration of slavery. There are two short slave narrative pieces that students should read and contrast to the three historical pathways of the Dream. How does slavery and indentured servitude fit or not fit with these?

**Closure:** As an exit ticket: of the three philosophical approaches, which one best represents your view of the world? Why?

**Strategies for ELL students:**
Be certain that students are group appropriately so that they can both easily access information and contribute the group effectively.

**Strategies for TAG students:**
Expand on the “primary” source portion of the lesson. Allow them to locate two contrasting sources through their research or to locate sources that are critical of the philosophical approach.
Teacher “ANSWER” Sheet for Activity

**Group 1: Puritans — Overview of Their Philosophy**

View of God: Theists
Values: morality, religion, Bible, God
Truth = faith, religion
View of man: Man is basically evil
Pessimistic view of life
View of God: God is omnipotent and wrathful
View of society: Emphasis is on the success of society
Emphasis on authority
Education is religious
Work and worldly success are paths to God’s grace

**Group 2: Revolutionaries — Overview of Their Philosophy**

View of God: Deists
Values: usefulness, success, reason
Truth = science, reason
View of man: Man is perfectible and basically good
Optimistic view of life
View of God: God is benevolent; judges but doesn’t control
Emphasis is on the individual within society
Importance of liberty
Education is practical and vocational
All men can achieve success through work
Education is liberal; the aim is self-knowledge
Success is measured by man’s correct relationship to his work.

**Group 3: Transcendentalists — Overview of Their Philosophy**

View of God: Pantheists
Values: nature, intuition
Truth = intuition, instinct
View of man: Man is divine and shares this divinity with all life
Idealistic view of life
God is omnipresent and omniscient
Emphasis is on the individual as superior to society
Importance of self-knowledge
General Student Directions:

After reflecting on the idea of the American Dream and those who came from distant lands to find their dream, now we will look at some historical groups and the imprint they have left on the American Dream through their philosophical underpinnings.

You are going to focus on a particular group and philosophy in order to teach fellow students about your findings. You will then, in turn, learn from your peers regarding other philosophies that have permeated America’s diverse belief systems. As you are exposed to these different philosophies, you will make connections to the texts within this unit as well as what you encounter in the world.

Each individual will read the assigned texts, research specific aspects of the assigned philosophy and complete specific assignments. Each student will also read one text found through research. This must be a primary source. You will keep a dialectical journal in which you will write quotes that grab your attention. Document the source of the quote in the left-hand column of the paper. On the right hand side, you will write your response to the quote in connection to the philosophy your group is studying. Note any modern connections. You must have three to five quotes from each source you read.

Each group of three to four (as your teacher assigns) will combine its research and create a concept map on chart paper or poster board. This concept map will use pictures, symbols, and words to represent the information learned regarding the specific philosophy. Include characteristics of the philosophy, major writings, historical and modern connections, and key people. The map will be presented to the entire class. Each group is responsible for giving the class a comprehensive overview of its assigned philosophy.
Group 1: Puritans

Student Directions:

1. Write a brief summary about what you know about The Puritans (“The Pilgrims”), The Mayflower, and/or Plymouth Rock. Share these with your group and confirm or change any misconceptions.

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

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

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

5. At the minimum, be sure that you have answers to the following questions regarding the Puritans:

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

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

7. How would you define the American Dream according to the Puritans? Explain.

8. How have the puritans come to influence the American Dream?
Group 2: Revolutionaries

Student Directions

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

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

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

4. Individually, read one of the following key American Revolutionary texts: Thomas Paine’s Common Sense, Patrick Henry’s Speech at the Virginia Convention, or The Declaration of Independence.

5. Research the Revolutionaries and find at least one primary source that provides additional insight into and specific examples of their philosophy. How did that philosophy translate into how they lived? At the minimum, be sure to answer the following questions regarding the Revolutionaries:

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

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

7. How would you define the American Dream according to the Revolutionaries? Explain. How have the Revolutionary influenced the American Dream?
Group 3: Transcendentalists

Student Directions

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

2. Read the aphorisms attributed to Emerson. Choose two or three and show how they fit the description of a Transcendentalist. Discuss in your group.

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

4. Research Transcendentalists and find at least one primary source that provides additional insight into and specific examples of their philosophy. How did that philosophy translate into how they lived? Research to answer the following questions regarding the Transcendentalists:

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

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

6. How would you define the American Dream according to the Transcendentalists? Explain.

7. How have Transcendentalists affected the American Dream?
The New England Primer

For more than a hundred years Puritan children received their first schooling from The New England Primer. Since the chief purpose of education in Puritan times was to enable people to read the Bible, it was natural that the alphabet rhymes chanted by the children should be based on Bible stories. The little pictures (not counting the primitive Indian signs) are the earliest examples of what we call today “visual education.” Besides the alphabet, the Primer contained the Christian catechism and several prayers, including “Now I lay me down to sleep.” The Primer is believed to have been in existence by 1688; this selection is from the 1727 edition.

A Lesson for Children.


A
In ADAM'S Fall
We sinned all.
B
Heaven to find;
The Bible Mind.
C
Christ crucify'd
For sinners dy'd.
D
The Deluge drown'd
The Earth around.
E
ELIJAH hid
By Ravens fed.
F
The judgment made
FELIX afraid.
G
As runs the Glass,
Our Life doth pass.
H
My Book and Heart
Must never part.
J
JOB feels the Rod,--
Yet blesses GOD.
Proud Korah's troop
   Was swallowed up
LOT fled to Zoar,
Saw fiery Shower
On Sodom pour.
MOSES was he
Who Israel's Host
Led thro' the Sea

NOAH did view
The old world & new.
Young OBADIAS,
DAVID, JOSIAS,
All were pious.
PETER deny'd
His Lord and cry'd.
Queen ESTHER sues
And saves the Jews.
Young pious RUTH,
Left all for Truth.
Young SAM'L dear,
The Lord did fear.

Young TIMOTHY
Learnt sin to fly.
VASHTI for Pride
Was set aside.
Whales in the Sea,
GOD's Voice obey.
XERXES did die,
And so must I.
While youth do cheer
Death may be near.
ZACCHEUS he
Did climb the Tree
Our Lord to see.
The Infant's Grace before and after Meat.

BLESS me, O Lord, and let my food strengthen me to serve thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. AMEN.
I Desire to thank God who gives me food to eat every day of my life. AMEN.
What's right and good now shew me Lord, and lead me by they grace and word. Thus shall I be a child of God, and love and fear they hand and rod.

An Alphabet of Lessons for Youth.

A Wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.
BEtter is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure & trouble therewith.
COME unto Christ all ye that labor and are heavy laden and he will give you rest.
DONot the abominable thing which I hate saith the Lord.
EXcept a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
FOolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.
GODLINESS is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.
HOLINESS becomes GOD's house for ever.
IT is good for me to draw near unto GOD.
KEEP thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.
LIARS shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

MANY are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth them out of them all.

NOW is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

OUT of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

PRAY to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly.

QUIT you like men, be strong, stand fast in the faith.

REMEMBER thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

SEest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him.

TRUST in God at all times, ye people, pour out your hearts before him.

UPON the wicked, God shall rain an horrible tempest.

WO to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

EXHORT one another daily while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened thro' the deceitfulness of sin.

YOUNG men ye have overcome the wicked one.

ZEal hath consumed me, because thy enemies have forgotten the word of God.
I. Martha Carrier was indicted for bewitching certain persons, according to the form usual in such cases, pleading not guilty to her indictment. There were first brought in a considerable number of the bewitched persons, who not only made the Court sensible of an horrid witchcraft committed upon them, but also deposed that it was Martha Carrier, or her shape, that grievously tormented them by biting, pricking, pinching, and choking of them. It was further deposed that while this Carrier was on her examination before the Magistrates, the poor people were so tortured that every one expected their death upon the very spot, but that upon the binding of Carrier they were eased. Moreover, the look of Carrier then laid the afflicted people for dead, and her touch, if her eye at the same time were off them, raised them again: which things were also now seen upon her trial. And it was testified that upon the mention of some having their necks twisted almost round, by the shape of this Carrier, she replied, It’s no matter though their necks had been twisted quite off.

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

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

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

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

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

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

V. John Rogger also testified that upon the threatening words of this malicious Carrier, his cattle would be strangely bewitched, as was more particularly then described.

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

VII. Phebe Chandler testified that about a fortnight before the apprehension of Martha Carrier, on a Lordsday, while the Psalm was singing in the Church, this Carrier then took her by the shoulder and, shaking her, asked her where she lived. She made her no answer, although as Carrier, who lived next door to her father’s house, could not in reason but know who she was. Quickly after this, as she was at several times crossing the fields, she heard a voice that she took to be Martha Carrier’s, and it seemed as if it was over her head. The voice told her she should within two or three days be poisoned. Accordingly, within such a little time, one-half of her right hand became greatly swollen and very painful, as also part of her face: where of she can give no account how it came. It continued very bad for some days; and several times since, she has had a great pain in her breast and been so seized on her legs that she has hardly been able to go. She added that lately, going well to the House of God, Richard, the son of Martha Carrier, looked very earnestly upon her and immediately her hand, which had formerly been poisoned as is abovesaid, began to pain her greatly, and she had a strange burning at her stomach, but then was struck deaf, so that she could not hear any of the prayer or singing till the two or three last words of the Psalm.

VIII. One Foster, who confessed her own share in the witchcraft for which the prisoner stood indicted, affirmed that she had seen the prisoner at some of their witch meetings and that it was this Carrier who persuaded her to be a witch. She confessed that the devil carried them on a pole to a witch meeting, but the pole broke and she hanging about Carrier’s neck, they both fell down, and she then received an hurt by the fall, whereof she was not at this very time recovered.

IX. One Lacy, who likewise confessed her share in this witchcraft, now testified that she and the prisoner were once bodily present at a witch meeting in Salem Village; and that she knew the prisoner to be a witch and to have been at a diabolical sacrament and that the prisoner was the undoing of her and her children by enticing them into the snare of the devil.

X. Another Lacy, who also confessed her share in this witchcraft, now testified that the prisoner was at the witch-meeting in Salem Village, where they had bread and wine administered unto them.

XI. In the time of this prisoner’s trial, one Susanna Sheldon, in open court, had her hands unaccountably tied together with a wheel-band, so fast that without cutting, it could not be loosened. It was done by a specter, and the sufferer affirmed it was the prisoner’s.

Memorandum. This rampant hag, Martha Carrier, was the person of whom the confessions of the witches and of her own children, among the rest, agreed that the devil had promised her she should be Queen of Heb.
“Moral Perfection”
by Benjamin Franklin

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

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

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

Temperance
Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerity
Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
Justice
Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

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

Cleanliness
Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, clothes, or habitation.

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

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

Humility
Imitate Jesus and Socrates.
“Sayings of Poor Richard”
by Richard Saunders (Benjamin Franklin)
from Poor Richard’s Almanack

Experience keeps a dear school, but a fool will learn in no other.

Hunger is the best pickle.

Love your neighbor; yet don’t pull down your hedge.

If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him.

Three may keep a secret if two of them are dead.

A small leak will sink a great ship.

Silks and satins, scarlet and velvet, put out the kitchen fire.

If a man could have half his wishes he would double his troubles.

A lie stands on one leg, truth on two.

He that is of the opinion that money will do everything may well be suspected of doing everything for money.

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

God helps them that help themselves.

A word to the wise is enough.

Fish and visitors smell in three days.
The used key is always bright.

Lost time is never found again.

The sleeping fox catches no poultry.

He that falls in love with himself has no rivals.

One today is worth two tomorrows.

Little strokes fell great oaks.

Since thou are not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour.

Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship.

Fools make feasts and wise men eat them.

When the well’s dry, they know the worth of water.

If you would know the worth of money, go and try to borrow some.

Make hay while the sun shines.

He that lieth down with dogs shall rise up with fleas.

’Tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright.

The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise.

If you would have your business done, go; if not, send.
MR. PRESIDENT: No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen if, entertaining as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfil the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offence, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves, and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with these war-like preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask, gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can
gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of
the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are
meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those
chains which the British ministry have been so long forgining. And what have we to oppose to them?
Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to
offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable;
but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we
find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves. Sir,
we have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have
petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the
throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and
Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence
and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt,
from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and
reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free² if we mean to preserve
inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending²if we mean not
basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have
pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we
must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left
us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall
we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed,
and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution
and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs,
and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot?
Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in
our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as
that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides,
sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of
nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base
enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission
and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war
is inevitable\textsuperscript{2} and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace\textsuperscript{2} but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!
Excerpt from Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*

Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our POSITIVELY by uniting our affections, the latter NEGATIVELY by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries BY A GOVERNMENT, which we might expect in a country WITHOUT GOVERNMENT, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. WHEREFORE, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows, that whatever FORM thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest, they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto, the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but one man might labour out of the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune would be death, for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which, would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.
Excerpt from *The Declaration of Independence*

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

When in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness--That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shown, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our
repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose character is thus
marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time
to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have
reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to
their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common
Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Connections and
Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must,
therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold
the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL
CONGRESS, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our
Intentions, do, in the Name, and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly
Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be FREE AND
INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and
that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally
dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War,
conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which
INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm
reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our
Fortunes and our sacred Honor.
From “Self-Reliance”  
by Ralph Waldo Emerson

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

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

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

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

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

1. A friend might well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

2. All violence, all that is dreary and repels, is not power, but the absence of power.

3. Every man I meet is in some way my superior.

4. Hitch your wagon to a star.

5. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.

6. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

7. People only see what they are prepared to see.

8. The reward of a thing well done is to have done it.

9. The world is all gates, all opportunities, strings of tension waiting to be struck.

10. Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.
“Where I Lived and What I Lived For” from *Walden*  
by Henry David Thoreau

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defense against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a traveling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creating is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus1 is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa2 says, “An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning.” Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager — the wood thrush, the very, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whippoorwill, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln,3 and about two miles south of our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground;4 but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and her and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the

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1 *Olympus*: A mountain in Greece; in legend the home of the gods  
2 *Harivansa (or Harivansha)*: A Hindu classic poem about the deity Krishna  
3 *Lincoln*: Small town in Massachusetts between Concord and Sudbury, which is mentioned in the next paragraph.  
4 *Concord Battle Ground*: A reference to Emerson’s poem “Concord Hymn.”
This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rainstorm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, midafternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. Form a hilltop nearby, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven’s own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but dry land.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary,5 affording ample room for all the roving families of men. “There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,” — said Damodara,6 when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshiper of Aurora7 as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraved on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: “Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again.” I can understand that. Mornings brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer’s requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings.8 There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us

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5 Tartary (or Tatary): An indefinite region in northern Asia and Europe, extending from the Sea of Japan to the Dnieper River
6 Damodara: Another name for the Hindu god Krishna
7 Aurora: Greek goddess of dawn
8 wrath and wanderings: Homer’s Iliad concerns the “wrath” of Achilles, and the Odyssey tells of the “wanderings” of Odysseus

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awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air — to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, “All intelligences awake with the morning.” Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clock say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartanlike as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the

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9 *Vedas*: Collection of sacred Hindu literature

10 *Memnon*: In Greek mythology, the King of the Ethiopians whom Zeus made immortal. Memnon’s statue at Thebes was supposed to emit musical notes at dawn

11 *Spartanlike*: The inhabitants of the ancient Greek city-state of Sparta were famed for their courage, discipline, and frugality
devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of man here to “glorify God and enjoy him forever.”

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

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches today to save nine tomorrow. As for work, we haven’t any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus’s dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the

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12 “glorify...forever”: From the Presbyterian book of beliefs, Westminster Shorter Catechism

13 dead reckoning: Nautical term for a method of positioning a ship without using the more reliable method of astronomical observation

14 German Confederacy: In 1815, the first ineffective alliance of German territories.

15 sleepers: Wooden beams to which railway tracks are riveted

16 Saint Vitus’s dance: A nervous disorder accompanied by spasmodic twitching
parish bell rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell,17 there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire — or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour’s nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, “What’s the news?” as if the rest of mankind has stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night’s sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. “Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe.” — and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River;18 never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

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

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

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17 *setting the bell*: A “few pulls” would sound an alarm. A slow, complete pull would rotate the bell (or “set it”) and only toll it.

18 *Wachito River (or Ouachita or Washita)*: River in Arkansas
Time is but the stream I go-a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and forepaws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.
The Atlantic Voyage
By Olaudah Equiano

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast, was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror, when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled, and tossed up to see if I were sound, by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions, too, differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spoke, (which was very different from any I had ever heard) united to confirm me in this belief. Indeed, such were the horrors of my views and fears at the moment, that, if ten thousand worlds had been my own, I would have freely parted with them all to have exchanged my condition with that of the meanest slave in my own country. When I looked round the ship too, and saw a large furnace of copper boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate; and, quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. When I recovered a little, I found some black people about me, who I believed were some of those who had brought me on board, and had been receiving their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but all in vain. I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces, and long hair. They told me I was not: and one of the crew brought me a small portion of spirituous liquor in a wine glass, but, being afraid of him, I would not take it out of his hand. One of the blacks, therefore, took it from him and gave it to me, and I took a little down my palate, which, instead of reviving me, as they thought it would, throw me into the greatest consternation at the strange feeling it produced, having never tasted any such liquor before. Soon after this, the blacks who brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair.

I now saw myself deprived of all chance of returning to my native country, or even the least glimpse of hope of gaining the shore, which I now considered as friendly; and I even wished for my former slavery in preference to my present situation, which was filled with horrors of every kind, still heightened by my ignorance of what I was to undergo. I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across, I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before, and although not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it, yet, nevertheless, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side, but I could not; and besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water; and I have seen some of these poor African prisoners most severely cut, for attempting to do so, and hourly whipped for not eating. This indeed was often the case with myself. In a little time after, amongst the poor chained men, I found some of my own nation, which in a small degree gave ease to my mind. I inquired of
these what was to be done with us? they gave me to understand, we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived, and thought, if it were no worse than working, my situation was not so desperate; but still I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner; for I had never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty; and this not only shown towards us blacks, but also to some of the whites themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we were permitted to be on deck, flogged so unmercifully with a large rope near the foremost, that he died in consequence of it; and they tossed him over the side as they would have done a brute. This made me fear these people the more; and I expected nothing less than to be treated in the same manner. I could not help expressing my fears and apprehensions to some of my countrymen; I asked them if these people had no country, but lived in this hollow place? (the ship) they told me they did not, but came from a distant one. 'Then,' said I, 'how comes it in all our country we never heard of them?' They told me because they lived so very far off. I then asked where were their women? had they any like themselves? I was told they had. 'And why,' said I, 'do we not see them?' They answered, because they were left behind. I asked how the vessel could go? they told me they could not tell; but that there was cloth put upon the masts by the help of the ropes I saw, and then the vessel went on; and the white men had some spell or magic they put in the water when they liked, in order to stop the vessel. I was exceedingly amazed at this account, and really thought they were spirits. I therefore wished much to be from amongst them, for I expected they would sacrifice me; but my wishes were vainÑ-for we were so quartered that it was impossible for any of us to make our escape.

FIGHTING REBELS WITH ONLY ONE HAND
(Frederick Douglass, September 1861)

What on earth is the matter with the American Government and people? Do they really covet the world's ridicule as well as their own social and political ruin? What are they thinking about, or don't they condescend to think at all? So, indeed, it would seem from their blindness in dealing with the tremendous issue now upon them. Was there ever anything like it before? They are sorely pressed on every hand by a vast army of slaveholding rebels, flushed with success, and infuriated by the darkest inspirations of a deadly hate, bound to rule or ruin. Washington, the seat of Government, after ten thousand assurances to the contrary, is now positively in danger of falling before the rebel army. Maryland, a little while ago considered safe for the Union, is now admitted to be studded with the materials for insurrection, and which may flame forth at any moment.--Every resource of the nation, whether of men or money, whether of wisdom or strength, could be well employed to avert the impending ruin. Yet most evidently the demands of the hour are not comprehended by the Cabinet or the crowd. Our Presidents, Governors, Generals and Secretaries are calling, with almost frantic vehemance, for men.--"Men! men! send us men!" they scream, or the cause of the Union is gone, the life of a great nation is ruthlessly sacrificed, and the hopes of a great nation go out in darkness; and yet these very officers, representing the people and Government, steadily and persistently refuse to receive the very class of men which have a deeper interest in the defeat and humiliation of the rebels, than all others.--Men are wanted in Missouri--wanted in Western Virginia, to hold and defend what has been already gained; they are wanted in Texas, and all along the sea coast, and though the Government has at its command a class in the country deeply interested in suppressing the insurrection, it sternly refuses to summon from among the vast multitude a single
man, and degrades and insults the whole class by refusing to allow any of their number to defend with their strong arms and brave hearts the national cause. What a spectacle of blind, unreasoning prejudice and pusillanimity is this! The national edifice is on fire. Every man who can carry a bucket of water, or remove a brick, is wanted; but those who have the care of the building, having a profound respect for the feeling of the national burglars who set the building on fire, are determined that the flames shall only be extinguished by Indo-Caucasian hands, and to have the building burnt rather than save it by means of any other. Such is the pride, the stupid prejudice and folly that rules the hour.

Why does the Government reject the Negro? Is he not a man? Can he not wield a sword, fire a gun, march and countermarch, and obey orders like any other? Is there the least reason to believe that a regiment of well-drilled Negroes would deport themselves less soldier-like on the battlefield than the raw troops gathered up generally from the towns and cities of the State of New York? We do believe that such soldiers, if allowed to take up arms in defence of the Government, and made to feel that they are hereafter to be recognized as persons having rights, would set the highest example of order and general good behavior to their fellow soldiers, and in every way add to the national power.

If persons so humble as we can be allowed to speak to the President of the United States, we should ask him if this dark and terrible hour of the nation's extremity is a time for consulting a mere vulgar and unnatural prejudice? We should ask him if national preservation and necessity were not better guides in this emergency than either the tastes of the rebels, or the pride and prejudices of the vulgar? We would tell him that General Jackson in a slave state fought side by side with Negroes at New Orleans, and like a true man, despising meanness, he bore testimony to their bravery at the close of the war. We would tell him that colored men in Rhode Island and Connecticut performed their full share in the war of the Revolution, and that men of the same color, such as the noble Shields Green, Nathaniel Turner and Denmark Vesey stand ready to peril everything at the command of the Government. We would tell him that this is no time to fight with one hand, when both are needed; that this is no time to fight only with your white hand, and allow your black hand to remain tied.

Whatever may be the folly and absurdity of the North, the South at least is true and wise. The Southern papers no longer indulge in the vulgar expression, "free n----rs." That class of bipeds are now called "colored residents." The Charleston papers say:

"The colored residents of this city can challenge comparison with their class, in any city or town, in loyalty or devotion to the cause of the South. Many of them individually, and without ostentation, have been contributing liberally, and on Wednesday evening, the 7th inst., a very large meeting was held by them, and a committee appointed to provide for more efficient aid. The proceedings of the meeting will appear in results hereinafter to be reported."

It is now pretty well established, that there are at the present moment many colored men in the Confederate army doing duty not only as cooks, servants and laborers, but as real soldiers, having muskets on their shoulders, and bullets in their pockets, ready to shoot down loyal troops, and do all that soldiers may to destroy the Federal Government and build up that of the traitors and rebels. There were such soldiers at Manassas, and they are probably there still. There is a Negro in the army as well as in the fence, and our Government is likely to find it out before the war comes to an end. That the Negroes are numerous in the rebel army, and do for that army its heaviest work, is beyond question. They have been the chief laborers upon those temporary defences in which the rebels have been able to mow down our men. Negroes helped to build the batteries at Charleston. They relieve their gentlemanly and military masters from the stiffening drudgery of the camp, and devote them to the nimble and dexterous use of arms. Rising above vulgar prejudice, the
slaveholding rebel accepts the aid of the black man as readily as that of any other. If a bad cause can do this, why should a good cause be less wisely conducted? We insist upon it, that one black regiment in such a war as this is, without being any more brave and orderly, would be worth to the Government more than two of any other; and that, while the Government continues to refuse the aid of colored men, thus alienating them from the national cause, and giving the rebels the advantage of them, it will not deserve better fortunes than it has thus far experienced.—Men in earnest don't fight with one hand, when they might fight with two, and a man drowning would not refuse to be saved even by a colored hand.

(Foner, Volume 3, pages 151-154)
Lesson #5: Getting to Know the American Dream

Duration: 90 minutes

Priority standards: 11.03, 11.11, 11.12

Brief overview of lesson: Students will expand their understanding of The American Dream by examining more contemporary aspects of people’s experiences with immigration and society’s dreams. There are a number of activities as part of this lesson where students can practice their interviewing skills.

Materials needed:

“They Live the Dream”
“Lifelong Dreamer — Vietnam Boat Person”

Addressing Essential Question(s): How has the American Dream changed and remained the same over time?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:

Ask students to reflect on the prior knowledge of the roots of the American Dream from the previous activity and to write a brief explanation of how one of those roots can be seen in today’s society.

Steps/Procedures:

1. Begin by reading “They Live the Dream” by Dan Rather (a former CBS evening news anchor). Read aloud the introduction section. Discuss Rather’s reasons for writing this article. Number students from one to six. Students in group 1 will read about Delores Kesler; group 2 will read about Wayne Ward Ford; group 3, Shawn Carlson; group 4, Oscar Carlos Acosta; group 5, Eileen Collins; and group 6, Curtis G. Aikens, Sr.

2. Direct students to mark their text by noting what each person’s dream was and how he or she accomplished it.

3. Explain to students that after they have read their section, they will share the story with a group who did not read about that particular person. Put students in groups that include one student from each of groups one through six. Each person will take a turn and tell the story he or she read (Jigsaw).

4. Ask students to complete Interview Practice sheet, which asks them to practice interview questioning and incorporating quotations. Discuss as a whole class the varieties of ways the American Dream looked to each person.

5. Direct students to read the next story, “Lifelong Dreamer — Vietnam Boat Person.” As the text is read, direct students to mark the text where Nancy Pham states her dream, where the dream is threatened, and how the dream comes into existence. Then, ask students to get into pairs and practice interviewing with each other with one pretending to be the reporter and the other to be Nancy Pham. Each should construct their own paragraphs with embedded quotes.

Closure:

6. Have students go back to their quickwrite from the previous activity and write an additional paragraph about what they learned from the small group and class discussions.
They Live the Dream
by Dan Rather

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

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

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

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

DELORES KESLER

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

Delores Kesler’s dream began with a $10,000 loan she used to found a temporary staffing agency in Jacksonville, FL, in 1977. When she retired 20 years later, her company, AccuStaff, had projected revenues of $2 billion. Kesler says she didn’t plan to become a millionaire: Divorced and with a small child, she began her career at 22 with a series of dead-end jobs, struggling to make ends meet.

When she founded her company, there were few women entrepreneurs. But her father had often told Kesler she could do anything she wanted to do, and she was determined to succeed. As time went on, however, Kesler realized it was not just financial gain she was pursuing: She wanted to make a contribution to her community. And, as her business grew, she started requiring her employees to devote time to community service and insisting that her company contribute to local charities. And she didn’t stop there. In time, Kesler’s company was earning $50 million a year, and a large portion was going back into the community.

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

WAYNE WARD FORD
A troubled young man, he had an odd premonition about his future. Wayne Ford was in eighth grade when a teacher asked the class to write their obituaries. How would you like to be remembered? Ford, who lived in a rough area of Washington, D.C., came up with a curious response: He said he would make his mark in the Midwest. He would be active in politics and in charge of a community center.

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

“Then,” he says, “it all started to come together. The worse things in my life were the things that had the potential to make me great.” Ford devoted himself to academics. History especially gave him a new perspective. “When I started reading it,” he says, “I thought, ‘My God, the world has gone through hell, not just Wayne Ford.’”

After graduation, Ford turned to politics. Today, he’s living the dream he had as a boy: He’s the only black member of the Iowa State Legislature and the founder and executive director of Urban Dreams, a nonprofit community program for at-risk youth. Last year, he spoke before the Democratic National Convention. It was one of the biggest achievements of his life, but he says, “It wasn’t the cherry on the ice cream. The best is yet to come.”

SHAWN CARLSON

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

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

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

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

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

As a boy in tiny Elida, NM, Oscar Acosta had a talent for throwing a baseball that brought him a college scholarship and a chance at athletic glory. Getting to the Majors was his dream, and he neglected everything else — his schoolwork, and his wife and children — to get there. “I became consumed,” he says. He made it to the minor leagues, but when a torn rotator cuff ended his pitching career, his life spiraled out of control. His wife took the kids and left. He was broke. He lost any belief in himself. “I’d just given up,” he says. “I thought I was destined to go back and be a cow-puncher the rest of my life.”

When he got a second chance — an offer to coach in the Texas Rangers’ minor league system — Acosta says, he realized it was time to change. His identity, he swore, would never be tied exclusively to baseball. He reconciled with his wife and for the next 11 years built back what he’d lost, taking his blessings as they came. “I told my daughter, if God wants me to be a minor league instructor, that’s what I’m going to do,” he says.

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

EILEEN COLLINS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusion

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

1. Name of subject you read about in Dan Rather’s piece: ______________________________

2. Summarize what you learned about the subject:

3. How does this person feel about America and the American Dream? How do you know?

4. What do you think is ONE question that Dan Rather asked the subject that led to a particular answer in the final story?

5. What are THREE questions that you would ask the subject if you were interviewing him or her about The American Dream?

6. Look back at the section you read and mark ONE sentence that smoothly incorporates a quote from the interview into the writer’s own sentence.

7. Now, write a new sentence of your own in which you smoothly include a quotation from an imaginary interview you conducted with the subject using one of the questions from above.
Lifelong Dreamer — Vietnam Boat Person
by Mary-Beth McLaughlin

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“‘I was not afraid of it. Sometimes, I would just sleep in my bed and you could feel the whole house shake. It was really, really noisy,” she said. “And then I would get up in the morning and I was not scared. I would feel wonderful I’m alive. And I would walk around the neighborhood and check and see who is alive and who is dead.”

But life went on and Mrs. Pham did the “normal” things: graduated from high school; learning shorthand, typing, and English, and getting a job as a secretary at Macvee II, a company associated with the U.S. Army.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

There was no roof, no room to move, and canned Army rations included raw fish with a worm inside. And there was no milk for 10-month-old Jenny, so they fed her sugar and water. But as days went by, Jenny became weak until she all but stopped moving, and her mother thought she had died.

“I don’t know where I’m at. Even if there had been a coconut floating by, I would have had some idea. My husband was crying and I was running from one room to another but there was no medicine,” she said. “We were just hoping they would stop somewhere.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“I’m such a worrier, that I looked down, picturing snow and ice and no living thing,” she said. “I look down and everything was so green and there were mountains and rivers. I feel so happy. I feel like I’m a bird, like I’m a fish. Everything is so beautiful and I think, ‘I can make a living.’”
The Phams stayed with an Oak Harbor family for two weeks, then moved when the church found a house for them to rent.

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

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

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

But always, always she was dreaming.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mrs. Pham said she doesn’t worry about whether her business will be a success.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mary-Beth McLaughlin is a newspaper journalist for the Toledo Blade.
Asking the Right Questions

1. Pretend that you were a journalist interviewing Mrs. Pham, but you could only ask her questions that could be answered with “yes,” “no,” or with a single word. Write five questions below and answer them as Mrs. Pham as best as you can with the information from the selection.

2. Now, take those five questions and rewrite them in such a way that they CANNOT be answered with a “yes,” “no,” or with a single word. Choose two and answer them as if you were Mrs. Pham.

3. What is the difference between the information you received from the Yes/No questions and the other type of questions? Which were more effective and illustrative?

4. What are the topics of questions that you would probably want to ask someone if you were interviewing him or her about the American Dream?
Lesson #6: America’s Voices
Duration: 90 minutes

Priority standards: 11.02, 11.03, 11.07, 11.13.1

Brief overview of lesson: America can be interpreted in a variety of ways, depending upon race, culture, socio-economic status and others. This lesson presents students with a wide range of interpretations expressed through poetry.

Materials needed:
America’s Voices poetry worksheet
“America the Beautiful”
“I Hear America Singing”
“I, Too, Sing America”
“Indian Singing in Twentieth Century America”
“next to of course god america i”

Addressing Essential Question(s): what causes different people to interpret America differently?

Hook/Anticipatory Set: Ask students to read or sing the lyrics of the song “America the Beautiful.” There are a number of versions that are available on YouTube.

Steps/Procedures:
1. Ask students to describe how the speaker of each song feels about America. Ask students to go back through the lyrics of both songs and underline or highlight (mark the text) words and phrases that communicate those feelings to the audience.
2. Ask for student volunteers to read aloud the three “singing” poems by Whitman, Hughes, and Tremblay. Assign each poem to a different group and direct them to perform the poem. Give them a few minutes to determine, among other things, their movements, how they will present the poem, and who will speak (performance).
3. Have students define tone (the attitude of the author toward the subject matter of a literary work). An author’s tone might be serious, playful, commanding, or angry, for example. Tone is communicated through word choice, sentence structure, and subjects discussed, among other things.
4. Assign students one of the poems and direct them to fill in the chart for that poem. Share at least one example of the poet’s feelings about America and the words or phrases that reveal those feelings. Have students write a paragraph that describes the tone of one of the poems in the chart.
5. Ask students to read “next to of course god america i” independently. Direct them to complete the chart. Instruct students to describe the poem’s tone. Then, using support from the poem, students will write a paragraph describing the poem’s tone. (Note: The tone of this poem is difficult to determine. Discuss the poem with the entire class).

Optional homework or extension step: Ask students to locate and to bring in copies of a poem or lyrics to a song that expresses a particular tone of America. Brainstorm a quick list as a class; there are a lot of them.

7. Ask students to brainstorm on their own a list of words and phrases that reflect their attitudes toward America. Have them share those lists with a partner or in small groups. Ask for volunteers to share with the whole class (think-pair-share).

8. Direct students to compose a 10- to 15-line poem that describes attitudes toward America. They may use one of the poems they have read as a model. Ask students to share their poems with a partner or small group. Ask listeners to identify the tone of each poem.
**America’s Voices**

Read “I Hear America Singing,” “I, Too, Sing America,” and “Indian Singing in Twentieth Century America” and complete the chart for the one(s) assigned to you. On separate paper, write a paragraph that describes the tone of one of the poems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Feelings About America/Tone</th>
<th>Words or Phrases That Reveal Tone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I Hear America Singing”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I, Too, Sing America”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Indian Singing in Twentieth Century America”</td>
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</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Feelings About America</th>
<th>Words or Phrases That Reveal Those Feelings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“next to of course god america i”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“America, the Beautiful”
by Katharine Lee Bates

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

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

O beautiful for heroes proved 
In liberating strife, 
Who more than self their country loved, 
And mercy more than life! 
America! America! 
May God thy gold refine 
Till all success be nobleness, 
And ev’ry gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream 
That sees beyond the years. 
Thine alabaster cities gleam, 
Undimmed by human tears. 
America! America! 
God shed his grace on thee, 
And crown thy good with brotherhood, 
From sea to shining sea!
I Hear America Singing
by Walt Whitman

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be
      Blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or
      Beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or
      Leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat,
      The deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the
      Hatter singing as he stands,
The woodcutter’s song, the plowboy’s on his way in the
      Morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown.
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife
      At work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none
      Else.
The day what belongs to the day — at night the party
      Of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.
I, Too, Sing America
by Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

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

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

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

I, too, am America.
Indian Singing in Twentieth-Century America  
by Gail Tremblay

We wake; we wake the day,  
the light rising in us like sun —  
our breath a prayer brushing  
against the feathers in our hands.  
We stumble out into streets;  
patterns of wires invented by strangers  
are strung between eye and sky,  
and we dance in two worlds,  
indefinite as seasons in one,  
exotic curiosities in the other  
which rushes headlong down highways,  
watches us from car windows, explains  
us to its children in words  
that no one could ever make  
sense of. The image obscures  
the vision, and we wonder  
whether anyone will ever hear  
our own names for the things  
we do. Light dances in the body,  
surrounds all living things —  
even the stones sing  
although their songs are infinitely  
slower than the ones we learn  
from trees. No human voice lasts  
long enough to make such music sound.  
Earth breath eddies between factories  
and office buildings, caresses the surface  
of our skin; we go to jobs, the boss  
always watching the clock to see  
that we’re on time. He tries to shut  
out magic and hopes we’ll make
mistakes or disappear. We work fast and steady and remember each breath alters the composition of the air. Change moves relentless, the pattern unfolding despite their planning — we’re always there — singing round dance songs, remembering what supports our life — impossible to ignore.

next to of course god america i
by e. e. cummings

“next to of course god america i love you land of the pilgrims’ and so forth oh say can you see by the dawn’s early my country ’tis of centuries come and go and are no more what of it we should worry in every language even deafanddumb thy sons acclaim your glorious name by gorry by jingo by gee by gosh by gum why talk of beauty what could be more beautiful than these heroic happy dead who rushed like lions to the roaring slaughter they did not stop to think they died instead then shall the voice of liberty be mute?”

He spoke. And drank rapidly a glass of water
Lesson #7: Money and the American Dream

Duration: 120 minutes

Priority standards: 11.03, 11.07, 11.11, 11.12

Brief overview of lesson: Students will read a variety of genres of texts – poetry, short story, and drama – in order to explore the role that money plays in the American Dream.

Materials needed:

Quotes about money
“Money”
Excerpt from A Raisin in the Sun
“Mammon and the Archer”

Addressing Essential Question(s): Is the American Dream mainly about money?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
1. Conduct a quickwrite on the topic of money. Ask students questions such as why they (or parents, friends, classmates) work, what money means to them, what they like to buy, and how important money is to them.

2. Ask students to work in pairs. Have them review the quotations about money and write an explanation of each one in their own words. Students should share their responses in groups. Then ask students to choose one quotation with which they agree and one with which they disagree and explain why.

Steps/Procedures:
1. Ask for several volunteers to read the poem “Money” aloud once each. Have students read it as a skit using gestures and actions that seem appropriate. Ask students what slang names for money they know. Look back through lines 10–18 of the poem. These lines describe what money does. Ask students what other things money does. The last line says, “And it talks.” Ask students to write a paragraph as if they were Money. What would money say if it really could talk?

2. Read or act out the excerpts from A Raisin in the Sun. Explain to students that the play A Raisin in the Sun is about a poor African American family that has recently received a large amount of money after the father dies. Walter, the son, wants to invest the money in a liquor store but his mother objects and refuses to give him the money. Ask students what money represents for Walter. What does he say that demonstrates his opinion? How does Mama view money differently from Walter? What lines show her opinion? Ask students if their views of money are more in line with Walter’s or Mama’s.

3. Direct students to read the short story “Mammon and the Archer.” Stop at the bottom of the second page to summarize the plot and to clarify the distinctions between Anthony, the father, and Richard, the son. Stop and summarize after the disagreement over the power of money.
between Aunt Ellen and old Anthony. After completing the story and discussing the “twist” ending, ask students to return to the list of sayings about money and identify which ones Aunt Ellen and old Anthony would agree or disagree with. Ask them to give a reason for their choices.

4. Direct students to write a letter in one of two voices: Mama from “Raisin in the Sun” as she would write to old Anthony in “Mammon and the Archer” to give advice about money, or Aunt Ellen as she would write to Walter. Students’ letters should make specific reference to details included in both stories.

5. Last, ask students to work in pairs – one will be Mama and the other Aunt Ellen – to interview each other about their feelings about the American Dream. They should write two or three questions ahead of time and write their synthesis of the interview to present to the class.
Money Quotes

The love of money is the root of all evil.

Remember that time is money.

Put not your trust in money, but your money in trust.

A good reputation is more valuable than money.

The rich are indeed rather possessed by their money than possessors.

Health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of — a blessing that money cannot buy.

Money cannot buy happiness.

Money makes the world go round.

A fool and his money are soon parted.

A penny saved is a penny earned.

Money changes all the iron rules into rubber bands.

There’s no money in poetry, but then there’s no poetry in money either.

Money is like manure. If you spread it around, it does a lot of good, but if you pile it up in one place, it stinks like hell.
Money
by Dana Gioia

Money, the long green,
cash, stash, rhino, jack
or just plain dough.

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

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

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

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

Money. You don’t know where it’s been,
but you put it where your mouth is.
And it talks.
From A Raisin in the Sun
by Lorraine Hansberry

Walter. Mama — I don’t need no nagging at me today.

Mama. Seem like you getting to a place where you always tied up in some kind of knot about something. But if anybody ask you ’bout it you just yell at ’em and bust out the house and go out and drink somewheres. Walter Lee, people can’t live with that. Ruth’s a good, patient girl in her way — but you getting to be too much. Boy, don’t make the mistake of driving that girl away from you.

Walter. Why — what she do for me?

Mama. She loves you.

Walter. Mama — I’m going out. I want to go off somewhere and be by myself for a while.

Mama. I’m sorry ’bout your liquor store, son. It just wasn’t the thing for us to do. That’s what I want to tell you about —

Walter. I got to go out, Mama —

(He rises.)

Mama. It’s dangerous, son.

Walter. What’s dangerous?

Mama. When a man goes outside his home to look for peace.

Walter (beseechingly). Then why can’t there never be no peace in this house then?

Mama. You done found it in some other house?
Walter. No — there ain’t no woman! Why do women always think there’s a woman somewhere when a man gets restless. (coming to her) Mama — Mama — I want so many things…

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

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

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

Mama. Understand what, baby?

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

Mama. Son — how come you talk so much ’bout money?

Walter (with immense passion). Because it is life, Mama!

Mama (quietly). Oh — (very quietly) So now it’s life. Money is life. Once upon a time freedom used to be life — now it’s money. I guess the world really do change…
Walter. No — it was always money, Mama. We just didn’t know about it.

Mama. No… something has changed. (She looks at him.) You something new, boy. In my time we was worried about not being lynched and getting to the North if we could and how to stay alive and still have a pinch of dignity too… Now here come you and Beneatha — talking ’bout things we ain’t never even thought about hardly, me and your daddy. You ain’t satisfied or proud of nothing we done. I mean that you had a home; that we kept you out of trouble till you was grown; that you don’ have to ride to work on the back of nobody’s streetcar — You my children — but how different we done become.
Old Anthony Rockwall, retired manufacturer and proprietor of Rockwall’s Eureka Soap, looked out the library window of his Fifth Avenue mansion and grinned. His neighbor to the right — the aristocratic clubman, G. Van Schuylight Suffolk Jones — came out of his waiting motor-car, wrinkling a contumelious nostril, as usual, at the Italian renaissance sculpture of the soap palace’s front elevation.

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

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

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

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

“Richard,” said Anthony Rockwall, “what do you pay for the soap that you use?”

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

“Six dollars a dozen, I think, dad.”

“And your clothes?”

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

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

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

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

“For one thing,” answered Richard, rankling a little, “it won’t buy one into the exclusive
“Oho! won’t it?” thundered the champion of the root of evil. “You tell me where your exclusive circles would be if the first Astor hadn’t had the money to pay for his steerage passage over?”

Richard sighed.

“And that’s what I was coming to,” said the old man, less boisterously. “That’s why I asked you to come in. There’s something going wrong with you, boy. I’ve been noticing it for two weeks. Out with it. I guess I could lay my hands on eleven millions within twenty-four hours, besides the real estate. If it’s your liver, there’s the Rambler down in the bay, coaled, and ready to steam down to the Bahamas in two days.”

“Not a bad guess, dad; you haven’t missed it far.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But within that minute a crosstown car had stopped directly in front of the cab. The cabman tried to pass to the left, but the heavy express wagon cut him off. He tried the right and had to back out, but dropped his reins and swore dutifully. He was blockaded in a tangled mess of vehicles and horses.

One of those street blockades had occurred that sometimes tie up commerce and movement quite suddenly in the big city.

“Why don’t you drive on?” said Miss Lantry impatiently. “We’ll be late.”

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

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

“Let me see the ring,” said Miss Lantry. “Now that it can’t be helped, I don’t care. I think theatres
At 11 o’clock that night somebody tapped lightly on Anthony Rockwall’s door.

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

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

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

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

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

“But, Brother Anthony, what good could your money have done?”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anthony called Kelly when he was at the door.

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

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

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

Lesson #8: Conducting Research on the American Dream
Duration: 45 minutes of class time with additional times outside of class

Priority standards: 11.03.

Brief overview of lesson: Students will conduct primary research into people’s perspectives of the American Dream.

Materials needed:
Survey sheet

Addressing Essential Question(s): Do some people view the American Dream differently than others? Why?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
Look back at the anticipation guide students completed at the beginning of the year. Ask them to reflect on any responses that might have changed so far during the unit.

Steps/Procedures:
1. Hand out the Research sheet and ask students to read through each of the statements and clarify any confusion with any of the statements. Students should add additional statements at the bottom.
2. Ask students to complete the form on their own time finding people who fit the identified categories.
3. When students have them completed, break students into groups based upon the various categories (under 25, male, non-white, etc.) and ask them to total their A’s and D’s for each of the questions.
4. Next, they will meet with other groups and compare their results and find statements that demonstrate a wide difference of opinion. Put these statements up on the board.
5. Students then should write a response to that statement, citing evidence from their surveys or other texts they’ve read in the unit as support.

Closure:
As an exit ticket, ask students to write one question that might elicit a valuable response from an interview subject about one of the statements on the board.
## Research on the American Dream

Locate people who fit the categories below and mark whether they Agree or Disagree with the following statements. There is room below for some of your own statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Under 25</th>
<th>Over 60</th>
<th>Non-white</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education is important primarily to increase one’s self-knowledge.</td>
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<td>Individuals’ rights are superior to the needs of society.</td>
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<td>God exists in all life forms.</td>
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<td>Mankind is basically evil.</td>
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<td>Education is important primarily to get a job.</td>
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<td>Truth is found in faith.</td>
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<td>Human beings are basically good and getting better.</td>
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<td>Individual liberties sometimes need to be controlled by government authority.</td>
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<td>We must protect ourselves from government intrusion on our liberties</td>
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<td>God is all-powerful and can be wrathful.</td>
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<td>Having a career is essential to success.</td>
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<td>America’s laws protect all equally</td>
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<tr>
<td>Truth can be found in science.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The American Dream means making lots of money.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The American Dream includes getting married and having children.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The American Dream is more true for some than others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>America is a melting pot</td>
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<tr>
<td>America is welcoming to differences</td>
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Lesson #9: Listen While You Work?

Duration: 50 minutes

Priority standards: 11.11, 11.09, 11.10, 11.07

Brief overview of lesson: Students will compare/contrast a speaker’s tone and the themes of songs that deal with work.

Materials needed:
Songs about work. For example: “Harlan Man” and “The Mountain” by Steve Earle. Both of which are available for streaming on YouTube. Any two contrasting songs will work well with the activity.

Addressing Essential Question(s): What role does work play in the American Dream?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
In order to activate prior knowledge -- if you use the songs identified in the materials -- before listening to the songs, ask students to describe what they know about coal mining. Ask questions such as: “Where does it take place? What is the nature of the work? What does a coal mine look like?”

Steps/Procedures:
1. Play the song “Harlan Man” as the students read the lyrics.
2. Introduce the graphic organizer, the Songs About Work Chart. Ask students to complete the appropriate section of the chart.
3. Play the second song, “The Mountain,” as students follow along with the lyrics. Again, students should complete the chart.
4. As a class, discuss responses to the chart. Then ask student pairs to discuss their findings about the two songs and, in the Venn diagram, identify similarities and differences among the characters (speakers).
5. Continue the comparison by having each student compose a thesis statement that compares the two speakers and then support that statement with a paragraph of explanation.
6. As a possible extension activity, ask students to locate and bring to class their own songs that describe work. Add those songs to the chart. In pairs or groups, assign students new paragraphs of comparison.

Closure:
Ask students to consider how work affects their lives or how they expect it will in the future.

Strategies for ELL students:
Be sure that you take the time to set context/background knowledge and to have lyrics available.
Listen While You Work?

As you listen to the songs and/or read the lyrics, fill in the chart in order to get a sense of the speakers’ and authors’ perspectives on work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Songs About Work Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Listen While You Work?

Song 1: _______________________  Song 2: _______________________

Write a thesis statement and supporting paragraph comparing the two songs (focus on tone or theme):
Lesson #10: Attitudes Toward Work

Duration: 50 minutes

Priority standards: 11.11, 11.09, 11.10, 11.07

Brief overview of lesson: Students will read a poem and an interview to determine attitudes toward work and the American Dream

Materials needed:
“Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper”
“Roberto Acuna Talks About Farm Workers”

Addressing Essential Question(s): how does work affect our lives?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
In order to introduce this section, ask students to do a quickwrite about either their first job or what they anticipate their first job will be. Ask volunteers to share responses.

Steps/Procedures:
1. As a pre-reading activity for the essay about Roberto Acuna, ask a volunteer to read the poem “Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper” aloud to the class. Next, form student groups and instruct them to reread the poem and to be ready to provide an interpretation of the title and of the meaning of the poem, using the graphic organizer on the Student Page. Ask group reporters to discuss their interpretations. Discuss the poem’s format as well as the lines that appear to have a double meaning in the poem.

2. Introduce the essay, “Roberto Acuna Talks About Farm Workers” by providing students with the following information about Studs Terkel, the author:

   Studs Terkel, famous Chicago radio broadcaster, interviewer, and writer, was born Louis Terkel in 1912 in New York. Terkel graduated with a law degree but never practiced law. Through his many radio shows and interviewing opportunities, Terkel discovered he was skilled at getting people to talk about their lives and the things they do best. Terkel is probably most famous for his oral histories. Terkel, a Pulitzer Prize winner, has written more than two dozen books on topics such as the Depression, World War II, race relations, the American Dream, working, and aging; and he serves as Distinguished Author-In-Residence at the Chicago Historical Society. The passage we will read is an excerpt from one of Terkel’s most well-known oral histories, Working. In this excerpt, Terkel interviews Roberto Acuna, a lettuce picker who eventually served as an organizer for the United Farm Workers.

3. Assign groups to complete the SOAPSTone organizer about the essay. Remind students that SOAPSTone describes a process for analyzing text by discussing and identifying Speaker,
Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, and Tone.

4. Ask groups to read and mark the text by highlighting the issues that motivated Acuna to become an organizer for the United Farm Workers. Have students discuss their findings.

5. After they have read the essay, ask students to review the text in order to determine Acuna’s attitudes toward different types of workers. Ask students to list the jobs in the essay and classify them into at least two categories.

6. Ask students to summarize the feelings that Robert Acuna or the speaker of the poem probably have about The American Dream. Which of the early foundations of the Dream would probably most apply to them? Why? What might good interview questions be for either of them?
### Attitudes toward Work

As you read the poem, “Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper,” complete the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Who Burns for the Perfection of Paper”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your interpretation of the meaning of the title of the poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your interpretation of the meaning of the poem. Provide textual support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words or phrases in the poem with double meanings. Explain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At sixteen, I worked after high school hours
at a printing plant
that manufactured legal pads:
Yellow paper
stacked seven feet high
and leaning
as I slipped cardboard
between the pages,
then brushed red glue
up and down the stack.
No gloves: fingertips required
for the perfection of paper,
smoothing the exact rectangle.
Sluggish by 9 PM, the hands
would slide along suddenly sharp paper,
and gather slits thinner than the crevices
of the skin, hidden.
Then the glue would sting,
hands oozing
till both palms burned
at the punchclock.

Ten years later, in law school,
I knew that every legal pad
was glued with the sting of hidden cuts,
that every open lawbook
was a pair of hands
upturned and burning.
Attitudes toward Work

Complete the following SOAPSTone to analyze the essay “Roberto Acuna Talks About Farm Workers,” by Studs Terkel.

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

Studs Terkel, famous Chicago radio broadcaster, interviewer, and writer, was born Louis Terkel in 1912 in New York. Terkel graduated with a law degree but never practiced law. Through his many radio shows and interviewing opportunities, Terkel discovered he was skilled at getting people to talk about their lives and the things they do best. Terkel is probably most famous for his oral histories. Currently Terkel, a Pulitzer Prize winner, has written more than two dozen books on topics such as the Depression, World War II, race relations, the American Dream, working, and aging, and serves as Distinguished Author-In-Residence at the Chicago Historical Society. The following passage is an excerpt from one of Terkel’s most well-known oral histories, Working, where Terkel interviews Roberto Acuna, a lettuce picker who eventually became an organizer for the United Farm Workers.

Acuna’s work in the Farm Labor Union was not a new idea for migrant farm workers of his time. In the mid 1960s, Mexican American Cesar Chavez created a labor union for migrant farm workers. As a result of poor working conditions, laborers united and Chavez led a strike that eventually caused growers to cave in and give workers their right — better hours, working conditions, and wages. Chavez died in 1993; however, workers like Acuna continue to fight for the rights of migrant workers.

I walked out of the fields two years ago. I saw the need to change the California feudal system, to change the lives of farm workers, to make these huge corporations feel they’re not above anybody. I am thirty-four years old and I try to organize for the United Farm Workers of America.…

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

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

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

The University of California at Davis had government experiments with pesticides and chemicals. They get a bigger crop each year. They haven’t any regard as to what safety precautions are needed. In 1964 and ’65, an airplane was spraying these chemicals on the fields. Spraying rigs they’re called. Flying low, the wheels got tangled in the fence wire. The pilot got up, dusted himself off, and got a drink of water. He died of convulsions. The ambulance attendants got violently sick because of the pesticide he had on his person. A little girl was playing around a sprayer. She stuck her tongue on it. She died instantly.
These pesticides affect the farm worker through the lungs. He breathes it in. He gets no compensation. All they do is say he’s sick. They don’t investigate the cause.

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

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

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

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

All kinds of people are farm workers, not just Chicanos. Filipinos started the strike. We have Puerto Ricans and Appalachians too, Arabs, some Japanese, some Chinese. At one time they used us against each other. But now they can’t and they’re scared, the growers. They can organize conglomerates. Yet when we try organization to better our lives, they are afraid. Suffering people never dreamed it could be different. Cesar Chavez tells them this and they grasp the idea — and this is what scares the growers.

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

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

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

1 Mexicali (mek’ si kal’ ē): Capital of the Mexican state of Baja California Norte
2 Salinas (sə lē’nas): City in west central California
only a wallet in their head. The more you squeeze it the more they cry out.

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

If people could see — in the winter, ice on the fields. We’d be on our knees all day long. We’d build fires and warm up real fast and go back onto the ice. We’d be picking watermelons in 105 degrees all day long. When people have melons or cucumber or carrots or lettuce, they don’t know how they got on their table and the consequences to the people who picked it. If I had enough money, I would take busloads of people out to the fields and into the labor camps. Then they’d know how that fine salad got on their table.
Lesson #11: Nickel and Dimed in America

Duration: 90 minutes
Priority standards: 11.01, 11.02, 11.03, 11.11

Brief overview of lesson: Students will examine the challenges of the American Dream for some based upon socio-economic status.

Materials needed:
Excerpt from *Nickel and Dimed*
Minimum Wage worksheet

Addressing Essential Question(s): How does economic status affect ability to reach the American Dream?

Hook/Anticipatory Set:
Form student groups. In order to activate prior knowledge about minimum wage jobs, instruct student groups to select a recorder and reporter to report findings to the class on the following question: What (legal) jobs are available to high school students in your area? Allow five minutes for groups to compile lists. Ask groups to share their responses.

Steps/Procedures:
1. Direct students to the Student Page containing the Minimum Wage Scenario. Again, allow time for groups (or individuals) to complete the scenario.
2. After students have completed the scenario, allow groups (or individuals) to present their responses to the class.
3. Instruct students to complete a dialectical journal while reading the excerpt from *Nickel and Dimed*. Students should quote at least five statements from the text to which they want to respond. Specify to the students that they are to look for information that they find interesting or emotionally charged, and then they should identify the effect of each quote on them as a reader.
4. After students have read the text and completed the dialectical journals, form groups of four to engage in a think-pair-share activity. Allow students to share and discuss responses to the text. Call on volunteers to share issues discussed in the groups.
5. Assign the following writing prompts:
   • Compose a letter to the maid service company stating problems the maids face. Provide suggestions of what the company can do to improve conditions.
   • Compose a letter to a local newspaper citing a need for a change in the attitudes of people toward those in service occupations, particularly those who are maids and wear uniforms.
6. Place students in groups in order to share responses.
Minimum Wage Scenario

Create a budget for yourself assuming that you live alone and work 40 hours at a minimum wage job. Use the newspaper, community resources, informal interviews, and Internet sources to document your responses to the following questions.

1. What is the current minimum wage in Portland?

2. What is the take-home pay for a single person working 40 hours per week at a minimum wage job? *(Remember to deduct 10 percent or more for federal taxes)*

3. How much will housing cost?

4. How much will water and electricity cost?

5. How much will transportation cost?

6. How much will auto insurance cost?

7. How much will food cost?

8. How much will life and health insurance cost?

9. What will be left for entertainment?

10. What conclusions do you draw based on your responses?
from *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*

by Barbara Ehrenreich

Barbara Ehrenreich, a white, middle-class independent journalist, originally graduated from college with a Ph.D. in biology. As a social activist, feminist, and political essayist, Barbara has written many books, and for several well-known publications about controversial topics such as healthcare, war, families, and women’s issues. For her book *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* Ehrenreich became part of the nation’s “working poor” and shared their experiences in entry-level jobs. In the following excerpt, she writes about her employment at a maid service in Maine.

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

But the relevant point about Holly is that she is visibly unwell — possibly whiter, on a daily basis, than anyone else in the state. We’re not just talking Caucasian here; think bridal gowns, tuberculosis, and death. All I know about her is that she is twenty-three, has been married for almost a year, and manages to feed her husband, herself, and an elderly relative on $30–$50 a week, which is only a little more than what I spend on food for myself. I’d be surprised if she weighs more than ninety-two pounds before breakfast, assuming breakfast is even on her agenda. During an eight-to-nine-hour shift, I never see her eat more than one of those tiny cracker sandwiches with peanut butter filling, and you would think she had no use for food at all if it weren’t for the fact that every afternoon at about 2:30 she starts up a food-fantasy conversation in the car. “What did you have for dinner last night, Marge?” she’ll ask, Marge being our oldest and most affluent team member, who — thanks to a working commercial fisherman husband — sometimes brings reports from such fine-dining spots as T.G.I. Friday’s. Or we’ll drive by a Dairy Queen and Holly will say, “They have great Foursquares” — the local name for a sundae — “there, you know. With four kinds of sauce. You get chocolate, strawberry, butterscotch, and marshmallow and any kind of ice cream you want. I had one once and let it get a little melted and, oh my God,” etc.

Today, though, even Marge, who normally chatters on obliviously about the events in her life (“It was the biggest spider” or “So she just puts a little mustard right in with the baked beans…”), notices how shaky Holly looks. “Is it just indigestion or is there nausea?” she asks. When Holly admits to nausea, Marge wants to know if she’s pregnant. No answer. Marge asks again, and again no answer. “I’m talking to you, Holly, answer me.” It’s a tense moment, with Marge prying and Holly just as rudely stonewalling, but Holly, as team leader, prevails.
There are only the three of us — Denise is out with a migraine — and at the first house I suggest that Marge and I do all the vacuuming for the day. Marge doesn’t chime in on my offer, but it doesn’t matter since Holly says no way. I resolve to race through dusting so I can take over as much as possible from Holly. When I finish, I rush to the kitchen, only to find a scene so melodramatic that for a second I think I have walked out of Dusting, the videotape, and into an entirely different movie. Holly is in a distinctly un-team-leader-like position, standing slumped over a counter with her head on her arms. “I shouldn’t be here today,” she says, looking up wanyly. “I had a big fight with my husband. I didn’t want to go to work this morning but he said I had to.” This confidence is so completely out of character that I’m speechless. She goes on. The problem is probably that she’s pregnant. It’s been seven weeks and the nausea is out of control, which is why she can’t eat anything and gets so weak, but she wants it to be a secret until she can tell Ted herself.

Very tentatively and mindful of the deep reserve of rural Mainers, as explained to me by a sociologist acquaintance, I touch her arm and tell her she shouldn’t be doing this. Even if she were feeling OK she probably shouldn’t be around the chemicals we use. She should go home. But all I can talk her into is taking the Pure Protein sports bar I always carry in my bag in case my sandwich let me down. At first she refuses it. Then, when I repeat the offer, she says, “Really?” and finally takes it, picking off little chunks with trembling fingertips and cramming them into her mouth. Also, would I mind doing the driving for the rest of the day because she doesn’t trust herself on account of the dizziness?

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

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

After the accident, Holly decides we can take a convenience store break. I buy myself a pack of cigarettes and sit out in the rain to puff (I haven’t inhaled for years but it helps anyway) while the others drink their Cokes in the car. Have to get over this savior complex, I instruct myself, no one wants to be rescued by a klutz. Even my motives seem murky at the moment. Yes, I want to help
Holly and everyone else in need, on a world-wide basis if possible. I am a “good person,” as my demented charges at the nursing home agree, but maybe I’m also just sick of my suddenly acquired insignificance. Maybe I want to “be somebody,” as Jesse Jackson likes to say, somebody generous, competent, brave, and perhaps, above all, noticeable.

Maids, as an occupational group, are not visible, and when we are seen we are often sorry for it.3 On the way to the Martha Stewart-ish place, when Holly and Marge were complaining about her haughtiness in the past encounter, I had ventured to ask why so many of the owners seem hostile and contemptuous toward us. “They think we’re stupid,” was Holly’s answer. “They think we have nothing better to do with our time.” Marge too looked suddenly sober. “We’re nothing to these people,” she said. “We’re just maids.” Nor are we much of anything to anyone else. Even convenience store clerks, who are $6-an-hour gals themselves, seem to look down on us. In Key West, my waitress’s polo shirt was always a conversation starter: “You at Jerry’s?” a clerk might ask. “I used to work at the waffle place just up the boulevard from there.” But a maid’s uniform has the opposite effect. At one place where we stopped for refreshments, an actual diner with a counter, I tried to order iced tea to take out, but the waitress just kept standing there chatting with a coworker, ignoring my “Excuse me’s.” Then there’s the supermarket. I used to stop on my way home from work, but I couldn’t take the stares, which are easily translatable into: What are you doing here? And, No wonder she’s poor, she’s got a beer in her shopping cart! True, I don’t look so good by the end of the day and probably smell like eau de toilet and sweat, but it’s the brilliant green-and-yellow uniform that gives me away, like prison clothes on a fugitive. Maybe, it occurs to me, I’m getting a tiny glimpse of what it would be like to be black.

And look at me now, sitting on a curb at a gas station, puffing into the endless slow rain, so sweat-soaked already that it doesn’t matter. Things don’t get any more squalid than this, is my thought. But they can — they can! — and they do. At the next house, I am getting my toilet brush out of its Ziploc bag when the liquid that’s been accumulating in the bag all day spills on my foot — 100 percent pure toilet juice leaking through the laces and onto my sock. In ordinary life, if someone were to, say, piss on your foot, you’d probably strip off the shoe and the sock and throw them away. But these are the only shoes I have. There’s nothing to do but try to ignore the nasty stuff soaking my foot and, as Ted exhorts us, work through it.

Culminating Assessment: Conducting and Presenting an Interview about the American Dream

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

You will identify and interview a person over the age of 18 in order to determine his or her attitude about America and the American Dream. Your final piece will not be in Q and A form, but will be a synthesis of your summary of the interview, quotations from your subject, blocking during the interview, and references to one or more pieces that you read during this unit. Your introduction should include a hook for the reader, relevant biographical information, and a rationale for why you chose this person to interview; your conclusion ought to include a personal reflection on how his or her feelings about the American Dream are similar or different from your own and finishes with an effective clincher.

**Steps in the Assignment:**

1. Brainstorm a list of people who might be good subjects for your interview. Use the brainstorming and prewriting form to assist you. Once you select a subject, be sure to identify times and places for the interview, noting that you will conduct the interview in two phases, as described below.

2. Begin writing questions for your interview. Remember to avoid questions that can be answered with a yes/no or a single word/phrase. Share these questions with a peer to receive feedback and additional question ideas.

3. Complete the Phase One portion of the interview with your subject, which is mainly about biographical information.

4. Using the information you learned from the Phase One of the interview, revise your list of questions. Write or type them out on separate paper, leaving space for your subject’s responses.

5. During the interview, take careful notes on your subject’s responses, whenever possible trying to take down exact quotations. Be sure also to note physical descriptions, setting, and movements of your subject during the interview. For example: “Reaching for the picture of his daughter, Raul paused before answering what clearly seemed to be a difficult and personal question for him.”

6. Before concluding the interview, be sure to read back any direct quotations to your subject to be sure that you accurately captured what he or she said.

7. After the interview, begin to organize the body of your paper. You may choose to organize your piece by presenting the information you learned about your subject chronologically (“When she was ten, she learned that she had to move …By the time she reached high school, Maddie …”). You may also choose to organize your piece by topic: home, school, politics, immigration, etc. Whatever the organizational method you employ, identify questions and answers that fit the structure. Also identify texts you read during this unit that might fit in within your organizational structure. For example, you could identify *Nickel and Dimed* in a paragraph about the jobs your interview subject held.

8. Begin drafting your piece, being sure that you have an effective introduction, organized body paragraphs that explain the subject’s attitude toward America and the American Dream, and a satisfying conclusion. Your piece must make reference to at least one text you read and include blocking elements during the interview.

9. Be sure that a peer and/or an adult reviews your piece before submitting your final.
Brainstorming/Prewriting

1. What are some of the most important topics that relate to the American Dream?

2. Identify people who might be available for you to interview:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Age/Relation</th>
<th>Topics he/she could discuss</th>
<th>Why he/she would be a good interview subject</th>
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3. After you have selected your interview subject, when and where will you meet for the interview?

4. Phase One of the interview is about gathering biographical information you will need in order to write effective questions for the full interview. Write down all of the essential biographical information you have already and biographical questions you need to ask prior to the full interview:
**Culminating Assessment: Conducting and Presenting an Interview about the American Dream**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Does Not Yet Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.03. Draw conclusions about the author’s purpose, basic beliefs, perspectives, and philosophical assumptions.</td>
<td>The interview effectively captures and presents the interview subject’s tone and beliefs about America and the American Dream.</td>
<td>The interview summarizes the interview subject’s tone and beliefs about America and the American Dream.</td>
<td>The interview does not present the interview subject’s tone and beliefs about America and the American Dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.11. Describe and evaluate the author's tone</td>
<td>The interview demonstrates a thorough and insightful understanding of the American Dream. There references to other texts and authors are evocative and original.</td>
<td>The interview demonstrates some understanding of the American Dream. There references to other texts and authors are appropriate and effective.</td>
<td>The interview does not demonstrate an understanding of the American Dream. Either there are no references to other texts and/or the references are not appropriate or relevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.06. Demonstrate familiarity with major literary periods, authors, subjects of U.S. literature.</td>
<td>The writing in the piece is lively and engaging for the reader with an effective introduction and conclusion paragraph.</td>
<td>The writing in the piece is mostly engaging for the reader an includes an introduction and conclusion paragraph.</td>
<td>The writing in the piece is not engaging for the reader and may be lacking an effective introduction and/or conclusion paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.13.1 Adjust tone and style as necessary to engage the interest of the reader.</td>
<td>The organization of the piece is clear and effective for the purpose.</td>
<td>The organization of the piece is clear.</td>
<td>The piece is difficult to follow because the organizational structures are inappropriate or ineffective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.13.3 Use organizational structures</td>
<td>The synthesis of quotations from the interview, original insights, and outside sources are effective and expertly crafted.</td>
<td>The synthesis of quotations from the interview, original insights, and outside sources are appropriate.</td>
<td>The synthesis of quotations from the interview, original insights, and outside sources are missing or inappropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15.5 Draw from both primary sources and secondary sources</td>
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Lesson #12: Unit Reflection

**Duration:** 50 minutes

**Priority standards:** 11.03, 11.11

**Brief overview of lesson:** Students will reflect on the unit’s essential questions by producing a text that includes no words.

**Materials needed:** List of unit’s essential questions, various magazines

**Hook/Anticipatory Set:**
Ask students to do a quickwrite on one or more of the unit’s essential questions by focusing on a specific lesson, activity, or text from the unit. Share with a partner.

**Steps/Procedures:**
1. Working with a partner, students should look through various magazines and locate images that reflect some kind of aspect of the American Dream. You could also do this online in you have access to a computer lab and a color printer.
2. Ask students to assemble at least five images and glue or copy/paste onto one sheet that reflect their perspective on the American Dream. None of the images can have words on them.
3. Taking turns, the pairs will present to the rest of the class, which should try to determine the point of view from the images.

**Closure:**
As an exit ticket, students should write a reflection on the skills they felt they improved on during the course of the unit, and what areas they think they still need to work on through the next unit.