Creative Teaching: Using Creative Teaching Methods in a Student-centered ESL Environment

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Creative Teaching: Using Creative Teaching Methods in a Student-centered ESL Environment

A Field Project Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by
Ivy Johnson
December 2017
Creative Teaching: Using Creative Teaching Methods in a Student-centered Environment

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MASTER OF ARTS

in

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:

Instructor / Chairperson                     Date

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

The ubiquity of the internet has changed the role that education plays in society. Before the internet became integrated into our day to day lives, the main purpose of education has been acquiring knowledge (Laufenberg, 2010). In the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) field, this has involved students going to school to learn the rules of reading, writing, listening, and speaking first hand. This, however, has changed as the internet has become more and more integrated into every aspect of our lives. Students can find the most obscure grammar rules imaginable on various grammar blogs, hear and practice the correct pronunciation by clicking on an icon in an online dictionary, or live chat with native speakers across the world. Because virtually the entirety of human knowledge is now available via the internet, students are less motivated in the classroom because it is no longer necessary to go to school to receive information. In short, teachers need to reimagine the role of education and move away from a traditional educational paradigm. Traditional education is best elucidated by Paulo Freire’s (2000) banking model where the students are seen as empty vessels, which the teacher fills with his / her knowledge.

In addition, our current system of education is historically entrenched in an educational model based off of enlightenment philosophy, which values deductive reasoning (Robinson, 2015). This educational system emerged post Industrial Revolution and is set up in a similar fashion to a factory, where students move through the assembly line in order to finally receive the product they have paid for - their diploma or certificate on graduation day. The applicability
of the industrial metaphor to education is even further brought out by the homogeneity standardized tests incentivize. School, especially higher education, is simply seen as a hoop students must jump through on their way to landing a economically viable job (Robinson, 2015). In light of a product based educational model fueled by an economy that values the arts less and less, engaging students as whole individuals has become less emphasized.

Students, particularly, adult English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) students, seek to learn English in the United States as a way of gaining a competitive edge on their peers. In my experience teaching at an adult language school, what they want in reality is to collect a certificate, degree, or reference that can help bolster their chances of getting a job. In countless instances which I have personally observed as a teacher, instead of seeking the value of knowledge, students are much more motivated by the accreditation and will do the minimal amount that they have to in order to obtain it.

Creative teaching, which has been linked to levels of attainment in ESL learners, looks past old educational models that include rote memorization of textbook knowledge and instead can be defined as teaching that focuses on student-centered, interaction-based, and open-ended elements that are more relevant to the challenges English language learners face today and also engages them holistically (Richards, 2013). In addition to the elements of creative teaching outlined by Richards, teachers need to encourage divergent thinking as opposed to deductive reasoning. The difference between divergent thinking and deductive reasoning can be understood in the following way. Divergent thinking encourages students to think of as many answers as possible to a posed question. On the other hand, deductive reasoning only accepts one answer, which is usually found in the back of the book (Robinson, 2015).
Creative teaching, when defined as such, is a viable approach to education in this new paradigm of human existence. In addition, engaging students’ individual talents and abilities through a method of principled eclecticism involved in creative teaching will motivate them to learn English by engaging them as whole person (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999). All in all, what ESL students need now is not a place to acquire textbook knowledge of the English language through rote memorization, but a safe space to hash out, work with, and work through the language that involves a student centered curriculum, which relates directly to students’ lives. This type of curriculum, brought to life through creative teaching methods, will ultimately motivate them to learn the language (Krashen, 1982).

**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to create a curriculum for an Intermediate Reading and Writing community college ESL class that employs creative teaching methods through a student centered curriculum. My aim is to eventually teach this curriculum in a community college setting. In addition, my goal is to publish this curriculum as an ESL workbook that teaches important reading and writing skills used in an academic setting. Specifically, this curriculum will utilize student-centered, interaction-based, open-ended elements, and divergent thinking to inspire students to be motivated to improve critical thinking skills. More specifically, students will learn methods to paraphrase and summarize, as well as paragraph and essay writing.

**Theoretical Framework**

This project is rooted mainly in three second language acquisition theories: Creative Language Teaching, Reflective Teaching, and The Affective Filter Hypothesis.

**Creative Language Teaching**
Richards (2013) argues that creativity in language teaching is linked to levels of attainment in language learners and can benefit students greatly because it helps them cope with unpredictability. Richards focuses on the qualities a teacher must possess to involve a creative teaching method, such as ability to solve problems, make new connections and meanings, have original thoughts, and use one’s imagination. Richards asserts that when teachers learn to harness these qualities in themselves, they can expect to see these same qualities nurtured in their students. Ultimately, using creativity in the classroom aids students in managing uncertainty in language learning by promoting creative solutions.

**Reflective Teaching**

Rodgers’ (2002) technique of Reflective Teaching is a method used to promote genuine presence of mind in language teachers both before, during, and after actual classroom teaching. Rodgers draws on a poet’s aesthetic experience of genuine presence during the artistic process in forming the basis of Reflective Teaching. Rodgers says that like a poet, a teacher must attend with his or her whole being to realize complexity, find patterns, and make meaning. When the teacher can develop the capacity to attended to the nuances and complexities or each moment, the students will benefit from being engaged with genuinely as a whole being.

**The Affective Filter Hypothesis**

Dr. Krashen (1987) proposes in this theory that negative emotional factors, such as anxiety, self-consciousness, and boredom, interfere with a student’s reception and processing of comprehensible input. For this field project, a student-centered curriculum was created with the intention of lowering the affective filter. If students feel an environment fosters their whole selves, according to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, their productivity will increase.
Significance of Project

This project has the potential to have great significance for intermediate-level community college ESL students and ESL teachers. Students will acquire critical thinking, as well as academic reading and writing skills, that will not only benefit them in their further studies, but will also potentially benefit them in both their future careers and day-to-day lives. The curriculum in this field project is designed with creative teaching methods outlined by Robinson (2015), Rodgers (2002), and Krashen (1987) because it is my belief that these methods will increase students’ intrinsic motivation to learn by engaging with their identity holistically. All too often I have seen students develop an incomplete and fragmented identity in English. This is due to the fact that they are unable to express their whole selves to the teacher or their peers because they do not yet have the linguistic ability to do so. A curriculum designed using creative teaching methods, however, will help foster students’ identities in the English language by creating a space for them to tell their personal stories, which will motivate them to learn English further by addressing their need to connect with others through sharing their stories. Upon completing the curriculum, the students will have achieved their learning objectives while also having developed a new sense of intrinsic motivation, which fundamentally will have come from expressing their whole self through a curriculum which engages creative teaching practices. Teachers who use this workbook will gain access to a topical curriculum that brings prescient political issues to the forefront of the linguistic content.
Overview

Review of the Literature

Summary
Overview

Introduction

This literature review seeks to explore creativity in language teaching and answer the questions: What is creativity? What makes a creative teacher? What makes a creative student? What are the benefits and drawbacks of employing creative teaching? How is creativity employed, all in a second language classroom? It explores these issues in three sections: creativity and its role in education, creative qualities in a teacher, and methods for employing creativity in the classroom. In the first section, definitions of creativity are examined from both a literary and pedagogical standpoint, while the political and economic impetus for creative teaching as a method is taken into account. The next section surveys different creative qualities teachers possess, looking mainly at definitions used by proponents of learning communities and student centered learning. The final section seeks out literature which evaluates different teaching activities that promote creative instruction, specifically teaching the reading and writing of poetry, prose, and essays.

Review of the Literature

Creativity and Its Role in Education

In order to define creative teaching, one must first define creativity. It is important to acknowledge, however, that defining creativity can be an elusive process. Ellis Paul Torrance (2010), the creator of the Torrance Test, a scholastic test of creative thinking, asserts that “creativity defies precise definition” (1988, p. 43). Torrance, who developed a research based definition of creativity, promulgated that creativity is best understood on artistic terms. For
example, he states “creativity is cutting holes to see though, digging deeper, and singing in your own key” (Torrance, 1988, p. 43). Carol Rodgers, a promoter of learning communities, also borrows from the language of artists in order to elucidate teaching methods. By quoting poet Anne McCrary Sullivan (2000), she argues that teachers must learn an aesthetic sensibility from artists, which is simply “the ability to see” (p. 221). This attention to the nuances of the present moment will give teachers the capacity for creative, holistic responses to any given situation (Rodgers, 2002).

In its most common British and American English usage, creativity is referred to as a personal attribute, or the ability to invent and develop new and original ideas (Sinclair, 1987). Creativity, however, does not have to involve pure novelty. In fact, many definitions, such as the one outlined by Burton (2010), suggest that creativity links two elements: forming new ideas and utilizing existing ideas in a new way. Richards (2013) gives a similar definition when discussing the qualities that a creative teacher must bring to their classes: having original thoughts and making new connections.

However, the ancient Greeks, who laid the philosophical foundation for Western thought, believed that creating something completely new could come solely from divine inspiration (Burton, 2010). In short, one must await a visit from the muse. The view of Western discourse on creative production, however, has evolved, especially in the Modern and Postmodern period, from believing creativity comes solely from inspiration to believing that one can form new combinations of existing ideas.

Csikszentmihalyi (1988) finds a middle ground in the debate between followers of ancient Greek thought and Modernism. He states that there is “small c and big C
creativity” (1988, p.25). “Big C creativity” can be found in individuals who have changed our culture in an impactful manner; “small c creativity” is present in all individuals and can be harnessed in the solution of ordinary problems. Anyone can access “small c creativity,” given the right environment, and facilitating this kind of creativity is seen as one of the goals of education according to him (Burton, 2010). This mode of thinking is integral to creative teaching because if creativity came only as a gift from the gods, it would only have the ability to be harnessed by select individuals.

Even though a commonly accepted belief in the Western world is that creativity can be tapped into by any who seek it (Burton, 2010), many definitions of creativity involve a person’s acceptance or willingness to hold, while not struggling against, ambiguity. In fact, the best example of this comes from the 19th Century English poet John Keats (1958), who is famous for his idea of negative capability. He defines this as when humans are “capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after the fact and reason” (193-194). According to Keats, this is what creates great works of art, such as the plays and poetry of William Shakespeare.

Creativity, however, is not only necessary and beneficial for artists. In fact, in Burton’s (2010) supposition, the nascence of modern creativity studies was precipitated and grown by a Cold War political agenda aimed at beating the Soviet Union in a race for technological supremacy. According to Burton, creativity studies burgeoned in the 1950s and still remain widespread today. This has given rise to the production of numerous journals, conferences, popular writing, creativity testing, workshops, etc. While academic research in this field is
mainly carried out by social psychologists, many other disciplines have been instrumental, including educational research.

Author and creativity expert, Ken Robinson (2013), also argues for creativity in education by examining its usefulness to the world economy. He prefaces this argument by giving a complicated socioeconomic history of Western education in his Ted Talk, “How to Change Education.” He proposes that because our current educational model is still based on a traditional one, which came to the fore during the Industrial Revolution; because the traditional model of education was based on Enlightenment philosophy, which espoused deductive reasoning, our current educational model kills creativity. This destruction of creativity arises out of the implicit adoption of what can be understood as a Fordist model of education—our pedagogical model mimics the machinery of a factory. Deductive reasoning goes hand in hand with this machinery, as it asks for one homogenized answer to a quandary or problem instead of eliciting multiple theories. Simply put, because it is beyond our human capacity to begin imagining the economic demands of the future, and because creativity is the basis for integral advances in human society at large, we must, according to Robinson (2013), encourage students to engage in divergent thinking.

Robinson (2013) infers that one of the benefits of encouraging divergent thinking is technological innovation, which can lead to economic prosperity. This is also proposed by Shangaraeva, Yarkhamova, Zubayda, and Dorice (2016), who assert that a person who uses her intellectual ability and creativity has the potential to “provide decent living conditions” for humankind (p. 1267). Although, Robinson’s (2013) notion of divergent thinking has similar intellectual mechanics as Keats’s idea of negative capability, Robinson focuses more on how to
facilitate creative output and less on the creative process itself. He illustrates the idea of this by the following example: Give a child a paper clip and try to get them to imagine as many uses for it as possible. A child who really embraces divergent thinking might ask: what if the paper clip is ten stories high and made of steel?

Jack Richards (2013) argues that creativity in language teaching has been “linked to levels of attainment in second language learning” (p. 20). Additionally, the ability to bring a creative mentality to language teaching is one quality among many that characterizes effective teachers. Many of the teaching methods educators favor today in a language classroom, such as student-centered, interaction-based, and communicative methods, along with integrating open-ended elements, will thrive by integrating creative components. In fact, developing creative capacity in students can greatly benefit that student’s experience of language learning because it helps them cope with unpredictability.

The reflective teaching cycle, which is a teaching method that involves four main steps taken by teachers to help teachers to attain presence in the classroom, employs a model of aesthetic sensibility as the founding principal of it’s method (Rodgers, 2002). This reflective cycle helps to develop an educator’s capability to skillfully observe their students as well as situations in the classroom, while also thinking critically about what they are observing. It opens up new possibilities for teachers and students, while allowing them to dispel inherited and insidious biases that they might not be acutely aware of. In addition, the reflective cycle has the potential to create an openness that can allow students to lower their affective filters and engage in language tasks more successfully and meaningfully.
Maria Teresa Fleta Guillén (2011) has found through conducting pedagogical research on creativity, that ESL students better internalize English language patterns when they engage with reading material creatively, perhaps because it becomes more personally meaningful. She notes that much of reading instruction carried out in the language classroom today greatly involves the ability to recall and retell stories accurately instead of preparing students to create stories themselves. By shifting focus with her students toward artistic production through creative writing, she found that the students developed more memorable strategies to remember vocabulary because the vocabulary was used by characters they created themselves. In addition, going through different creative phases, which included visualization, movement, drafting, flow chart and interaction, editing, and storytelling (which I will return to in more depth later on), the students “internalized language in an unconscious manner” (Guillén, 2011, p. 43).

Guillén (2011) also argues that going through the previously mentioned creative phases enabled the students to activate multiple intelligences - a theory developed by Gardner (1983), who proposed that we all possess different avenues for learning: linguistic, mathematical, spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Activating these different modalities of intelligence helped students develop a rich linguistic environment and internalize the language learned and used. By allowing students to use multiple intelligences, they are able to internalize language in a multifarious manner.

**Creative Qualities of a Teacher**

Creativity in the classroom is generated through the interplay between the energies of teachers and students alike, coming as much from student productivity as from teacher
facilitation. That said, much of the literature reviewed in this essay explores both student and teacher creativity while teasing out the differences and relationships of the two.

Jack Richards (2013) gives perhaps the most in depth overview of the qualities a creative teacher must possess: the ability to solve problems, make new connections and meanings, have original thoughts, and use one’s imagination. This is akin to Ken Robinson’s (2007) notion of divergent thinking. According to Richards, these qualities must be present in a teacher in order for teachers to successfully employ creative teaching in an ESL context. In addition, teachers must put divergent thinking to work in their own lesson plans if they want it mirrored back to them by their students.

Richards (2013) is also careful to point out that teachers must first be knowledgeable before integrating the principals of creative teaching into their classrooms. They must know their subject and draw upon subject matter to build creative lessons. Much of his article is a collection of different teacher experiences with different approaches toward facilitating creativity firsthand. One teacher relayed an experience witnessing a young ESL teacher working abroad, who would use free association and wordplay to start his lessons; however, he did not have any learning outcomes outlined for those tasks. This example illustrates creative teaching done unskillfully, where the students seems to learn little (Richards, 2013). That said, it is of the utmost importance for teachers to employ a method of principled eclecticism, which integrates different teaching methods with an emphasis on laying a foundation of knowledge in the subject matter and having clear learning outcomes for each lesson before employing an array of methodologies (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999).
The reflective teaching cycle (Rodgers, 2002), as stated previously, is a teaching method that utilizes the reflective process in order to facilitate a teacher’s ability to be present. It is a valuable source of information on how to foster creativity in the classroom because it builds a capacity for creativity in teachers. Carol R. Rogers (2002), a vocal proponent of the reflective teaching cycle, draws a comparison to poetic intelligence when introducing the idea of reflective teaching. She discusses the aesthetic sensibility poets have, which, as she states, is the ability to see. This is central to learning communities, which is a term used to define a group of people engaged in reflective teaching, outlined by Rodgers (2002). She quotes poet Anne McCrary Sullivan (2000), who proposes that the artistic sensibility found in poets demands, “attention to detail and form: the perception of relations (tensions and harmonies); the perception of nuance (colors and meaning): and the perception of change (shifts and subtle motions)” (p.221-222). Although these qualities, which are the foundation of critical reflection, are not mentioned when discussing creative teaching per se, they go hand in hand with the definition of creative teaching provided by Richards (2013). Without presence of mind, teachers will not be able to acquire the ability to solve problems, make new connections and meanings, or have unique insights. As a poet and artist myself, I agree that rigorous attention is the first step in any creative process, no matter if the medium is a poem or a curriculum played out effectively in the classroom.

Perhaps the most important principle Rodgers (2002) introduces as part of community teaching practices is the reflective cycle. The first part of the reflective cycle is reflection-in-action, which can be understood as acknowledging, framing, and responding to unexpected student reactions in real time. Reflection-on-action, however, comes either before or after a given situation and incorporates feedback peer educators have given and the well-considered
thoughts of the teachers themselves. This incorporation of the teacher’s active presence in the moment and critical reflection after-the-fact can help develop creative abilities in teachers themselves.

Pauline Burton (2010) provides an intellectual history of creativity used in education well before the reflective cycle, particularly focusing on the role of Western philosophical and pedagogical discourse on creativity in Hong Kong pedagogies. In her fastidious historical research, she dispels the archaic notion that creativity is a scarce gift found only among a chosen few. Rather, anyone can learn to be creative, given the right environment and appropriate tasks. One of the qualities she espouses as being indicative of creativity is having a high tolerance for ambiguity, which is akin to Robinson’s (2007) idea of divergent thinking and Keats’ (1958) theory of negative capability. Within traditional pedagogical discourse, this notion often translates to the view that creative children can be disruptive in class by asking too many questions, challenging accepted views and modalities of behavior, and challenging the authority of the teacher.

Consequently, Rodgers’s (2002) technique of the reflective cycle can aid teachers who seek to employ creative teaching in the classroom by allowing themselves to observe and reflect upon the behavior of a challenging student while remaining present to the nuances of the situation at hand. When remaining present, a teacher can hold space for the student’s divergence from expected classroom normalities and facilitate a dialogue around whatever issue comes up, all the while keeping in mind the learning objective at hand (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999).

In learning how to develop the capacity for presence or, in other words, learning to see, Rodgers (2002) again quotes McCrary (2000) who states that the teacher, like the artist, must
attend “with his or her whole organism, inquiring, testing with the body as well as the mind, sensing and seeing, responding and retesting - (preforming) a multitude of functions simultaneously -registering complexity, then sorting, finding pattern, making meaning” (p. 221-222). The next technique she uses to develop this capacity for presence is description, which is the third phase of the reflective cycle.

For a teacher to employ the technique of description, she must be able to differentiate between description and interpretation (Rodgers, 2002). To help teachers fully understand this process, Rodgers first asks them to describe a small object, such as an orange or a stone, exhaustively. She then has them describe a photograph or a painting in the same manner. Finally, she shows them a video of an emotionally intense situation in a classroom, and asks teachers to then describe the situation objectively, trying as best as they can to remove all judgment. This means that in this phase teachers are not allowed to qualify any of their observations. For example, a video is shown of a girl crying. Teachers are not allowed to say something like, “she’s a crybaby.” Instead, they’re encouraged to say something like, “I saw a girl who was so upset that she was crying and inconsolable.” This process has great potential to facilitate the capacity for presence in teachers.

However, presence alone is nothing if it cannot inform action. Once teachers have passed through the descriptive phase, they are encouraged to analyze the experience, which is the fourth and final step of the reflective cycle. This is the time where teachers are allowed to qualify what they have observed while still holding the complexities of the situation at one’s disposal. Here, a teacher can employ previous learned pedagogical theories while reflecting on different teaching
methods that could aid the situation. This is what will then inform the actions of the teacher
(Rodgers, 2002).

Methods for Employing Creativity in the Classroom

Poetry, Literature, and Creative Writing

Earlier, Guillén’s (2011) research was described as employing multiple intelligences and
collaborative learning techniques, which potentially help students internalize the different
language tasks presented to them. She proposes that there is a strong connection between music,
language, and thinking, and that integrating musical experiences into instruction results in
creative thinking. In fact, Garner (2011) proposes that musical intelligence develops before
linguistic intelligence; however, music’s impact is often unknown to adult learners. Guillén
suggests that even with adult learners, listening to music can improve listening and oral skills, as
well as aide in vocabulary and memory. The participants in Guillén’s study, who were both
children and adult language learners, moved from listening to music, to the word and then
sentence construction levels, to finally telling their stories in English.

Three groups of learners were invited to listen to a piece of music, imagine a character,
and draw it. In one instance, a group of students were also asked to look at a piece of art while
listening to the music (Guillén, 2011). In the art world, the process of creating a work of art in
response to another work of art is called ekphrasis (Brock, 2008), which translates directly from
the Greek as “description” and includes art produced in any medium, such as creative writing.
After engaging with the piece of music or visual art, students were invited to think of words to
describe what they had just seen. This was done in order to utilize visualization as a learning
strategy.
After the visualization stage, students moved on to the movement stage, which incorporated student interpretations of the piece of art through movement in a gym. While doing this, students also reinforced previously learned vocabulary. Additionally, while led by student teachers, students practiced interpersonal skills by discussing the characters they previously created and were asked to decide on one or more characters to use in the writing of their story (Guillén, 2011). Following the movement stage, students worked on drafting, where they were encouraged to come up with a setting and a title for their story, while also thinking up a list of words to use for that story. This was a good opportunity to practice vocabulary and, according to Guillén (2011), helped students who were struggling with writing. Students then participated in an activity where they created a flow chart for their story, which visually spaced out a beginning, middle, and end, linked the vocabulary from the list previously created.

In the final stages, students transferred the information from their flow chart into the actual text of their book, which included illustrations. They designed and created a cover page and also wrote a blurb for the back of their book. Afterwards, students had the opportunities to read their stories aloud to the class and, by doing so, worked on their storytelling skills. As a result of the study, Guillén (2011) reported that music triggered student creativity and helped them in the process of writing their own innovative story. As stated previously, Guillén ultimately found that this creative process helped students internalize language patterns.

Writing creatively and engaging with creatively achieved literature go hand-in-hand. A method widely beloved by language teachers to engage with literature is called literature circles. This method was developed in response to the traditional way of teaching literature, which focused more on a story as a vehicle for social studies or a moral tale. Literature circles were
created as a way to try and bring passion for and enjoyment of literature back into the classroom, as they help teach students to be more creative, independent, and think outside the box (Azmi, 2013). As an instructional method, literature circles come out of reader response theory. Instead of focusing on the story grammar or close reading of a line, stanza, or dialogue, reader response theory encourages students to respond to the text in terms of how it affected their thinking and feeling. Student groups form literature circles where they are asked to read, reflect, and analyze the given text as a part of a team.

There are nine common literature circle roles: discussion facilitator, passage finder, illustrator, connector, summarizer, vocabulary enricher, travel tracer, investigator, and figurative language finder. These all work to pick out different language learning aspects of the text and allow the student to hone in on just one aspect while learning the other aspects from other students. They also allow space for different learning styles. In Azmi’s study (2013) of literature circles, students agreed that literature circles helped break the cycle of silence and talk in the classroom. Even students who felt that they could not read or write well in a second language reported that literature circles encouraged them to open up and participate more than they had previously. Weak students felt that they had not been left out because each person in the group had been given an important task and that there was no right or wrong answer in respect to their ideas.

Kim (2004) also researched the use of literature circles in an second language context and found that students using this modality responded personally and emotionally to literary texts, and that literature circles help facilitate literal comprehension of the text, personal connections,
cross cultural themes, interpretation and evaluation. In addition, Kim (2004) reported that students found that literature circles made the texts moving and engaging.

After students engage thoroughly with literature, they are more equipped to write creatively. Burton (2010) examined an instance where creative writing was employed in an EFL context in an elite secondary school in Hong Kong. The project examined was called “Poetry for Pleasure” and was incorporated into an English literature curriculum at the school by a senior teacher who advocated for the use of authentic texts combined with energetic classroom activities such as drama and speech. In beginner classes incorporated within this project, teachers reported that they did not initially perform error correction in an effort to lower the students’ affective filters and allow them to engage in creative dialogue with each other in response to the poems presented in class. In terms of creating the actual curriculum for the class, one teacher reported that he composed a very detailed lesson plan with explicit outcomes yet remained open to the possibility of divergence from the outlined plan. He stated, “the night before class, I could have a dream or idea, then it all would be changed” (Burton, 2010, p. 503). He also reported that through this project he felt that he had become an “agent of change” (Burton, 2010, p. 503) and even was told that some of his students had been using the writing methods he taught them at the university level.

Although the interviewed teacher in Burton’s (2010) study felt that the project was successful in teaching students the learning outcomes determined, he did express struggling against the fact that “Poetry for Pleasure” did not aid students in exam results; a huge pressure from both the administration and students alike. This point speaks to one key element Richards (2013) outlines in his discussion of creative teaching; how creativity can be supported in the
school. Richards suggests that in order for that to happen, schools must encourage creative partnership between teachers and the administration, use shared lesson planning, provide resources to support creative teaching, and reward creative teachers.

From Burton’s (2010) detailed report of the “Poetry for Pleasure” project, most of these criteria were met in the Hong Kong school surveyed. To prepare for the project, teachers took classes together to discover the poetry for themselves, share thoughts and ideas, as well as receive mentoring by teachers with more experience teaching creative writing. Nothing, however, is mentioned about an explicit reward for the teachers for performing creatively and encouraging creativity in their classroom besides the feeling of personal achievement mentioned by the interviewed subjects. When asked about balancing the students’ pragmatic desire to score well on examinations and desire for developing the creative potentiality, a teacher responded that “access to resources and training was less important to teachers than a shared culture that could be transmitted to students” (Burton, 2010, p. 502-504). The impact of this concept, however, is unknown in an ESL classroom. Nevertheless, the fact that the more advanced the student was, the more likely that they enjoyed the “Poetry for Pleasure” project, potentially translates from EFL to ESL.

Hanauer (2010) also studied the use of creative writing in an ESL context and noted that more advanced students are more likely to benefit from reading and writing poetry than less advanced students. He notes that the Russian Formalist view of de-familiarization in reading poetry in the first language, which proposed that the function of poetry is often to interrupt automaticity, brings into question readily accepted notions of grammar, vocabulary, semantics, etc. This is one of the ways that poetry takes the reader out of cliché notions of existence and
prepares them to see the world anew, similar to poet Anne McCrary Sullivan’s (2002) previously mentioned notion of adopting an aesthetic model of attention, which is an interruption of automatic processing, to the classroom. Interestingly, the implications of Russian Formalists views on the process of reading poetry are that it makes first language readers into second language readers. Therefore, when students read poetry in a second language context, they are already starting from a mode of defamiliarization. Therefore, the text is twice removed from automaticity. Consequently, it can be very difficult for second language learners to read poetry; as Hall (2005) proposes, there is a threshold level of language proficiency needed in order to read literature, especially poetry. This is because, with second language reading, there is both bottom up and top down processing involved, which is slower in second language learners.

In a study conducted by Hanauer (2010), using sheltered instruction, where English language learners were paired together and asked to verbalize their thoughts of the poem “Suzanne” by Leonard Cohen and to construct meaning, students spent much of the time allotted honing in on certain aspects of the poem, such as unusual grammatical usage and repetition. The students drew from their own cultural knowledge and had to employ cultural negotiation in the process of meaning making, ultimately engaging in an exercise of personal discovery while reading the poem. Moreover, while not having previous training in the formal process of reading a poem, they were able to pick out certain formal elements, such as repetition and rhyme. Finally, Hanauer (2010) concluded that advanced second language readers are capable of reading and interpreting poetry. The second language reader is guided by a process of meaning making where she first notices and analyzes linguistic forms and then enters into a process of interpretation and description as a modality of understanding poetry. Hanauer’s study suggests
that reading poetry can be a rewarding process for advanced second language learners, which may involve personal and emotional engagement.

After reaching the conclusion that second language learners can engage in important linguistic skills from reading poetry while also reaping affective benefits, Hanauer (2010) went on to study the process of second language learners writing poetry. Hanauer collected a corpus of 844 poems written by 81 second language poets between the years of 2003 and 2009. Because of the data collected, we can definitively conclude that second language learners can write poetry in their target language; however, the existence of these poems does not tell us anything about their value as pieces of literature, or whether composing poetry in their target language effectively helps students process learning objectives while writing them. After meticulously analyzing these poems through a corpus, Hanauer (2010) concluded that second language learners reap affective benefits from writing poetry in their target language, providing evidence of significant life experiences in a way which allows the reader of the poem access into the self-positioning of the writer. However, because his focus was on the ability of poetry to be researched and not on the explicit linguistic benefits, we are not provided insight into how to use poetry to achieve concrete learning objectives in the classroom.

**Voice in Creative Writing**

Stewart’s (2010) research can help provide insight into the benefits of creative writing on students’ understanding of the concept of voice in their writing within an ESL classroom. She defines “voice” as the individual being composed of words in the text and describes it as having the ability to reach the reader, no matter their position, and give them an unexpected experience.
According to Stewart, voice makes the text more compelling, therefore easier for the reader to comprehend. For this study Stewart taught a writing course in a community college context that infused the theme of immigration within their reading and writing, allowing them to express their identity in their written work. Stewart decided to teach this in her writing class because she observed that in other classes, such as oral communication, the students were much more willing to disclose their personal experiences. However, she noticed that in writing classes she had taught students did not view their assignments as a place to open up and tell their story. Rather, they viewed the assignments as places to display their newfound grammatical knowledge.

Stewart (2010) observed that students taking her writing class on immigration, who had previously been quiet in class, thrived during discussions about the immigrant experience. In addition, because communicating their personal experience felt so important to them, it greatly motivated them in comprehension of texts and writing. Stewart notes that, “The academic objective of improving students’ writing became a shadow in the bigger picture of relating their immigrant experiences to others” (p. 273). In short, telling their stories became the primary focus for students and learning the language objective became their way of telling those stories.

In this class, Stewart (2010) incorporated thematically similar reading and writing assignments that were directly related to each other. They read poetry, essays, short stories, and novels that, in some way, connected to the immigrant experience. With each reading, they all discussed how the writer allowed the reader to walk in their shoes as a way to experience the story. Stewart would also read from the selection out loud and asked students to read some of it silently at home. These readings would also be interspersed with questions, discussion, and journal writing. Afterwards, she encouraged them to incorporate certain linguistic components
found in the literature assigned to them in their own compositions, and found that students were more likely to take risks and include words in L1 and metaphors. In addition to the assigned readings, Stewart let students choose from a list of novels based on the immigrant experience which came with vocabulary and comprehension support. Even though she did not use books from the additional list every day, she brought them to class to lend to students, who were excited and motivated to read them at home in their spare time.

In fact, from the very first day of Stewart’s (2010) class she had an exercise aimed at lowering their affective filters. As part of an ekphrastic exercise, Stewart played the John Mayer song, “Say,” along with a visual slide show, and encouraged students to voice what they felt they needed to say, despite any feelings of fear or brokenness. This, along with student journaling in response to the many readings completed during the course, formed inspirational components of their final writing project while also working to help lower their affective filters. Steward also noted that students reported being very motivated for their final wiring assignment because their essays were to be collected in a publication available to read at the college. Stewart reported that centering the curriculum on the immigrant experience encouraged voice to appear in their writing like she had never seen before. Students wanted to read ahead in their novels and reported wanting to buy books to read on their own time. One student even stated, “I don’t know why. During this class, I have started to like writing” (p. 8). Using a theme that was relevant to student experiences played a large part in motivating them to write.

Also of note is that Stewart’s (2010) study on voice follows closely in the steps of a Freirian educational model (Freire, 2000). Instead of using a traditional “banking model” (Freire, 2000) of education, Stewart (2010) incorporates Freire’s (2000) notion of
humanizing students by co-creating a space for the student to find their authentic voice in English. When students engage in such praxis, which in Stewart’s case is the utilization of voice in their writing, those students then have the power to liberate themselves from oppression and effect positive change in their communities (Freire, 2000).

A similar study conducted by Park (2011) that came out of her Cultural and Linguistic Autobiography Project found that community college, ESL students were especially motivated to write when they were assigned to write their own personal story, which Park referred to as their cultural autobiography. The participants in Park’s project included adult women in an ESL class who were studying ESL for various purposes, such as to get a better job, help their children with their homework, or to go on to get a four year degree. Park notes that naming student motivations for learning English is an important first step to reconstructing their identities as ESL students in the United States.

Writing these cultural autobiographies in English was seen by Park (2011) as an important step in integrating student’s previous identities by helping them go through the process of wrestling with questions of race, gender, language, and race in a multitude of contexts. As a native Korean speaker, Park (2011) had gone through similar struggles with identity formation and hoped that through the CLA Project, that both she and her students would increase their confidence in using English in both academic and personal contexts and also heighten their awareness of the power of sharing their immigration stories and the similarities of experiences shared. Park (2011) believed that increasing both her own and student confidence, while also revealing the power of their shared stories, would work to help shape their identities in academic and personal settings alike.
Writing prompts in Park’s (2011) class were collectively determined by class discussions and included topics such as challenges and triumphs in the United States, motivations for learning English, and the experience of living in multicultural communities in the United States. The major themes that emerged from student writing were language, race, gender, social class, and the contribution of these factors to identity reconstruction.

Ultimately, Park’s (2011) students reported going through a transformation from disliking writing in English to greatly enjoying it. Park attributes this to the psychological impact of students gaining confidence from sharing their powerful immigration stories with one another. When explaining this process, Park (2011), like Stewart (2010), noted inspiration from Freirian (2000) pedagogy, which employs the consciousness of the students themselves as a teaching method. In Park, this was achieved by creating writing prompts from class discussions collectively and ultimately using the content of the student’s lives as the content of their learning of English.

Summary

From this literature review we have learned that creativity can be defined as an approach that employs divergent thinking, the bringing together of ideas in novel ways, and tolerance for ambiguity, on the part of both the teacher and the student. Teachers can use creative thinking as a way of erasing existing, insidious biases while striving to see students, a situation in the classroom, or a text anew. However, to successfully use creative teaching in a classroom, teachers must have a solid knowledge base of what they are teaching and keep learning objectives at the center of their orientation by employing a method of principled eclecticism. Students seem to thrive in a creative environment that is student centered, where they are
provided a safe space and also the linguistic tools to tell their personal stories. Students can benefit greatly by reading prose, especially when they are reading it while engaging in metacognitive self-talk and keeping specific learning objectives in mind. Poetry, as a genre, has been proven to be effective in teaching voice to students who are advanced enough to read and write it. Keeping learning objectives in mind while providing a meticulously planned lesson that is also open to divergence, all the while relating directly back to students’ experiences is key in effectively employing creative teaching.
REFERENCES


Chapter III
THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

THE PROJECT
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THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Description of the Project

This field project consists of five units of Intermediate Reading and Writing community college curriculum. The curriculum is based off of the nonfiction novel *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions* by Valeria Luiselli, which is about Central American refugee children who cross the Mexican border into the United States. The intent of the curriculum is to facilitate the learning of reading and writing English as a Second Language (ESL) skills through the context of the topical issue of immigration, which relates directly to students’ lives. This project is designed for a three-unit community college course broken into 120 minute classes held twice a week with a total of 54 hours of instruction. Included in the project is a workbook for the full five units.

Unit 1: “Introduction”- By the end of this unit students will be able to define new vocabulary, discuss main ideas and details, make inferences, and write a narrative paragraph.

Unit 2: “Border”- By the end of this unit students will be able to imagine themselves from another person’s perspective, define new vocabulary, respond to passages that strike them, place events in chronological order, paraphrase, and write a journal entry response that synthesizes making inferences and paraphrasing an idea from the book.

Unit 3: “Court”- By the end of this unit students will be able to make and check predictions, define new vocabulary, identify different types of figurative language, analyze a poem, and write a poem that uses figurative language.
Unit 3: “Home: Part 1” - By the end of this unit students will be able to improve inference skills through practice, define new vocabulary, improve paraphrases through practice, and write a summary.

Unit 4: “Home: Part 2” - By the end of this unit students will be able to learn new vocabulary chosen by the facilitator in their group, discuss main ideas and details in a small group facilitated by students, facilitate student learning based on their role in the literature circle, and write a response paragraph.

Unit 5: “Community” - By the end of this unit students will be able to learn new vocabulary chosen by the facilitator in their group, discuss main ideas and details in a small group facilitated by students, facilitate student learning based on their role in the literature circle, and write a response essay.

Development of the Project

Originally, I chose to do this research project based off of creativity in language teaching because I wanted to research different ways that my unique qualities as a poet might translate successfully in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. I was already an English as a Second Language Teacher (ESL) at Transworld Schools, an adult English as a Second Language (ESL) school, when I started this field project. I had observed that many students responded with increased interest and motivation to learn the language when I allowed space for deviation from the day’s plan, often by getting into in-depth discussions relating to the subject matter of the curriculum. In these discussions, I challenged students to think outside the box, debate, defend their opinions, and most of all, share their personal stories. In my literature
review, I sought after solid research to gain more insight into my personal method of teaching, which I had seen as creative teaching.

In the literature review, I found my creative and open approach to teaching validated especially by research of Richards (2013) and Rodgers (2002) but also learned that teaching a curriculum heavy in poetry, which is something I was considering, would deprive students of learning the more basic skills they would need to enjoy poetry in the first place (Hanauer, 2010). At the same time, while I was surveilling research for my literature review, I came across an article by Stewart (2010) which both inspired and convinced me that a key to unlocking truth-telling in the classroom, similar to the truth-telling brought on by poetry, is to create a space for students to share their own stories, no matter how difficult those stories might be to tell. This was the impetus behind creating a curriculum for *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions* by Valeria Luiselli.
THE PROJECT

See Appendix.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The traditional model of education, which can be understood as the banking model outlined by Friere (2000), has two fundamental problems. The first is prophetically elucidated by Freire’s (2000) banking model, where the students are seen as empty vessels, which the teacher fills with his / her knowledge. However, in light of the digital age, his banking model reveals a more current problem—students no longer need go to school for the sole purpose of acquiring knowledge, which can be accessed easily from the internet (Laufenberg, 2010). In short, the bank is no longer accessed at school, but can be obtained by any device with an internet connection. This has decreased students’ motivation to learn in many different contexts, including English as a Second Language (ESL).

Freire’s (2000) banking model resonates on another relevant level in an English as a Second Language (ESL) context. Because of the recent corporatization of academia, education is seen as a product that students purchase. All too often, they are imagined as a consumer of education instead of an active participant in acquiring invaluable knowledge. Furthermore, engaging students as whole individuals has become devalued due to a product based educational model stimulated by an economy which values creativity less and less (Robinson, 2006).

The curriculum for this field project attempts to address these problems by emphasizing the affective benefits of creativity in education, which has the ability to facilitate profound development in students as whole people while also giving them important academic skills.
When developing the curriculum, I used Bloom’s taxonomy as a guide to facilitate higher thinking. At the same time, I allowed space for the student’s stories via discussion of the book through different types of comprehension activities paired with critical thinking exercises, as well as writing assignments. It is my hope that students will not only be able to gain access to better jobs and higher education through acquiring academic reading and writing skills, but also be able to develop their identities as English as a Second Language Speakers (ESL), ultimately gaining invaluable benefits that will reach to myriad aspects of their lives.

Recommendations

For the implementation of this curriculum, I would like to make the following recommendations. Although the curriculum was written with creativity in language teaching in mind, it wasn’t appropriate to explicitly include instructions on how to use these methods in the actual curriculum. I suggest teachers of this curriculum familiarize themselves with Richards (2013) Creativity in Language Teaching, Rodgers (2002) Reflective Teaching, and Krashen’s (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis. These methods are integral to the success of the curriculum.
References


Appendix
Tell Me How It Ends

Intermediate Reading and Writing

Ivy Johnson
# Introduction to Curriculum

In this class you will read, *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay In Forty Questions*, by Valeria Luiselli. Each Chapter has accompanying curriculum, which you will find in this packet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Reading</strong></th>
<th><strong>Writing</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Introduction** | • Make and check predictions  
• Learn new vocabulary  
• Discuss main ideas and details | • Write a narrative paragraph                                                   |
| **Chapter 1: Border** | • Imagine yourself from another person’s perspective  
• Learn new vocabulary  
• Respond to passages that strike you  
• Place events in chronological order | • Paraphrase  
• Write a journal entry that synthesizes making inferences and paraphrasing an idea from the book |
| **Chapter 2: Court** | • Make and check predictions  
• Learn new vocabulary  
• Identify different types of figurative language  
• Analyze a poem | • Write a poem that uses figurative language                                      |
| **Chapter 3: Home Part 1** | • Make and check predictions  
• Learn new vocabulary  
• Improve inference skills through practice | • Improve paraphrasing skills through practice  
• Write a summary                                                               |
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<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 3: Home Part 2</strong></td>
<td>• Learn new vocabulary chosen by the facilitator in your group</td>
<td>• Write a response paragraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discuss main ideas and details in a small group facilitated by students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Facilitate student learning based on your role in the literature circle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 4: Community</strong></td>
<td>• Learn new vocabulary chosen by the facilitator in your group</td>
<td>• Write a response essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discuss main ideas and details in a small group facilitated by students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Facilitate student learning based on your role in the literature circle</td>
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**Author Bio**
Ivy Johnson is an ESL teacher and poet living in Oakland. She received an MFA in Poetry from Mills College in 2011 and is expected to graduate with a Masters in TESOL from USF in December, 2017. Her poetry publications include *As They Fall*, published by Timeless, Infinite Light Press in 2011 and *Born Again*, forthcoming from The Operating System in Spring of 2018.
Introduction

Tell Me How It Ends
An Essay in Forty Questions

By the end of this chapter, students will be able to:

• Define new vocabulary
• Discuss main ideas and details
• Make inferences
• Write a narrative paragraph

A. Discuss the following questions with a partner.

1. What are some of the questions you think an immigration lawyer asks a child immigrating alone to the United States? Write down at least three.

2. How would you feel if you had to answer the questions you came up with? If you thought your answer would prevent you from entering, would you lie?

3. Is it okay to bend the truth if it saves your life or someone else’s life or keeps a family together? Why?
### B. Vocabulary

Match the words in bold with their definition. Determine the meaning from context, then check your answers with a dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The sets and costumes for the dance performance were <strong>exquisitely</strong> made.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. someone who can be easily harmed or hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. to take something or someone secretly to a place where they are not allowed to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. extremely beautiful and very delicately made</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. He <strong>smuggled</strong> a pack of cigarettes into the jail for his friend, despite the possible consequences.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d. a situation in which a lot of people leave a particular place at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. a difficult or unpleasant situation, or very tiring work</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. I've been feeling very <strong>vulnerable</strong> since we broke up.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f. having such strong opinions about a group of people that you are unwilling to listen to anyone else’s opinions; racist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. to think carefully and deeply about something</td>
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<tr>
<th>4. Her speech was a <strong>rumination</strong> on the injustice of racism.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h. deep or far below the surface of something, showing great knowledge and understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. to suddenly increase</td>
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<tr>
<th>5. The <strong>exodus</strong> of refugees continued throughout the autumn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>j. something or someone that causes an important change or event to happen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. to leave a place or person without intending to return</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>6. Stores are expecting a <strong>surge</strong> in demand as Christmas approaches.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>l. something or someone that causes an important change or event to happen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>7. Many have already died from this terrible illness, no doubt others will follow before our present <strong>travail</strong> is over.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. someone who can be easily harmed or hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. to take something or someone secretly to a place where they are not allowed to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. extremely beautiful and very delicately made</td>
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<tr>
<th>8. He believes some people in America are becoming dangerously <strong>bigoted</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d. a situation in which a lot of people leave a particular place at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. a difficult or unpleasant situation, or very tiring work</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>9. Joan Didion’s interview was amusing as well as being <strong>profound</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f. having such strong opinions about a group of people that you are unwilling to listen to anyone else’s opinions; racist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. to think carefully and deeply about something</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>10. The women's movement acted as a <strong>catalyst</strong> for change in the workplace.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h. deep or far below the surface of something, showing great knowledge and understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. to suddenly increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. something or someone that causes an important change or event to happen</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. The women's movement acted as a <strong>catalyst</strong> for change in the workplace.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k. to leave a place or person without intending to return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. something or someone that causes an important change or event to happen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. Main Ideas

B. Circle the best main idea for the introduction.

1. This book is about a Mexican woman’s journey to getting a card in the United States.

2. This book is about Central American refugee children who fled their home countries in search of a better life in the United States.

3. This book is about Donald Trump wanting to build a wall between the United States and Mexico.

B. Details

Write T for True and F for false. If the answer is false, correct it to make it true.

___1. The author, Valeria Luiselli, is a Mexican woman living in the United States, who worked as an interpreter with an immigration court.

___2. The subtitle, An Essay in Forty Questions, comes from the questions children asked the author about the immigration process.

___3. The book will examine what immigrants face since Donald Trump was elected.

___4. The book’s main title, Tell Me How It Ends, comes from a question asked by the author’s son.
When we interpret the author’s words we practice “reading between the lines” to understand the author’s intention, even when is not stated explicitly. Being able to read between the lines is an important comprehension skill. Remember, an inference isn’t your opinion. It is the best answer based on evidence from the text.

C. MAKING INFERENCES

First, find the following quotations in the book’s introduction. Then circle the best inference for the quote given.

1. In *Tell Me How It Ends*, there are no answers, only more questions.”
a. There are no answers because the author wants to keep us interested in the story. This is why she doesn’t want to tell us the ending.

b. There are no answers because we don’t know what will ultimately happen to the refugee children who are trying to get citizenship in the United States.

c. There are no answers because life often doesn’t make very much sense.

2. “The problem with telling their story is because there is no beginning, no middle, and no end.”

a. There is no beginning, no middle, or no end because it is difficult to find order in the story of these children’s lives.

b. There is no beginning, no middle, and no end to the story because we haven’t read the whole story yet.

c. There is no beginning, no middle, or no end because these children haven’t lived long enough to have a middle or an end.

3. “...Donald Trump, who notoriously referred to Mexicans as unwelcome intruders, as ‘criminals, drug dealers, and rapists’ and called for a wall to be built along the border, one that, in an effort to be as humiliating as possible, he insisted, ‘Mexico will pay for.’”

a. The author of the statement agrees that we should build a wall between the United States and Mexico.

b. The author of the statement disagrees with Trump for wanting to build a wall.

c. The author of the statement has a neutral feeling for Trump’s ideas.

1 in the end

2 famously known for something bad
The narrative paragraph can be fun to write because you tell a personal story from your own life. Narratives usually have a beginning, middle, and end. Usually, when you go to a movie or read a book, you are experiencing a narrative.

The topic sentence of a narrative paragraph, which is usually the first sentence, gives background information about the action that is going to happen in the story. Although the background sentence is the first sentence of the paragraph, it doesn’t start at the beginning of the story. It sets the story up. Read the following example paragraph and answer the questions.
A. Read the following sample paragraph, “Lost and Alone.” Then analyze it by completing the questions that follow.

Lost and Alone

I’ll never forget the time I got lost on my way home from school on my first day of the fourth grade. My family and I had just moved from the tiny town of Washburn, North Dakota to a much larger town called Minot. When my mother dropped me off that morning at school she told me, “Remember, all you have to do is walk straight down this road here, and eventually, our house will come up on your right.” When the last bell of the day rang, I got caught in a swarm of students, who flooded out of the school, excited to go home and play. Because I had followed the crowd of students, I ended up exiting the back door of the school, with which I wasn’t familiar. My nervousness clouded my mind and I didn’t know what direction to walk in, so I randomly picked one and set out. I ended up walking wearily for over an hour. Shaking from nervousness, I finally decided to return to the school and go to the office, praying someone would be there to help me. By the time I got there, my great aunt was waiting inside. I sighed a big breath of relief. When I got home, I hugged my mother tightly. Eventually, I was able get the courage to walk home by myself.
B. Answer the following questions about, “Lost and Alone.”

Write the correct response.

1. What is the topic sentence of this paragraph?

______________________________________________________

______________________________________________________

2. Where does the story happen?

______________________________________________________

Circle the correct answer.

3. What is the beginning of the story?
   a. She had just moved to Minot.
   b. She got lost on her way home.

4. What is the middle of the story?
   a. She couldn’t figure out which way to walk home.
   b. Her great aunt picked her up.

5. What is the end of the story?
   a. She walked wearily for over an hour.
b. She hugged her mom when she got home.

6. What is the writer’s purpose for writing this paragraph?

7. What grammar tense is most of the story written in? Underline words in the paragraph to support your answer.
Ideas for Narrative Paragraphs

Read the following paragraph titles. Put a check next to the titles that you think would make good narrative paragraphs. Be prepared to explain your choices.

___ My Funniest Day In America
___ A Cultural Misunderstanding
___ My First American Friend
___ Buying Groceries in Oakland
___ My First Day of English Class

C. Let’s Write!

You are going to write a narrative paragraph about a story that has to do with your experience of living as an immigrant in the U.S. The story must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. You may take one of the topics above or create your own. Remember, your paragraph must be a specific story and NOT just general feelings about immigration.

Activity 1

• Choose a topic.

• Brainstorm the events in your story.

• Write a topic sentence with controlling ideas.

• Write supporting sentences for the middle of your narrative.

• Check for consistency in past tense verbs.

• Write the end of your story.
D. Activity 2
Work with a partner and exchange paragraphs. Use the peer editing sheet provided below. Remember to offer positive comments that will help the

Name of Writer: ______________________________________

Peer Editor: ______________________________________

1. Write the topic sentence here.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Is this a narrative paragraph? (Yes or No)

3. Look for the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Summarize these parts here.

   Beginning:

   ______________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________

   Middle:

   ______________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________

   End:

   ______________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________

   ______________________________________________________________________
4. Is there any part of the paragraph that is unclear to you? Is so, write it down here.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

6. Are the verb tenses consistent? If not, write any problem here.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
writer.
**E.** Revise your paragraph.
**F.** Rewrite your paragraph.
By the end of this chapter you will be able to...

• Imagine yourself from another person’s perspective
• Define new vocabulary
• Respond to passages that strike you
• Place events in chronological order
• Paraphrase
• Write a journal entry response that synthesizes making inferences and paraphrasing an idea from the book

Finding Perspective

When you look at a situation from another person’s perspective you are imagining that you are that person whatever situation they are in. What would you do if you were that person? What would you think? What would you feel? In English, we have an idiom, “putting yourself in someone else’s shoes,” which means that you are looking at the situation from that other person’s perspective. *Do you have a similar idiom in your language?
A. **Find Perspective**
Discuss the following question with a partner.

The first question on the intake questionnaire for unaccompanied child migrants is “Why did you come to the United States?” Put yourself in the shoes of an unaccompanied child migrant. What would you think if someone asked you that? What would you feel? How would you answer? Would you be afraid that you wouldn’t give the right answer?
### B. Predict

**BEFORE READING**

1. What percentage of women and girls do you think are sexually assaulted when they cross through Mexico to get to the U.S?
   - a. 80%  
   - b. 25%  
   - c. 15%

2. How many abductions do you think occurred in 2011, between April and September, to immigrants crossing between the U.S and Mexico border?
   - a. 6,000  
   - b. 11,000  
   - c. 2,500

**AFTER READING**

1. What percentage of women and girls are sexually assaulted when they cross through Mexico to get to the U.S?
   - a. 80%  
   - b. 25%  
   - c. 15%

2. How many abductions occurred in 2011, between April and September, to immigrants crossing between the U.S and Mexico border?
   - a. 6,000  
   - b. 11,000  
   - c. 2,500
7. Some of the questions immigration lawyers ask are about moral **turpitude**, which offends the narrator.
   a. wickedness
   b. failure
   c. a bad attitude

8. It is as if some of the questions are accusing the person of **debauchery**.
   a. rebelliousness
   b. excessive indulgence, sinfulness
   c. laziness

9. The author speaks with **candor** about immigration issues, not sugarcoating what is really going on.
   a. eloquence
   b. openness and honesty
   c. exquisitely

10. Some of the vocabulary used by immigration officers to refer to the process of immigration has a **cynical** tone.
    a. snobby
    b. hateful
    c. skeptical, distrustful
C. Vocabulary

Choose the best synonym for the vocabulary words in bold. Try to determine the meaning from context.

1. When children tell Valeria their story, in order to translate them, she has to transform them into **barren** terms.
   - a. infertile
   - b. bare
   - c. cold

2. Also, while translating, she had to make the children’s sentences **succinct** so she could make it easier for the lawyers.
   - a. interesting
   - b. concise
   - c. convincing

3. The children hope to **obtain** some kind of help from the U.S government.
   - a. get
   - b. allow
   - c. ask

4. The children **sustained** months of vaccinations, medical exams, and uncertainty.
   - a. slowed down
   - b. braved
   - c. happened for an extended period without stopping

5. The inmate went to prison for 18 months and is now out on **parole**.
   - a. released from prison because of good behavior
   - b. temporarily released from prison
   - c. released from prison by paying money

6. The author would sometimes make **frivolous** jokes to lighten the mood.
   - a. nerdy
   - b. stupid
   - c. foolish
READING SKILL

Responding

What does it mean when something strikes you? We use the phrase something strikes us or the adjective striking to describe something that interests us for some reason. Maybe it interests us because it makes us feel something, even though we don’t know exactly why. Something could strike us because we are learning something new or because we can relate what is being said to our own lives. We can also find something striking when we make connections of any kind. These can be connections between different passages in the same text but also to our own experiences, movies we have seen, articles we have read, or anything else you can think of.

A. Activity 1

While you are reading keep a pen or pencil nearby. Underline passages that strike you in some way.
A. Main Ideas: Activity 1

1. Go back and skim through the first chapter, paying attention to the parts that you underlined. Ask yourself, what in particular strikes you about that passage? Did it remind you of something? Did it give you an idea? Take notes.

2. Before you read, you predicted the answers to the following questions, which are answered in Chapter 1. Go back to the prediction and fill out the correct information. Were your predictions correct? Were you surprised? Why or why not?

B. Main Ideas: Activity 2

Chronological Order

Some stories are told in a chronological, or linear order. This means that the story starts at the beginning and tells the story in the order of the events as they happened. For example, “She was born in 1962, received her education at NYU, and then became a great actress,” is told in chronological order.

"Tell Me How It Ends," however, is not completely told in linear order. She does not start at the beginning but jumps
Put the following events in linear order, not as they are told in the book, but how they happened in real life.

**Put the following events in chronological order by writing the correct order (1, 2, and 3) in the blank.**

___A. Luiselli watches her children sleep in the back of the car while she is also waiting for her green card.

___B. Luiselli begins working as an interpreter for immigrant children.

___C. Luiselli is stopped by border patrol officers and tells them that she is writing a Western.

**B. Details**

1. Put the following legal steps in chronological order for an immigrant child moving through the system.

   ___1. a. The child either obtains some form of immigration relief or receives a deportation order from a judge.

   ___2. b. Valeria meets with the child for an intake interview.

   ___3. c. The real legal battle begins.

   ___4. d. Legal representation is found for the child.

   ___5. e. Luiselli gives her transcription and notes to the lawyers.
WRITING SKILL

Paraphrasing

In your everyday life, you use the skills of summarizing and paraphrasing to explain and share your opinion of a movie or new policy at your school or workplace. When you paraphrase information, you restate a quote or passage by putting it in your own words. Look at the example below.

Original Passage

“Luiselli’s book appears during an especially raw juncture in the relationship between her birthplace, Mexico, and her adoptive home, the United States.”

Paraphrase

Since Luiselli was born in Mexico and then resettled in the United States, Tell Me How It Ends deals with a subject that is very personal to the author.

Question: Compare the original passage and the paraphrase. Do they basically have the same meaning?

Answer: Yes. They do basically mean the same things.
STEPS TO PARAPHRASING

!) Before you start to paraphrase, make sure you. **understand what the passage is saying.** This is by far the most important step. If you don’t understand the content of the passage, you will definitely not be able to write a paraphrase. **This step is not an optional step.** You must complete this step before continuing to the other steps.

1. **Find synonyms.** What is a synonym? It is a word that means the same or almost the same as another word. Look again at the original passage and the paraphrase. Can you find the synonyms?

2. **Change word order.** In other words, change the sentence structure. Can you find how the word order has changed between the original and the paraphrase?

3. **Change word form.** How do you change word form? Take a verb and use its noun form, or take an adjective and use its adverb form. This is what it means to change word form.
C. Paraphrase

Activity 1
The author states, “according to the slightly offensive parlance of the U.S immigration law, for the three years or so that we had lived in New York we had been “nonresident aliens.” She then discusses different terms\(^3\) used for immigrants, such as, “resident alien” and “removable alien.” These are terms, short for terminology, used to describe different phases in the immigration process.

Luiselli dedicates a lot of the chapter to discussing the different terms that are often used for immigrants or for the immigration process.

Paraphrase: Now it is your turn to paraphrase. Using the steps listed above, paraphrase the following quote, which we read above.

“According to the slightly offensive parlance of the U.S immigration law, for the three years or so that we had lived in New York we had been “nonresident aliens.”

\(^3\) a descriptive name used for a particular purpose
C. Let’s Write!
Journal

WRITING SKILL

Synthesizing

When you synthesize, you combine two or more skills. In the previous chapter, you learned how to make inferences, or read between the lines. You have also learned to paraphrase. In the following journal writing assignment, you are going to bring these two skills together and write a journal entry responding to the following prompt.

Activity 2

The word “alien” is used in two ways. In one way, we use it to refer to creatures from outer space. In the other way, some people use it to refer to a foreigner or immigrant. In the quote that you paraphrased, Luiselli says using the word “alien” to refer to a foreigner is “offensive.” Write your thoughts about why calling immigrants “aliens” might be offensive. Give examples both from Tell Me How It Ends and also your own life.
Chapter 2

Court

By the end of this unit you will be able to...

- Make and check predictions
- Learn new vocabulary
- Identify different types of figurative language
- Analyze a poem
- Write a poem that uses figurative language
### BEFORE YOU READ

1. How many children migrants do you think were detained at the border between October of 2013 and June of 2014? ____________

2. How much time do you think a child, who has crossed the border, is currently given to find an immigration lawyer? ____________

3. Legally, do you think that children who immigrated across the border must be given temporary shelter? ____________

4. President Obama passed legislation called The Priority Juvenile Docket in 2014. What was this legislation? ____________

### AFTER YOU READ

1. How many children migrants were detained at the border between October of 2013 and June of 2014? ___________________

2. How much time is a child, who has crossed the border, currently given to find an immigration lawyer? ________________

3. Legally, must children who immigrated across the border be given temporary shelter? __________________

4. President Obama passed legislation called The Priority Juvenile Docket in 2014. What was this legislation? ____________________

### B. Vocabulary

Read the following journal entry written from the perspective of a young girl who illegally crossed the Mexican border into the U.S. Try to guess the definition of the highlighted words from the context of the journal entry.
3/3/15

Dear Journal,

Today, the sky was an **1. ominous** shade of grey as we crossed the desert. I felt a chill run down my back as night began to fall. I knew that I must continue with great **2. fortitude** even though I was tired and weary from countless days of travel. I tried not to focus on the **3. magnitude** of the difficulties ahead, to not show fear on my face and remain **4. stoic** for the sake of my little sister, who held onto my hand, even though the **5. impending** fear of being caught by border patrol wouldn’t leave me. I trailed quickly behind the hired coyote, who held himself with an **6. austere** posture and wore **7. inscrutable** expressions on his face. Who was this man and what were his thoughts? Did he also feel fear? There is no time for such thoughts. I must keep going.

try. Then match the words in bold with their correct definition.

Match the each word, which is given a number, with it’s correct definition.

____1.
____2.
____3.
____4.
____5.
____6.
Dear Journal,

So much has happened that I don’t know where to start. Right now, I am sitting in a room alone as my sister still waits in what they call the “ice box,” waiting for what, I’m not sure. The interpreter is asking her so many questions she doesn’t know how to answer. Because I have nothing to do, I am staring out the window at an adjacent building under construction, as many construction workers sit on the scaffolding for a short lunch break. The entire street is actually cordoned off for pedestrian’s safety as they try to repair this old building. I watch their comings and goings as a way to keep my mind off of my worries. The U.S. is supposed to be a nation of immigrants but it seems some people want the complete eradication of immigration from Mexico. That is what Trump’s wall is all about. And what about the Dreamers, who were promised a life in the U.S but are now threatened with being sent back? Will they ever find recompensation for a life built in the U.S and then be forced to go back to what they no longer recognize as home? I look out the window and the Mexican workers are now busy back at work and wonder at my fate.

Match the each word, which is given a number, with it’s correct definition.

__7. __9. __11.
__8. __10.
A. Main Ideas

1. Go back to the prediction section and write down the correct answers to questions to 1-4.

2. In the last chapter, we learned how to paraphrase. Find three to five sentences in this chapter that you think state a main idea. Write a paraphrase for each sentence you choose.

B. Details

Write T for True and F for false. If the answer is false, correct it to make it true.

___ 1. Luiselli had plenty of time to prepare before actually interviewing the children.

___ 2. The children who come from the countries that make up the Northern Triangle: Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras, are mostly fleeing gang violence.

___ 3. The first person Luiselli interviewed was a child who was trying to immigrate to the U.S because he was fleeing gang violence in his home country.

___ 4. The United States was a primary ally of the Salvadoran government, which relentlessly killed opposition groups during the Salvadorian War; this war happened from 1979-1992.

___ 5. The states with the highest amount of children released to sponsors are Texas, California, and Arizona.

___ 6. Many Mexican children are deported back under something called “voluntary return,” although they are not voluntarily returning.

4 run away from a place or situation of danger
Similes and metaphors are types of figurative language that authors use to enrich the text. They are used to deepen the readers’ knowledge of whatever is being compared. Figurative language is the opposite of literal language. For example, “I felt like I was ten feet tall when I scored my first soccer goal” uses figurative language. The author of that statement wasn’t ten feet tall in reality. She just felt that way because she became so confident when she scored the goal. The comparison enriches the reader’s understanding of how the soccer player felt when she scored.

“I felt like I was ten feet tall when I scored my first soccer goal” is an example of a simile. Similes use “like” or “as” when comparing two things.

“I was ten feet tall when I scored my first soccer goal” is an example of a metaphor. A metaphor is just like a simile, but doesn’t use the words “like” or “as” when comparing two things.
D. Application
When figurative language compares two things, often times it is comparing something concrete with something abstract. If something is concrete, it means it is real and you can touch it. For example, a rose is something concrete. An example of something abstract is an idea or emotion, such as love. When we put those two things together, we can come up with the simile, “My love is like a red rose.”

1. Write one sentence with a simile in the space provided below.

______________________________________________________

2. Now take your simile and turn it into a metaphor.

______________________________________________________

3. Share your simile and metaphor with the person sitting next to you.

His heart is a rock.
Identifying Figurative Language
Task 1

In the following quoted passages, the author uses figurative language to help deepen our understanding of what she is trying to describe to us. **In groups of three or four, use the questions as a springboard for a deeper discussion about the passages.**

“The building’s labyrinthine architecture is, in a way, a replica of the U.S immigration system. And, as in any labyrinth, some find their way out and some don’t. Those who don’t might remain there forever, invisible specters who go up and down elevators and wander the hallways, imprisoned in circular nightmares.”

1. **Underline** the metaphors and / or **circle** the similes.

2. How is the U.S immigration system similar to a labyrinth?

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. Why does she say the people who remain there forever are “invisible specters?”

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

---

5 something that helps you to start doing something

6 a complicated irregular network of passages or paths in which it is difficult to find one's way; a maze

7 a ghost
4. How does the figurative language deepen your understanding of the subject being discussed?

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

“During each interview, the child’s relatives sit on the benches on the other side of the balustrade and wait, like spectators in a silent mass.”

1. Underline the metaphors and / or circle the similes.

2. Why do the child’s relatives behave like they are in a silent mass?

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

3. What kind of overall feeling does the passage give you?

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

4. How does the figurative language deepen your understanding of the subject being discussed?

______________________________________________________

8 a Catholic church service
“He unfolded it gently, slowly, treated it with the same careful precision a surgeon might have when making a decisive incision. After showing it to me, he folded the document back up and put it in his pants pocket, rubbing his palm now and then against the denim, like he was activating a lucky charm.”

1. Who is the “he” in this passage and what is the piece of paper in his pocket?

2. Underline the metaphors and / or circle the similes.

3. Why did he handle the piece of paper like a surgeon?
Identifying Figurative Language

Task 2

You are going to read a poem about immigration by Korean-American poet, Franny Choi. Read her bio below before reading the poem.

Franny Choi is the author of Floating, Brilliant, Gone (Write Bloody Publishing, 2014), which the Providence Phoenix called “a thin, muscular book crackling with energy.” She has received awards from the Poetry Foundation and the Kentucky Women Writers’ Conference for her poems, which have been published in Poetry Magazine, The Poetry Review, Indiana Review, Margins, New England Review, and others. Her work has been featured by the Huffington Post, PBS NewsHour, Feministing, and Angry Asian Man.
Circle the metaphors and underline the similes. Put an asterisk (*) by other types of figurative language that compare something abstract with something concrete.

Choi Jeong Min

For my parents, Choi Inyeong & Nam Songeun

in the first grade i asked my mother permission
to go by frances at school. at seven years old,

i already knew the exhaustion of hearing my name
butchered by hammerhead tongues. already knew

to let my salty gook⁹ name drag behind me
in the sand, safely out of sight. in fourth grade

i wanted to be a writer & worried
about how to escape my surname—choi

is nothing if not korean, if not garlic breath,

---

⁹ an offensive terms used to refer to a foreigner, especially a person of Philippine, Korean, or Vietnamese descent.
if not seaweed & sesame & food stamps

during the lean years—could i go by f.j.c.? could i be paper thin & raceless? dust jacket & coffee stain,

boneless rumor smoldering behind the curtain & speaking through an ink-stained puppet?

my father ran through all his possible rechristenings\(^{10}\)—ian, isaac, ivan—and we laughed at each one,

knowing his accent would always give him away.

you can hear the pride in my mother’s voice when she answers the phone \textit{this is grace}, & it is some kind of strange grace she’s spun herself,

some lightning made of chain mail. grace is not her pseudonym\(^{11}\), though everyone in my family is a poet.

\(^{10}\) to christen is to give (a baby) a Christian name at baptism as a sign of admission to a Christian church

\(^{11}\) an invented name that a writer, artist etc. uses instead of their real name
these are the shields for the names we speak in the dark
to remember our darkness. savage\textsuperscript{12} death rites\textsuperscript{13}

we still practice in the new world. myths we whisper
to each other to keep warm. my korean name

is the star my mother cooks into the jjigae\textsuperscript{14}
to follow home when i am lost, which is always

in this gray country, this violent foster\textsuperscript{15} home
whose streets are paved with shame, this factory yard

riddled with bullies ready to steal your skin
& sell it back to your mother for profit,

land where they stuff our throats with soil
& accuse us of gluttony\textsuperscript{16} when we learn to swallow it.

\textsuperscript{12} an offensive word used to describe people who have a simple traditional way of life
\textsuperscript{13} final prayers or religious ceremonies for someone who is dying
\textsuperscript{14} a Korean dish similar to a Western stew
\textsuperscript{15} to take someone else’s child into your family for a period of time but without becoming their legal parent
\textsuperscript{16} the bad habit of eating and drinking too much
i confess. i am greedy. i think i deserve to be seen
for what i am: a boundless, burning wick.

a minor chord. i confess: if someone has looked
at my crooked spine and called it elmwood,

i’ve accepted. if someone has loved me more
for my gook name, for my saint name,

for my good vocabulary & bad joints,
i’ve welcomed them into this house.

i’ve cooked them each a meal with a star singing
at the bottom of the bowl, a secret ingredient
to follow home when we are lost:
sunflower oil, blood sausage, a name

given by your dead grandfather who eventually
forgot everything he’d touched. i promise:

i’ll never stop stealing back what’s mine.
i promise: i won’t forget again.
A. Analyze

A. In groups of three or four, go back to the similes and metaphors, and other figurative language that you have identified. For each passage that you have underlined, circled, or made an asterisk, discuss the questions:

1. What is being discussed throughout the figurative language?

2. How does the figurative language deepen my understanding of the subject being discussed?

3. What are a few main ideas of the poem?

Takes notes in the space below.
WRITING SKILL

Figurative Language

Using figurative language in your writing will deepen the readers understanding of whatever you are trying to describe. It will also enrich your writing by making it more interesting and relatable.

You have just discussed a poem by Franny Choi about immigration. In the poem, she focuses on names. When she was a child she wanted to be called Francis. He father took on different American sounding names that didn’t quite fit. Her mother took the American name, Grace. In the end, Choi discusses that by losing her Korean name she also looses a part of her identity. For Choi, one of the most difficult parts about immigrating is having to use an American name.

You are going to write a poem about immigration. Follow the steps provided to get you started.

1. Make a list of the most difficult parts of immigrating and blending into American culture for you. Include four or five items on your list, for example, finding a new name and learning a new language.

2. Discuss the items on your list in groups of three or four. Ask follow up questions. Do some of you have similar items?

3. Pick the item on the list that you want to write about. You should choose the item that speaks closest to your heart.

4. Write a poem that includes figurative language. It can be in paragraph form, or in lines and stanzas like Choi’s. If you feel stuck, start by making a simile
or a metaphor. For example, if you chose learning a new language from your list, you could start by writing, “Speaking English is like…”

Before you get started, read the following example adapted from *The Woman Warrior*, by Maxine Hong Kingston and find the similes and metaphors.

**Speaking English**

When I speak English, I speak in a voice that is not my own.
The voice is not a whisper, but it is not a proper voice either.
My voice sounds like twigs breaking up underfoot.
When I am standing at the grocery store counter, my voice hides deep inside me.
I sound as if I am trying to sing through weeping and strangling.
At first, when I spoke English, my voice sounded like a crippled animal running on broken legs.
Now, when I speak it, my voice sounds as if those legs are healing.
When I speak English, even though it’s not perfect, I am loud.
When I speak English, I do not whisper.

Activity 1

Now, write your own poem. When you are finished, share it with a partner.
1. In the section you are about to read, Luiselli interviews two little girls from Guatemala. She asks them,

*Did you work in your home country? How many hours did you work a day? What sort of work did you do? What kinds of things did you do when you were at home? Were you ever punished for doing something wrong?*

**What answers do you think the little girls should give in order to be able to stay in the United States?**
2. In the United States, Miranda rights are a list of rights that must be read to anyone who is being accused of a crime. Read them below.

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you. Do you understand the rights I have just read to you? With these rights in mind, do you wish to speak to me?

Guess which of the rights listed are not provided for “alien” children.
B. Vocabulary

Choose the best synonym for the vocabulary words in bold. Try to determine the meaning from context.

1. More natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and forest fires, are **imminent** because of climate change.
   - a. dangerous
   - b. expected
   - c. at fault

2. Trump denied **allegations** of sexual harassment.
   - a. claims
   - b. crimes
   - c. lies

3. Environmentalists **concede** that it will not be easy to persuade car drivers to use their vehicles less often.
   - a. convince
   - b. admit
   - c. declare

4. Refugees have sought political **asylum** in the United States.
   - a. citizenship
   - b. protest
   - c. safety

5. The Rohingya people of Myanmar are **persecuted** for being a religious minority.
   - a. praised
   - b. mistreated
   - c. pushed out
6. This is an exceptional case; I’ve never seen anything like it before.
   a. unusual
   b. excellent
   c. terrible

7. Clothes and blankets have been distributed among the refugees.
   a. taken from
   b. bought by
   c. handed out evenly

8. Only someone with a warped sense of humor would think the accident is funny.
   a. twisted
   b. funny
   c. set straight

9. Changes in society are happening so fast, they sometimes seem bewildering.
   a. confusing
   b. amusing
   c. appearing

10. Many democrats have aligned themselves with immigrant rights.
    a. believed
    b. joined
    c. helped
A. Keep the prediction questions in mind and underline the passages with the correct answers.

AFTER YOU READ

A. **Main Ideas**
Go back to the prediction questions at the beginning of the chapter. Discuss the correct answers with a partner.

B. **Comprehension**
Write your answers to the following questions. When you are finished, compare your answers with a partner.

1. What story is Luselli’s daughter obsessed with? Write a short summary of the story.

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
2. How is a child granted special immigrant juvenile status?

3. How is a child granted asylum status?

4. What is the story that obsesses Luiselli? Write a short summary.
C. Making Inferences

At the very beginning of the book, you learned to make inferences. Remember...

When we interpret the author’s words we practice “reading between the lines” to understand the author’s intention, even when is not stated explicitly. Being able to read between the lines is an important comprehension skill. Remember, an inference isn’t your opinion of the text. It is the best conclusion based on evidence from the text.

Read the following quotations and answer the questions by making your best inference.

1. “During the interviews, I sometimes note the children’s answers in the first person\(^{17}\) and sometimes in the third (person)\(^{18}\).”

Why do you think she sometimes wrote their answers in the first person and other times wrote them in the third person?

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

\(^{17}\) a way of telling a story in which the writer or speaker tells it as though they were involved in the story; for example, “I crossed the border by foot.”

\(^{18}\) a story written in the third person is told as the experience of someone else, using the pronouns ‘he’, ‘she’, or ‘they’, for example, “She swam across the river.”
2. “But how does the story about those girls end? My daughter asks.
I don’t know how it ends, I say.

She comes back to this question often, demanding a proper conclusion with the insistence of very small children:

But what happens next, Mamma?

I don’t know.”

The title of the book, Tell Me How It Ends, is taken from this passage. Why do you think Luiselli chose to title the book after this conversation with her daughter?
You have already learned that when we **paraphrase** something, we restate the meaning of a text or passage using other words. Basically, when you **paraphrase** a text or passage, you are putting it in your own words. This is a very important skill to have. **Paraphrasing** can be used as a tool to help your comprehension. When you paraphrase a text or passage, it becomes easier to remember what you read. In addition, people often use paraphrasing while writing an essay when they want to refer to an idea from an article or book. Review the following example from the introduction of *Tell Me How It Ends*.

**Review** the following steps to paraphrasing, which you learned in chapter 1.

**STEPS TO PARAPHRASING**

! Before you start to paraphrase, make sure you understand what the passage is saying. This is by far the most important step. If you don’t understand the content of the passage, you will definitely not be able to write a paraphrase. **This step is not an optional step.** You must complete this step before continuing to the other steps.
In *Tell Me How It Ends*, Luiselli tells us about how, during long drives with her children, they sometimes told their children stories about the American Southwest, back when it used to be apart of Mexico. The following sentences are about Saint Patrick’s Batallion, a unit of several hundred immigrants and expatriates of Irish descent who fought as part of the Mexican Army against the U.S in the Mexican-American War of 1846-8.

Paraphrase the following sentences using the steps provided above. **Remember, first make sure you understand the sentence’s meaning. Then pick two out of the three steps to use in making your paraphrase. If you need help finding synonyms, use a thesaurus!**

1. The St. Patrick's Battalion was a Mexican army unit made up primarily of Irish Catholics who changed sides from the invading US army during the Mexican-American War.
2. By 1846, tensions between the USA and Mexico had reached a critical point.

3. Mexico was enraged by the American takeover of Texas, and the USA had its eye on Mexico's sparsely populated western holdings, such as California, New Mexico, and Utah.

4. Armies were sent to the border and it didn't take long for a series of skirmishes to flare into an all-out war.

5. In September of 1847, the Americans captured Mexico City, forcing Mexico to surrender.
6. Many Irish were immigrating to America at about the same time as the war, due to harsh conditions and famine in Ireland.

Summarizing

Summarizing is very similar to paraphrasing. In fact, you use the same steps to paraphrase that you use to summarize. The main difference is that a summary is shorter than the original text or passage, while a paraphrase is about the same length. You know how when you buy a novel, there is a short description on the back which tells you the main ideas of the book? That is a summary.

When we write summaries, the most important part happens in the beginning, just like with paraphrasing. First, you must understand what the passage says. After that, with summarizing, you must pick out the most important information, and then put that information in your own words. In other words, in order to write a summary, you must first find the main ideas of the passage that you want to summarize. After you have done that, you can go back to the three main steps used for paraphrasing and use those to begin writing your summary. See the example below, taken from the same article on Saint Patrick’s Batallion.
Original Passage
“Thousands of the Irish joined the U.S. army in cities like New York and Boston, hoping for some pay and U.S. citizenship. Most of them were Catholic. The U.S. army (and US society in general) was at that time very intolerant towards both Irish and Catholics. Irish were seen as lazy and ignorant, while Catholics were considered fools who were easily distracted by pageantry and led by a faraway pope.”

Summary
While many Irish were immigrating to the U.S, the main population, as well as the U.S Army, were prejudiced towards them and Catholics alike. Still, thousands of Irish, in hope of pay and citizenship, signed up for the U.S army.

Let’s now more closely compare the original passage and the summary.

Question 1: Is the summary shorter than the original passage?

Answer: Yes.

Question 2: What was left out of the summary?

Answer: The sentence and idea, “Irish were seen as lazy and ignorant, while Catholics were considered fools who were easily distracted by pageantry and led by a faraway pope,” was left out of the sentence. This is because it was a supporting point and not a main idea.

Question 3: Can you find synonyms when you compare the original passage and the summary?

Answer: Yes, “population” and “society” are synonyms. “Intolerant” and “prejudice” are synonyms as well.
**Question 4:** Were any word forms changed from the original passage to the summary?

**Answer:** Yes, “hoping” was changed to “in hope of”.

**Question 5:** Was the sentence structure changed from the original?

**Answer:** Yes. The order was completely changed. (See the example for comparison.)

**Bonus:** When summarizing, it we look for synonyms to change the passage into our own words. However, when there is a term used, we keep that term. For example, in the following passage, “San Patricios” is a term used for the IrishAmerican men who fought on the Mexican side. Since this term is very specific, we must keep it.
Now, its your turn to summarize. Follow the steps mentioned above to summarize the following passage about Saint Patrick’s Batallion.

1. While Americans see the San Patricos negatively, Mexicans see them much differently. To Mexicans, the San Patricios were great heroes who changed to the Mexican side because they could not stand to see the Americans bullying a smaller, Catholic nation. They fought not out of fear but out of a sense of righteousness and justice. Every year, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in Mexico, particularly in the places where the soldiers were hanged. They have received many honors from the Mexican government, including streets named after them, plaques, postage stamps issued in their honor, etc.
By the end of this section you will be able to...
• Learn new vocabulary chosen by the facilitator in your group
• Discuss main ideas and details in a small group facilitated by students
• Facilitate student learning based on your role in the literature circle
• Write a response paragraph

PREVIEW THE UNIT

A. Describe

With a partner, describe the picture above with many details. What do you think these people are doing? Why?
A. Literature Circles

For the remaining part of this chapter, you will work in assigned groups, but each of you will have a different role. Your role will be determined by the card I give you, indicated below.

1. **Discussion Director**: Write down four WH-questions about things that you don’t understand or want to know more about in these chapters for discussion by the group, and act as timekeeper. Your questions should help group members understand confusing parts. **Product**: a list of WH-questions, correctly formed, with answers agreed upon by group members after the next meeting.

2. **Main Ideas Summarizer**: Prepare a brief summary of the main ideas of Chapter 3, part 2 and read it to the group. The summary should focus on key information that is central to these chapters. Read your summary to your group and add information to your paper if your group members think something important is missing. **Product**: A one-page written summary of key story events, in pen or typed; skip lines.

3. **Quoter**: Locate one short section from the Chapter 3, part 2, to read aloud to the group. The idea is to help people remember the most powerful, interesting, and important selection from the assigned reading. This selection should be no more than a half of a page in the book. Write 2-3 sentences that explain why you chose it, and read these to your group. **Product**: One typed or photocopied selection (with page numbers) with your explanatory sentences. Make one copy for each group member, and one copy to turn into the teacher (including your sentences about why you chose it).

4. **Wordsmith**: Find five new vocabulary words that you think are important for understanding these chapters. For each one, give the page number and dictionary definition, and copy the sentence in which you found it. Share these new words with your group members, and together, write one original sentence for each. **Product**: Your list of words plus five original sentences written by your group.
A. On the date determined by your teacher, each group will have seven minutes to report to the group the work he or she has prepared, while the other members take notes. The Discussion Director will keep time and lead the discussion about the WH-questions.

Finally, at the end of the discussion, students will give the teacher their products and notes for review and for a grade.
Response Paragraph

A response to a reading is different from a summary of a reading. A response should include your opinions. Often in a response, you answer a question or questions about the main idea of reading.

Steps for Writing a Response Paragraph

1. **Read the assigned text for main ideas**, and then reread it for better understanding. As you read, mark main ideas, major supporting points, and interesting ideas.

2. **Read the prompt or question of your assignment**. Here are a few common types of response assignments.
   - Agree or Disagree with a main idea in the reading.
   - Compare and/or contrast what you read with your experiences.
   - Evaluate a main idea in the reading.
   - **Example prompt**: Do you agree that the juvenile priority docket was legislation that hurt immigrant children?

3. **Begin your response with one sentence that gives the title and author of the reading and answers the assigned prompt or question**. (It is proper to
4. **In the middle of the paragraph**, which is the detail section of the paragraph, you focus on answering the question or prompt with more **detail**. Support your opinion with reasons, using ideas from the reading and your own ideas. In this part of the paragraph use phrases such as: “The author states that...” or “In chapter 3...”

5. **At the end of the paragraph**, or conclusion, **restate your thesis in different words and sum it up**. In this part of the paragraph, we often use words and phrases such as: “in conclusion,” “all in all,” and “finally.”

See the example provided below.

**Example Prompt**

Luiselli writes on page fifteen, “We wonder if the reactions would be different were all these children of a lighter color: of better, purer breeds and nationalities. Would they be treated more like people? More like children? We read the papers, listen to the radio, see photographs, and wonder.” Do you agree or disagree with Luiselli’s statement?
I agree with Luiselli’s statement in *Tell Me How It Ends* which states that race plays an important role in American’s reaction to the child refugee problem. Previously in the book, she gives the example of a photograph posted in the paper, which pictured two elderly white people holding up signs that said, “illegal is a crime” and “return to sender.” I think that if those two elderly people saw pictures of child refugees who looked like their own children, they would feel differently. In addition, the current Black Lives Matters movement offers countless examples of black and brown people across the United States who feel they are discriminated against because of the color of their skin. This racism goes hand-in-hand with ant-immigration sentiments. In conclusion, I sadly agree that color plays an important role in who is treated more humanely.
Writing Prompts for Response Paragraph

**Topic 1**
Evaluate this statement. “The roots and reach of the (child refugee problem) branch out across hemispheres and form a complex global network whose size and real reach we can’t imagine” (86). Do you agree or disagree with Luiselli’s statement? Support your opinions with examples from the book or from history.

**Topic 2**
Manu fled his home country because he was trying to get away from the gang Barrio 18. Luiselli writes,

   Indeed, it turns out Manu has good reasons to be afraid. Members of Barrio 18 beat him up. When he tells me about this incident, he is missing his two front teeth. Showing the wide gap and trying to joke about it, he says, “I used to laugh at my grandma ‘cause she had no front teeth, and now I look in the mirror and I laugh at me.”

p.82

Compare and contrast Manu’s experience of being forced to leave his home country with your own. What are the similarities? What are the differences?
Follow the below steps to write your response paragraph.

Step 1  Get ideas.

A. Choose a prompt.

B. Find the passage in the book where the quote is and re-read the section.

C. Write the first sentence to your response.

Example

Topic 1: I agree with Luiselli’s statement in Tell Me How It Ends that... (include paraphrase of quote).

Topic 2: The reason that I left my home country is very different from Manu’s reason in Tell Me How It Ends, by Valeria Luisseli.

Step 2  Organize your ideas.

Follow this format to organize your one-paragraph response.

• **Introduction**: State your opinion (the answer to the topic question) in your first sentence.

• **Body Sentences**: Support your opinion with reasons. Use ideas from the reading and your own ideas to explain your reasons. Use phrases to identify the writer’s ideas and your ideas.

• **Conclusion Sentence**: Conclude by restating your opinion.

Step 3  Write a rough draft.

Write your response. Use the format from Step 2. Include vocabulary from the chapter where possible.
By the end of this section you will be able to...
• Learn new vocabulary chosen by the facilitator in your group
• Discuss main ideas and details in a small group facilitated by students
• Facilitate student learning based on your new role in the literature circle
• Write a response essay

A. Predict

1. True or False: United States law guarantees free public education for all children, no matter their nationality or immigration status.
Literature Circles

For the final chapter and afterword, you will continue to work in your assigned groups, but will switch roles. Just like last time, your role will be determined by the card I give you, indicated below.

1. **Discussion Director**: Write down four WH-questions about things that you don’t understand or want to know more about in these chapters for discussion by the group, and act as timekeeper. Your questions should help group members understand confusing parts. **Product: a list of WH-questions, correctly formed, with answers agreed upon by group members after the next meeting.**

2. **Main Ideas Summarizer**: Prepare a brief summary of the main ideas of Chapter 3, part 2 and read it to the group. The summary should focus on key information that is central to these chapters. Read your summary to your group and add information to your paper if your group members think something important is missing. **Product: A one-page written summary of key story events, in pen or typed; skip lines.**

3. **Quoter**: Locate one short section from the Chapter 3, part 2 to read aloud to the group. The idea is to help people remember the most powerful, interesting, and important selection from the assigned reading. This selection should be no more than a half of a page in the book. Write 2-3 sentences that explain why you chose it, and read these to your group. **Product: One typed or photocopied selection (with page numbers) with your explanatory sentences. Make one copy for each group member, and one copy to turn into the teacher (including your sentences about why you chose it).**

4. **Wordsmith**: Find five new vocabulary words that you think are important for understanding these chapters. For each one, give the page number and dictionary definition, and copy the sentence in which you found it. Share these new words with your group members, and together, write one original sentence for each. **Product: Your list of words plus five original sentences written by your group.**
A. On the date determined by your teacher, each group will have seven minutes to report to the group the work he or she has prepared, while the other members take notes. The Discussion Director will keep time and lead the discussion about the WH-questions.

Finally, at the end of the discussion, students will give the teacher their products and notes for review and for a grade.
WRITING SKILL

Response Essay

In the previous chapter, you wrote a response paragraph. For this assignment, you are going to write a response essay. A response essay is very similar to response paragraph, but instead of writing one paragraph, you are going to write three. Just like in the response paragraph, you are going to have an introduction, body, and conclusion, but in the essay, each of those sections will make up an entire paragraph.

Steps for Writing a Response Essay

Step One and Two are exactly the same. Review them now.

1. Read the assigned text for main ideas, and then reread it for better understanding. As you read, mark main ideas, major supporting points, and interesting ideas.

2. Read the prompt or question of your assignment. Here are a few common types of response assignments.
   - Agree or Disagree with a main idea in the reading.
   - Compare and/or contrast what you read with your experiences.
   - Evaluate a main idea in the reading.
Steps Three, Four, and Five have changed a little bit. Read now and try to find the similarities and differences between Steps 3, 4, and 5 for writing the Response Paragraph.

3. Begin your response in an introduction paragraph. Instead of giving your opinion or response to the prompt immediately, like you did in the response paragraph, this time you will first give background information. This will lead up to the last sentence of this paragraph, which is your thesis statement. Remember, your thesis statement is your answer to the assigned prompt or question. Make sure you know your thesis before you begin writing. The introduction paragraph should be three to five sentences.

4. The body paragraph is the middle paragraph and is the detail section of the essay. Here, you focus on answering the question or prompt with more details. Support your opinion with reasons, using ideas from the reading and your own ideas. In this part of the paragraph use phrases such as: “The author states that...” or “In chapter 4...”. This paragraph should be around five to seven sentences.

5. The final paragraph, or conclusion, restates your thesis in different words and sums it up. In this part of the paragraph, we often use words and phrases such as: “in conclusion,” “all in all,” and “finally.”
Read the following example of a Response Essay. Note that the example is an expanded version of the Response Paragraph example, but you will choose a different prompt than that of your Response Paragraph.

**Example Prompt**

Luiselli writes on page fifteen, “We wonder if the reactions would be different were all these children of a lighter color: of better, purer breeds and nationalities. Would they be treated more like people? More like children? We read the papers, listen to the radio, see photographs, and wonder.” Do you agree or disagree with Luiselli’s statement?
Example Response Essay

Race and Immigration Attitudes

Recently, with the advent of Donald Trump as President of the United States, immigration from the Mexican border to the U.S has been a hot topic for discussion. This is exactly the subject Luiselli discusses in her book, *Tell Me How It Ends*. In fact, in Chapter 1, Luiselli states that race plays an important role in American’s reactions to the child refugee problem, saying that people’s attitudes would be different to immigrants if they were of a lighter color. I agree with Luiselli’s statement.

A photo posted in a web publication and the Black Lives Matter movement are two examples of why I agree with Luiselli. The photograph posted in a web publication pictured two elderly white people holding up signs that said, “Illegal is a Crime” and “Return to Sender.” Luiselli also notes that in the photo, the couple sat on beach chairs, and she wondered if they penciled the event onto their calendars next to their Sunday bingo. I think she gave this detail to demonstrate the lack of care that some Americans give to actually thinking through these issues. It was as if protesting children were another day on the beach. In addition, the current Black Lives Matters movement offers countless examples of black and brown people across the United States voicing their experience of being discriminated against because of the color of their skin. This racism goes hand-in-hand with ant-immigration sentiments.

In conclusion, the two examples I provided prove that color plays an important role in who is treated more humanly. As Luiselli notes, color impacts who society treats more humanely. That said, I think that the current national discussion about the issue offers hope that this is changing.
Prompts for Response Essay

**TOPIC 1**
Luiselli writes the Immigrant Prayer, which is translated to English as, “To leave is to die a little/ To arrive is never to arrive,” (98). Compare and contrast this sentiment with your own experience of immigrating to the U.S.

**TOPIC 2**
One of Luiselli’s students refers to Professor Gowrinathan, who gave a lecture in the class. The student says that the Professor, “insisted that the most important thing was to know how to transform emotional capital— the rage, sadness, and frustration produced by certain social circumstances—into political capital.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give examples.
Follow the below steps to write your response essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Get ideas.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Choose a prompt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Find the passage in the book where the quote is and re-read the section.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Write your thesis statement.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• For prompt 1 you will need to paraphrase the prayer and offer a comparison to your own experience.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• For prompt 2 you will have to paraphrase the idea and say if you agree or disagree.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Organize your ideas.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow this format to organize your three paragraph response.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Introduction: Give background information. Your thesis should be the last sentence of this paragraph.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Body Paragraph: Support your opinion with reasons. Use ideas from the reading and your own ideas to explain your reasons. Use phrases to identify the write’s ideas and your ideas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Conclusion Paragraph: Conclude by restating your opinion. You man offer a new idea here.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Write a rough draft.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Write your response. Use the format from step 2. Include vocabulary from the chapter where possible.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Revise your rough draft by peer editing.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Read your partner’s response and look for mistakes. Use the following checklist.</td>
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Checklist

___ Does your introduction contain a thesis statement that answers the question or states your opinion?

___ Did you follow the introduction-body-conclusion format?

___ Did you use your own words?

___ Did you give reasons to support your argument?

___ Did you support your argument with ideas from the reading and your own ideas?

___ Did you use phrases to identity the writer’s ideas and your own ideas?

___ Did you use vocabulary from the chapter appropriately?
References
