



Cultural Conversations

Visual Prompt: Cities are places where people of many different cultures have to work and live together. What challenges does this pose? What are the opportunities?

Unit Overview

Your culture is hard to pin down in a simple explanation, but it influences everything from who you are as an individual to how you relate to other people at home and around the world. You can come to understand your culture better when you see it in comparison with other cultures. In this unit, you will explore different cultures by reading texts that reflect on the connection between one's cultural heritage and sense of identity. Using your own experiences and information from what you read, you will write a reflection about your own cultural identity and argue to what extent a person's culture influences how he or she perceives the world and other people.

GOALS:

- To analyze how culture affects identity and perceptions
- To practice effective speaking and listening skills that build capacity for collaboration and communication
- To analyze the concept of voice in reading and writing
- To examine and apply the elements of argument
- To analyze and apply syntactic structures in writing

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

- synthesis
- argument
- claim
- counterclaim
- concession
- refutation

Literary Terms

- voice
- syntax
- conflict
- theme
- thematic statement
- symbol
- allusion
- imagery
- figurative language

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Language and Writer's Craft

- Formal and Informal Voice (1.3)
- Syntax (1.4)
- Colon and Semicolon (1.10)
- Phrases and Clauses (1.11)



MY INDEPENDENT READING LIST

Previewing the Unit

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Close Reading, Marking the Text, Think-Pair-Share, Summarizing, Paraphrasing, graphic organizer

My Notes

Learning Targets

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

Making Connections

In this unit, you will read poetry, short stories, and essays—all focusing on some element of cultural identity. What is your personal cultural identity, and how does it affect the way you see the world? Cultural perspectives are shaped by family, life experiences, and perceptions about the world around you. You will explore all of these as you prepare to write your reflective essay about your cultural identity.

Essential Questions

Based on your current knowledge, write your answers to these questions.

1. What is my cultural identity?

2. How do cultural experiences shape, impact, or influence our identity and perceptions?

Vocabulary Development

Go back to the Contents page and use a QHT strategy to analyze and evaluate your knowledge of the Academic Vocabulary and Literary Terms for the unit.

Unpacking Embedded Assessment 1

Read the following assignment for Embedded Assessment 1:

Your assignment is to write a reflective essay explaining your cultural identity.

Summarize in your own words what you will need to know to complete this assessment successfully. With your class, create a graphic organizer to represent the skills and knowledge you will need to complete the tasks identified in the Embedded Assessment. To help you complete your graphic organizer, be sure to review the criteria in the Scoring Guide on page 58.

Learning Targets

- Explore the concept of culture and the role it plays in personal perceptions.
- Analyze the communication process to develop collaborative discussion norms.

Defining Culture

1. When you see the word *culture*, what are your thoughts about what it means? Write your definition in the space below.

Culture is

2. Discuss your definition with a small group of peers. In the space below, record any new ideas you have about culture after your discussion.

3. What are some examples of culture? Create a word web around the word *Culture*, writing words or phrases that you associate with culture.



LEARNING STRATEGIES:

graphic organizer,
Discussion Groups,
Quickwrite, Word Sort,
Sharing and Responding

My Notes

Exploring Culture and Communication

My Notes

4. With these ideas about culture in mind, write down the impressions and associations evoked by the images your teacher shares with you.

Object/Image	My First Associations	Responses from Peers

5. Why did other students share some of your perceptions but differ with others?

6. In the box below, write five items you could bring to class tomorrow that would express something about your cultural identity. In the second column, write a description of what each item represents to you and your cultural connection (e.g., heritage, values, practices, experiences). Share some of your examples and how they connect to your culture in a class discussion.

Object	What do the objects reveal about you and your culture?

Explanatory Writing Prompt

Choose one of the five items from your list as the focus of a brief essay that explains the object to an audience that is unfamiliar with what it is, how it is used, and how it connects to your culture (and personally to you). Be sure to:

- Describe the object clearly using vivid and concrete language.
- Explain how the object connects to your culture.
- Explain the significance of the object to you.

Communicating Effectively

Our individual cultures affect the way we communicate. During this course, you will participate in discussions with partners and in groups. To make collaborative discussion groups productive, all members of a group need to communicate effectively as speakers and listeners.

7. What are the characteristics of effective communication?

8. What obstacles get in the way of effective communication, and how can we remove some of the barriers identified?

9. George Bernard Shaw once said, “The problem with communication ... is the *illusion* that it has been accomplished.” One of the goals of this unit is “to develop speaking and listening skills to communicate effectively” in collegial discussions. Identify two to three norms (set rules) you and your fellow classmates can follow to communicate effectively.

Class Norms

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Notes

Exploring Culture and Communication



INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Research

In this unit, you will be exploring cultural identity. For your independent reading, find texts by authors who share your cultural ideas and make comparisons about shared experiences and experiences that are different.

My Notes

Check Your Understanding

Explain why classroom communication norms are important for productive discussion.



Independent Reading Plan

Reading independently gives you a chance to expand your knowledge about topics that fascinate you while also reinforcing and deepening the learning you are doing in class. Each of the selections that you will read in this course can help you analyze and understand your independent reading texts in new and enlightening ways.

Discuss your independent reading plan with a partner by responding to these questions:

- How do you go about choosing what to read independently? Where can you find advice on which books or articles to read?
- What genre of texts do you most enjoy reading outside of class?
- How can you make time in your schedule to read independently?
- How do you think learning about new cultures might change your perspective of the texts you read independently?
- Look at the Independent Reading Link on this page and think about which text or author you plan on reading during the first half of Unit 1.

Learning Targets

- Compare and contrast how a central idea of a text is developed in an informational text and a personal essay.

Preview

In this activity, you will read an informational text and a personal essay to compare and contrast how the main idea is developed through the authors' distinct **voices**.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- Underline or highlight information that helps you define the concept of cultural identity.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Think-Pair-Share, Marking the Text, Word Maps, Discussion Groups

Literary Terms

Voice is the way a writer or speaker uses words and tone to express ideas as well as the writer's persona or personality.

Informational Text

What Is Cultural Identity?

by Elise Trumbull and Maria Pacheco, Brown University

1 Children begin to develop a sense of identity as individuals and as members of groups from their earliest interactions with others (McAdoo, 1993; Sheets, 1999a). One of the most basic types of identity is ethnic identity, which **entails** an awareness of one's membership in a social group that has a common culture. The common culture may be marked by a shared language, history, geography, and (frequently) physical characteristics (Fishman, 1989; Sheets, 1999a).

2 Not all of these aspects need to be shared, however, for people to psychologically identify with a particular ethnic group. Cultural identity is a broader term: people from multiple ethnic backgrounds may identify as belonging to the same culture. For example, in the Caribbean and South America, several ethnic groups may share a broader, common, Latin culture. Social groups existing within one nation may share a common language and a broad cultural identity but have distinct ethnic identities associated with a different language and history. Ethnic groups in the United States are examples of this....

Definitions of Culture and the Invisibility of One's Own Culture

3 Anthropologists and other scholars continue to debate the meaning of this term. García (1994) refers to culture as

[T]he system of understanding characteristics of that individual's society, or of some subgroup within that society. This system of understanding includes values, beliefs, notions about acceptable and unacceptable behavior, and other socially constructed ideas that members of the society are taught are "true." (p. 51)

My Notes

entails: involves; includes

Exploring Cultural Identity

My Notes

manifest: show; display

phenomenon: occurrence
distributive: spreading out
posits: suggests

attributes: characteristics

4 Geertz (1973) asserts that members of cultures go about their daily lives within shared webs of meaning. If we link García and Geertz’s definitions, we can imagine culture as invisible webs composed of values, beliefs, ideas about appropriate behavior, and socially constructed truths.

5 One may ask, why is culture made up of invisible webs? Most of the time, our own cultures are invisible to us (Greenfield, Raeff, & Quiroz, 1996; Philips, 1983), yet they are the context within which we operate and make sense of the world. When we encounter a culture that is different from our own, one of the things we are faced with is a set of beliefs that **manifest** themselves in behaviors that differ from our own.

6 In this way, we often talk about other people’s cultures, and not so much about our own. Our own culture is often hidden from us, and we frequently describe it as “the way things are.” Nonetheless, one’s beliefs and actions are not any more natural or biologically predetermined than any other group’s set of beliefs and actions; they have emerged from the ways one’s own group has dealt with and interpreted the particular conditions it has faced. As conditions change, so do cultures; thus, cultures are considered to be dynamic.

Individual Differences Within Cultures and the Dynamic Nature of Culture

7 Individual cultural identity presents yet another layer of complexity. Members of the same culture vary widely in their beliefs and actions. How can we explain this **phenomenon**? The argument for a “**distributive** model” of culture addresses the relationship between culture and personality (García, 1994; Schwartz, 1978). This argument **posits** that individuals select beliefs, values, and ideas that guide their actions from a larger set of cultural beliefs, values, and ideas. In most cases, we do not consciously pick and choose **attributes** from the total set; rather, the conditions and events in our individual lives lead us to favor some over others. In summarizing Spiro’s concept of “cultural heritage,” García (1994) draws a distinction between “cultural heritage” and “cultural inheritance.” Cultural heritage refers to what society as a whole possesses, and a cultural inheritance is what each individual possesses. In other words, each individual inherits some (but not all) of the cultural heritage of the group.

8 We all have unique identities that we develop within our cultures, but these identities are not fixed or static. This is the reason that stereotypes do not hold up: no two individuals from any culture are exactly alike. While living inside a culture allows members to become familiar with the total cultural heritage of that society, no individual actually internalizes the entire cultural heritage. In fact, it would be impossible for any one person to possess a society’s entire cultural heritage; there are inevitably complex and contradictory values, beliefs, and ideas within that heritage, a result of the conditions and events that individuals and groups experience. For example, arranged marriage has long been a cultural practice in India based on the belief that the families of potential spouses best know who would make a desirable match. More and more frequently, however, individuals reject the practice of arranged marriage; this is partly due to the sense of independence from family brought on by both men’s and women’s participation in a rapidly developing job market. The changing experience of work is shifting cultural attitudes towards family and marriage. These different experiences and the new values, beliefs, and ideas they produce contribute to the dynamic nature of culture.

References

Fishman, J. (1989). *Language and ethnicity in minority sociolinguistic perspective*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- Underline or highlight information that helps you define the concept of cultural identity.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.



WORD CONNECTIONS

Etymology

Hors d'oeuvre (awr DURV) is a French term that refers to appetizers—small food portions served before a main meal. The word can be traced back to 1714 and a meaning of “outside the ordinary courses of a meal.” It comes from *fors* (“outside”), *de* (“from”) and *ouvre* (“work”), which in turn is from Latin *opera*.

Personal Essay

Ethnic Hash

by Patricia J. Williams from *Transition*

1 Recently, I was invited to a book party. The book was about **pluralism**. “Bring an hors d’oeuvre representing your ethnic heritage,” said the hostess, innocently enough. Her request threw me into a panic. Do I even have an ethnicity? I wondered. It was like suddenly discovering you might not have a belly button. I tell you, I had to go to the dictionary. What were the flavors, accents, and **linguistic** trills that were passed down to me over the ages? What are the habits, customs, and common traits of the social group by which I have been guided in life—and how do I cook them?

2 My last name is from a presumably Welsh plantation owner. My mother chose my first name from a dictionary of girls’ names. “It didn’t sound like Edna or Myrtle,” she says, as though that explains anything. I have two mostly Cherokee grandparents. There’s a Scottish great-grandfather, a French-Canadian great uncle, and a bunch of other relations no one ever talks about. Not one of them left recipes. Of course the ancestors who have had the most tangible influence on my place in the world were probably the West Africans, and I can tell you right off that I haven’t the faintest idea what they do for hors d’oeuvres in West Africa (although I have this Senegalese friend who always serves the loveliest, poufiest little fish mousse things in puff pastries that look, well, totally French).

3 Ethnic recipes throw me into the same sort of **quandary** as that proposed “interracial” box on the census form: the concept seems so historically vague, so cheerfully open-ended, as to be virtually meaningless. Everyone I know has at least three different kinds of cheese in their fondue. I suppose I could serve myself up as something like Tragic Mulatta Souffle, except that I’ve never gotten the hang of souffles. (Too much fussing, too little reward.) So as far as this world’s concerned, I’ve always thought of myself as just plain black. Let’s face it: however much my categories get jumbled when I hang out at my favorite kosher sushi spot, it’s the little black core of me that moves through the brave new world of Manhattan as I hail a cab, rent an apartment, and apply for a job.

4 Although it’s true, I never have tried hailing a cab as an *ethnic*...

5 So let me see. My father is from the state of Georgia. When he cooks, which is not often, the results are distinctly Southern. His specialties are pork chops and pies; he makes the good-luck black-eyed peas on New Year’s. His recipes are definitely black in a regional sense, since most blacks in the United States until recently lived in the Southeast. He loves pig. He uses lard.

6 My mother’s family is also black, but relentlessly steeped in the New England tradition of hard-winter cuisine. One of my earliest memories is of my mother

pluralism: state in which people of different backgrounds live in society together but hold on to their unique traditions and customs

linguistic: relating to language

My Notes

quandary: dilemma; difficulty

Exploring Cultural Identity

My Notes

piccalilli: relish of pickled vegetables

primeval: ancient or old

faux: fake

culmination: conclusion

gastronomic: relating to cooking
palate: appetite

borrowing my father’s screwdriver so she could pry open a box of salt cod. In those days, cod came in wooden boxes, nailed shut, and you really had to hack around the edges to loosen the lid. Cod-from-a-box had to be soaked overnight. The next day you mixed it with boiled potatoes and fried it in Crisco. Then you served it with baked beans in a little brown pot, with salt pork and molasses. There was usually some shredded cabbage as well, with carrots for color. And of course there was **piccalilli**—every good homemaker had piccalilli on hand. Oh, and hot rolls served with homemade Concord grape jelly. Or maybe just brown bread and butter. These were the staples of Saturday night supper.

7 We had baked chicken on Sundays, boiled chicken other days. My mother has recipes for how to boil a chicken: a whole range of them, with and without bay leaf, onions, potatoes, carrots. With boiled chicken, life can never be dull.

8 The truth is we liked watermelon in our family. But the only times we ate it—well, those were secret moments, private moments, guilty, even shameful moments, never unburdened by the thought of what might happen if our white neighbors saw us enjoying the **primeval** fruit. We were always on display when it came to things stereotypical. Fortunately, my mother was never handier in the kitchen than when under political pressure. She would take that odd, thin-necked implement known as a melon-baller and gouge out innocent pink circlets and serve them to us, like little mounds of **faux** sorbet, in fluted crystal goblets. The only time we used those goblets was to disguise watermelon, in case someone was peering idly through the windows, lurking about in racial judgment.

9 I don’t remember my parents having many dinner parties, but for those special occasions requiring actual hors d’oeuvres, there were crackers and cream cheese, small sandwiches with the crusts cut off, Red Devil deviled ham with mayonnaise and chopped dill pickles. And where there were hors d’oeuvres, there had to be dessert on the other end to balance things out. Slices of home-made cake and punch. “Will you take coffee or tea?” my mother would ask shyly, at the proud **culmination** of such a meal. . . .

QUADROON SURPRISE

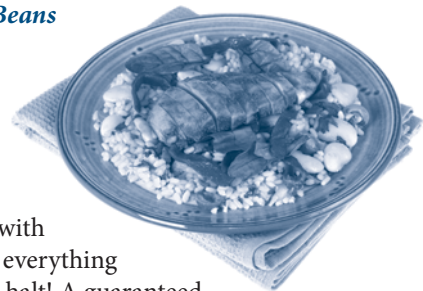
10 Some have said that too much salt cod too early in life hobbles the culinary senses forever. I have faith that this is not the case, and that any disadvantage can be overcome with time and a little help from Williams-Sonoma. Having grown up and learned that you are what you eat, I have worked to broaden my horizons and cultivate my tastes. I entertain global **gastronomic** aspirations, and my **palate** knows no bounds. After all, if Aunt Jemima and Uncle Ben¹ can Just Get Over It, who am I to cling to the limitations of the past? Yes, I have learned to love my inner ethnic child. And so, I leave you with a recipe for the Twenty-first Century:

Chicken with Spanish Rice and Not-Just-Black Beans

- **Boil the chicken**
- **Boil the rice**
- **Boil the beans**

11 Throw in as many exotic-sounding spices and mysterious roots as you can lay your hands on—go on, use your imagination!—and garnish with those fashionable little wedges of lime that make everything look vaguely Thai. Watch those taxis screech to a halt! A guaranteed crowd-pleaser that can be reheated or rehashed generation after generation.

12 Coffee? Tea?



¹ African American advertising icons that some consider to be offensive.

Exploring Cultural Identity

My Notes

Language & Writer's Craft: Formal and Informal Voice

Though formal and informal voice are both effective and correct writing styles, each is characterized differently.

Formal (academic) voice: main point(s) are clearly introduced in logical order with obvious transitions; uses limited emotion and depicts confidence and expertise; avoids contractions, abbreviations, and slang; arguments are supported by evidence; longer and more complex sentences are preferred; may contain technical language and cited facts or statistics

Example: “Children begin to develop a sense of identity as individuals and as members of groups from their earliest interactions with others (McAdoo, 1993; Sheets, 1999a). One of the most basic types of identity is ethnic identity, which entails an awareness of one’s membership in a social group that has a common culture. The common culture may be marked by a shared language, history, geography, and (frequently) physical characteristics (Fishman, 1989; Sheets, 1999a).”

Informal voice: similar to spoken conversation in structure; displays emotion and acknowledges difficulty of subject; may use contractions, abbreviations, or slang; arguments are supported by personal example; may use short and simple sentences; vocabulary is conversational more than technical

Example: “My last name is from a presumably Welsh plantation owner. My mother chose my first name from a dictionary of girls’ names. ‘It didn’t sound like Edna or Myrtle,’ she says, as though that explains anything. I have two mostly Cherokee grandparents. There’s a Scottish great-grandfather, a French-Canadian great uncle, and a bunch of other relations no one ever talks about. Not one of them left recipes. Of course the ancestors who have had the most tangible influence on my place in the world were probably the West Africans, and I can tell you right off that I haven’t the faintest idea what they do for hors d’oeuvres in West Africa (although I have this Senegalese friend who always serves the loveliest, poufiest little fish mousse things in puff pastries that look, well, totally French).”

PRACTICE Referencing the characteristics of formal and informal voice, use the My Notes space to notate the characteristics of formal voice found in the first example and the characteristics of informal voice found in the second example. Choose one of the above examples, and rewrite it using the opposite voice.

Check Your Understanding

In your Reader/Writer Notebook create a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the two passages in this activity. What does each text say about cultural identity? How does each text convey that message?

Writing to Sources: Explanatory Text

Use your notes as the basis of an essay that examines the similarities and differences between the formation of cultural identity as analyzed by academics and as experienced by individuals. Draw on both selections as you explore this issue. Be sure to:

- Use a formal, academic voice to examine the issues.
- Begin with a clear thesis that states your position; include clear transitions between points; and include a concluding statement.
- Effectively incorporate multiple direct quotations from both texts, introducing and punctuating them correctly.

Group Discussion: This is the first of many opportunities you will have to participate in a collaborative discussion with your peers about the concept of cultural identity. Choose a characteristic of culture and use it to explain your cultural identity to your group. Remember to follow the Class Norms during the discussion.



INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Respond

In your independent reading, consider people’s awareness of how their cultural identity is shaped—through ethnicity, family history, and/or geographical location. Note in your journal specific texts that cause you to reflect on how your own cultural identity has been shaped.

My Notes

LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Think-Pair-Share

Literary Terms

Syntax refers to the arrangement of words and the order of grammatical elements in a sentence or the way in which words are put together to make meaningful elements, such as phrases, clauses, and sentences.

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Identify different types of phrases and use them in writing.
- Revise writing to include phrases and parenthetical expressions.

Understanding Phrases

Consider sounds as the building blocks of language. Combined, they create words, or diction. When writers move those words around, they are playing with **syntax**. One essential element of syntax is the phrase. Understanding what a phrase is, how to punctuate it, and when to use it in your writing will help you make informed decisions about your syntax.

Phrases clarify meaning by adding information or by describing the subject, the action, or other nouns in the sentence. Standing alone, a phrase is not a complete sentence. Three types of phrases include *gerund phrases*, *participial phrases*, and *infinitive phrases*. Review their definitions in your Grammar Handbook, marking the text to highlight their function and the proper method of punctuating them within a sentence.

Highlight the gerund, participial, or infinitive phrases in the following sentences from the texts from this unit. Note the punctuation of each phrase. Then label the type of phrase.

1. “able to sit in a paneled office/drafting memos in smooth English,/able to order in fluent Spanish/at a Mexican restaurant ...”—Pat Mora, “Legal Alien”
2. “They rode away through our large garden, still bright green from the rains, and we turned back into the twilight of the house and the sound of fans whispering in every room.”—Santha Rau, “By Any Other Name”
3. “It felt like worms and toads and slimy things were crawling out of my chest, but it also felt good, that this awful side of me had surfaced, at last.”—Amy Tan, “Two Kinds”
4. “Impressed with her, they worshiped the well-turned phrase, the cute shape, the scalding humor that erupted like bubbles in lye.”—Alice Walker, “Everyday Use”
5. “The lessons were mostly concerned with reading and writing...”—Santha Rau, “By Any Other Name”

My Notes

Parenthetical Expressions

Parenthetical expressions can be effectively used to add voice to writing as they add editorial comments to the text. When you incorporate parenthetical expressions in your writing, set them apart from the rest of the sentence by placing commas around them. Practice writing your own sentences by emulating the style of the examples below.

1. "The headmistress had been in India, *I suppose*, fifteen years or so, but she still smiled her helpless inability to cope with Indian names."—Santha Rau, "By Any Other Name"

Practice:

2. "I tell you, I had to go to the dictionary."—Patricia Williams, "Ethnic Hash"

Practice:

Check Your Understanding

Revisit a piece of your writing from this unit and revise it to include various types of phrases, or revisit a reading passage from this unit to identify phrases that might be present. Highlight and label the phrases you find.

Learning Target

- Analyze how two characters interact and develop over the course of a text to explain how conflict is used to advance the theme.

Preview

In this activity, you will read an excerpt from a novel and analyze the **conflict** between two characters.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- As you read Amy Tan’s “Two Kinds,” look for evidence of conflict. Mark the text for the reasons for the conflict and how it is resolved.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Tan was born in California in 1952, several years after her parents left their native China. A writer from a very young age, Tan experienced difficulty early in life resulting from the untimely deaths of her father and brother, a rebellious adolescence, and the expectations of others. Educated at a Switzerland boarding school as well as at San Jose State and Berkeley, Tan ultimately became a writer of fiction. She has written numerous award-winning novels, including her most famous *The Joy Luck Club*, from which “Two Kinds” is an excerpt. Tan resides in San Francisco with her husband and two dogs, Bubba and Lilli.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Discussion Groups, Marking the Text, Brainstorming, graphic organizer, Questioning the Text

Literary Terms

A **conflict** is a struggle or problem in a story. The central conflict of a fictional text sets the story in motion. An *internal conflict* occurs when a character struggles between opposing needs or desires or emotions within his or her own mind. An *external conflict* occurs when a character struggles against an outside force. This force may be another character, a societal expectation, or something in the physical world.

Novel Excerpt

Two Kinds

by Amy Tan

Chunk 1

1 My mother believed you could be anything you wanted to be in America. You could open a restaurant. You could work for the government and get good retirement. You could buy a house with almost no money down. You could become rich. You could become instantly famous.

2 “Of course, you can be a prodigy, too,” my mother told me when I was nine. “You can be best anything. What does Auntie Lindo know? Her daughter, she is only best tricky.”

My Notes

“Two Kinds” of Cultural Identity

My Notes

3 America was where all my mother’s hopes lay. She had come to San Francisco in 1949 after losing everything in China: her mother and father, her home, her first husband, and two daughters, twin baby girls. But she never looked back with regret. Things could get better in so many ways.

4 We didn’t immediately pick the right kind of prodigy. At first my mother thought I could be a Chinese Shirley Temple. We’d watch Shirley’s old movies on TV as though they were training films. My mother would poke my arm and say, “*Ni kan*. You watch.” And I would see Shirley tapping her feet, or singing a sailor song, or pursing her lips into a very round O while saying “Oh, my goodness.” “*Ni kan*,” my mother said, as Shirley’s eyes flooded with tears. “You already know how. Don’t need talent for crying!”

5 Soon after my mother got this idea about Shirley Temple, she took me to the beauty training school in the Mission District and put me in the hands of a student who could barely hold the scissors without shaking. Instead of getting big fat curls, I emerged with an uneven mass of crinkly black fuzz. My mother dragged me off to the bathroom and tried to wet down my hair.

6 “You look like a Negro Chinese,” she lamented, as if I had done this on purpose.

7 The instructor of the beauty training school had to lop off these soggy clumps to make my hair even again. “Peter Pan is very popular these days” the instructor assured my mother. I now had bad hair the length of a boy’s, with curly bangs that hung at a slant two inches above my eyebrows. I liked the haircut, and it made me actually look forward to my future fame.

8 In fact, in the beginning I was just as excited as my mother, maybe even more so. I pictured this prodigy part of me as many different images, and I tried each one on for size. I was a dainty ballerina girl standing by the curtain, waiting to hear the music that would send me floating on my tiptoes. I was like the Christ child lifted out of the straw manger, crying with holy **indignity**. I was Cinderella stepping from her pumpkin carriage with sparkly cartoon music filling the air.

9 In all of my imaginings I was filled with a sense that I would soon become perfect: My mother and father would adore me. I would be beyond **reproach**. I would never feel the need to sulk, or to clamor for anything. But sometimes the prodigy in me became impatient. “If you don’t hurry up and get me out of here, I’m disappearing for good,” it warned. “And then you’ll always be nothing.”

Chunk 2

10 Every night after dinner my mother and I would sit at the Formica topped kitchen table. She would present new tests, taking her examples from stories of amazing children that she read in *Ripley’s Believe It or Not* or *Good Housekeeping*, *Reader’s Digest*, or any of a dozen other magazines she kept in a pile in our bathroom. My mother got these magazines from people whose houses she cleaned. And since she cleaned many houses each week, we had a great assortment. She would look through them all, searching for stories about remarkable children.

11 The first night she brought out a story about a three-year-old boy who knew the capitals of all the states and even most of the European countries. A teacher was quoted as saying that the little boy could also pronounce the names of the foreign cities correctly. “What’s the capital of Finland?” my mother asked me, looking at the story.

indignity: something that happens that causes insult or embarrassment

reproach: criticism

12 All I knew was the capital of California, because Sacramento was the name of the street we lived on in Chinatown. “Nairobi!” I guessed, saying the most foreign word I could think of. She checked to see if that might be one way to pronounce *Helsinki* before showing me the answer.

13 The tests got harder—multiplying numbers in my head, finding the queen of hearts in a deck of cards, trying to stand on my head without using my hands, predicting the daily temperatures in Los Angeles, New York, and London. One night I had to look at a page from the Bible for three minutes and then report everything I could remember. “Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance and . . . that’s all I remember, Ma,” I said.

14 And after seeing, once again, my mother’s disappointed face, something inside me began to die. I hated the tests, the raised hopes and failed expectations. Before going to bed that night I looked in the mirror above the bathroom sink, and I saw only my face staring back—and understood that it would always be this ordinary face—I began to cry. Such a sad, ugly girl! I made high-pitched noises like a crazed animal, trying to scratch out the face in the mirror.

15 And then I saw what seemed to be the prodigy side of me—a face I had never seen before. I looked at my reflection, blinking so that I could see more clearly. The girl staring back at me was angry, powerful. She and I were the same. I had new thoughts, willful thoughts—or, rather, thoughts filled with lots of won’ts. I won’t let her change me, I promised myself. I won’t be what I’m not.

16 So now when my mother presented her tests, I performed **listlessly**, my head propped on one arm. I pretended to be bored. And I was. I got so bored that I started counting the **bellows** of the foghorns out on the bay while my mother drilled me in other areas. The sound was comforting and reminded me of the cow jumping over the moon. And the next day I played a game with myself, seeing if my mother would give up on me before eight bellows. After a while I usually counted only one bellow, maybe two at most. At last she was beginning to give up hope.

Chunk 3

17 Two or three months went by without any mention of my being a prodigy. And then one day my mother was watching the *Ed Sullivan Show* on TV. The TV was old and the sound kept shorting out. Every time my mother got halfway up from the sofa to adjust the set, the sound would come back on and Sullivan would be talking. As soon as she sat down, Sullivan would go silent again. She got up—the TV broke into loud piano music. She sat down—silence. Up and down, back and forth, quiet and loud. It was like a stiff, embraceless dance between her and the TV set. Finally, she stood by the set with her hand on the sound dial.

18 She seemed entranced by the music, a frenzied little piano piece with a **mesmerizing** quality, which alternated between quick, playful passages and teasing, lilting ones.

19 “*Ni kan,*” my mother said, calling me over with hurried hand gestures. “Look here.”

My Notes

listlessly: without energy or enthusiasm

bellows: deep, low sounds

mesmerizing: spellbinding

GRAMMAR & USAGE

Syntax

Effective syntax enhances the meaning and contributes to the tone of a piece of writing.

Notice the arrangement of words in the sentences beginning with “She got up . . .” through the rest of the first paragraph in Chunk 3. The short, abrupt sentences affect the reader’s perception of the mother. She appears comical, almost like a mechanical toy.

Now look back at the underlined sentence in Chunk 2. What feeling or attitude does this syntax convey? Look for other longer, more complex sentences in the story. Describe how the syntax helps the author express more complicated ideas and feelings.

“Two Kinds” of Cultural Identity



My Notes

20 I could see why my mother was fascinated by the music. It was being pounded out by a little Chinese girl, about nine years old, with a Peter Pan haircut. The girl had the sauciness of a Shirley Temple. She was proudly modest, like a proper Chinese Child. And she also did a fancy sweep of a curtsy, so that the fluffy skirt of her white dress cascaded to the floor like petals of a large carnation.

21 In spite of these warning signs, I wasn't worried. Our family had no piano and we couldn't afford to buy one, let alone reams of sheet music and piano lessons. So I could be generous in my comments when my mother badmouthed the little girl on TV.

22 “Play note right, but doesn't sound good!” my mother complained. “No singing sound.”

23 “What are you picking on her for?” I said carelessly. “She's pretty good. Maybe she's not the best, but she's trying hard.” I knew almost immediately that I would be sorry I had said that.

24 “Just like you,” she said. “Not the best. Because you not trying.” She gave a little huff as she let go of the sound dial and sat down on the sofa.

25 The little Chinese girl sat down also, to play an encore of “Anitra's Tanz,” by Grieg. I remember the song, because later on I had to learn how to play it.

26 Three days after watching the *Ed Sullivan Show* my mother told me what my schedule would be for piano lessons and piano practice. She had talked to Mr. Chong, who lived on the first floor of our apartment building. Mr. Chong was a retired piano teacher, and my mother had traded housecleaning services for weekly lessons and a piano for me to practice on every day, two hours a day, from four until six.

27 When my mother told me this, I felt as though I had been sent to hell. I whined, and then kicked my foot a little when I couldn't stand it anymore.

28 “Why don't you like me the way I am?” I cried. “I'm *not* a genius! I can't play the piano. And even if I could, I wouldn't go on TV if you paid me a million dollars!”

29 My mother slapped me. “Who ask you to be genius?” she shouted. “Only ask you be your best. For you sake. You think I want you to be genius? Hnnh! What for! Who ask you!”

30 “So ungrateful,” I heard her mutter in Chinese, “If she had as much talent as she has temper, she'd be famous now.”

Chunk 4

31 Mr. Chong, whom I secretly nicknamed Old Chong, was very strange, always tapping his fingers to the silent music of an invisible orchestra. He looked ancient in my eyes. He had lost most of the hair on the top of his head, and he wore thick glasses and had eyes that always looked tired. But he must have been younger than I thought, since he lived with his mother and was not yet married.

32 I met Old Lady Chong once, and that was enough. She had a peculiar smell, like a baby that had done something in its pants, and her fingers felt like a dead person's, like an old peach I once found in the back of the refrigerator: its skin just slid off the flesh when I picked it up.

33 I soon found out why Old Chong had retired from teaching piano. He was deaf. “Like Beethoven!” he shouted to me: We’re both listening only in our head!” And he would start to conduct his frantic silent sonatas.

34 Our lessons went like this. He would open the book and point to different things, explaining their purpose: “Key! Treble! Bass! No sharps or flats! So this is C major! Listen now and play after me!”

35 And then he would play the C scale a few times, a simple chord, and then, as if inspired by an old unreachable itch, he would gradually add more notes and running **trills** and a pounding bass until the music was really something quite grand.

36 I would play after him, the simple scale, the simple chord, and then just play some nonsense that sounded like a rat running up and down on top of garbage cans. Old Chong would smile and applaud and say “Very good! But now you must learn to keep time!”

37 So that’s how I discovered that Old Chong’s eyes were too slow to keep up with the wrong notes I was playing. He went through the motions in half time. To help me keep rhythm, he stood behind me and pushed down on my right shoulder for every beat. He balanced pennies on top of my wrists so that I would keep them still as I slowly played scales and **arpeggios**. He had me curve my hand around an apple and keep that shape when playing chords. He marched stiffly to show me how to make each finger dance up and down, staccato, like an obedient little soldier.

38 He taught me all these things, and that was how I also learned I could be lazy and get away with mistakes, lots of mistakes. If I hit the wrong notes because I hadn’t practiced enough, I never corrected myself, I just kept playing in rhythm. And Old Chong kept conducting his own private **reverie**.

39 So maybe I never really gave myself a fair chance. I did pick up the basics pretty quickly, and I might have become a good pianist at the young age. But I was so determined not to try, not to be anybody different, and I learned to play only the most ear-splitting preludes, the most discordant hymns.

40 Over the next year I practiced like this, dutifully in my own way. And then one day I heard my mother and her friend Lindo Jong both after church, and I was leaning against a brick wall, wearing a dress with stiff white petticoats. Auntie Lindo’s daughter, Waverly, who was my age, was standing farther down the wall, about five feet away. We had grown up together and shared all the closeness of two sisters, squabbling over crayons and dolls. In other words, for the most part, we hated each other. I thought she was snotty. Waverly Jong had gained a certain amount of fame as “Chinatown’s Littlest Chinese Chess Champion.”

41 “She bring home too many trophy.” Auntie Lindo lamented that Sunday. “All day she play chess. All day I have no time do nothing but dust off her winnings.” She threw a scolding look at Waverly, who pretended not to see her.

42 “You lucky you don’t have this problem,” Auntie Lindo said with a sigh to my mother.

43 And my mother squared her shoulders and bragged: “Our problem worsen than yours. If we ask Jing-mei wash dish, she hear nothing but music. It’s like you can’t stop this natural talent.” And right then I was determined to put a stop to her foolish pride.



trills: the sound produced when two notes that are close together are pressed

arpeggio: a chord in which notes are played individually instead of simultaneously

reverie: daydream

My Notes

“Two Kinds” of Cultural Identity



WORD CONNECTIONS

Cognates

Many words in English are the same in Spanish, such as *piano*, *honor*, and *natural*. Other words are similar, such as *fame-fama*, *purpose-propósito*, *music-música*, *reflection-reflexión*, and *talent-talento*. Look for these cognates as you read.

My Notes

Chunk 5

44 A few weeks later Old Chong and my mother conspired to have me play in a talent show that was to be held in the church hall. By then my parents had saved up enough to buy me a secondhand piano, a black Wurlitzer spinet with a scarred bench. It was the showpiece of our living room.

45 For the talent show I was to play a piece called “Pleading Child,” from Schumann’s *Scenes From Childhood*. It was a simple, moody piece that sounded more difficult than it was. I was supposed to memorize the whole thing. But I dawdled over it, playing a few bars and then cheating, looking up to see what notes followed. I never really listened to what I was playing. I daydreamed about being somewhere else, about being someone else.

46 The part I liked to practice best was the fancy curtsy: right foot out, touch the rose on the carpet with a pointed foot, sweep to the side, bend left leg, look up, and smile.

47 My parents invited all the couples from their social club to witness my debut. Auntie Lindo and Uncle Tin were there. Waverly and her two older brothers had also come. The first two rows were filled with children either younger or older than I was. The littlest ones got to go first. They recited simple nursery rhymes, squawked out tunes on miniature violins, and twirled hula hoops in pink ballet tutus, and when they bowed or curtsied, the audience would sigh in unison, “Awww,” and then clap enthusiastically.

48 When my turn came, I was very confident. I remember my childish excitement. It was as if I knew, without a doubt, that the prodigy side of me really did exist. I had no fear whatsoever, no nervousness. I remember thinking, This is it! This is it! I looked out over the audience, at my mother’s blank face, my father’s yawn, Auntie Lindo’s stiff-lipped smile, Waverly’s sulky expression. I had on a white dress, layered with sheets of lace, and a pink bow in my Peter Pan haircut. As I sat down, I envisioned people jumping to their feet and Ed Sullivan rushing up to introduce me to everyone on TV.

49 And I started to play. Everything was so beautiful. I was so caught up in how lovely I looked that I wasn’t worried about how I would sound. So I was surprised when I hit the first wrong note. And then I hit another and another. A chill started at the top of my head and began to trickle down. Yet I couldn’t stop playing, as though my hands were bewitched. I kept thinking my fingers would adjust themselves back, like a train switching to the right track. I played this strange jumble through to the end, the sour notes staying with me all the way.

50 When I stood up, I discovered my legs were shaking. Maybe I had just been nervous, and the audience, like Old Chong had seen me go through the right motions and had not heard anything wrong at all. I swept my right foot out, went down on my knee, looked up, and smiled. The room was quiet, except for Old Chong, who was beaming and shouting “Bravo! Bravo! Well done!” By then I saw my mother’s face, her stricken face. The audience clapped weakly, and I walked back to my chair, with my whole face quivering as I tried not to cry. I heard a little boy whisper loudly to his mother, “That was awful,” and the mother whispered, “Well, she certainly tried.”

51 And now I realized how many people were in the audience—the whole world, it seemed. I was aware of eyes burning into my back. I felt the shame of my mother and father as they sat stiffly through the rest of the show.

52 We could have escaped during intermission. Pride and some strange sense of honor must have anchored my parents to their chairs. And so we watched it all: the eighteen-year-old boy with a fake moustache who did a magic show and juggled flaming hoops while riding a unicycle. The breasted girl with white makeup who sang an aria from *Madama Butterfly* and got an honorable mention. And the eleven-year-old boy who won first prize playing a tricky violin song that sounded like a busy bee.

53 After the show the Hsus, the Jongs, and the St. Clairs from the Joy Luck Club, came up to my mother and father.

54 “Lots of talented kids,” Auntie Lindo said vaguely, smiling broadly. “That was somethin’ else,” my father said, and I wondered if he was referring to me in a humorous way, or whether he even remembered what I had done.

55 Waverly looked at me and shrugged her shoulders. “You aren’t a genius like me,” she said matter-of-factly. And if I hadn’t felt so bad, I would have pulled her braids and punched her stomach.

56 But my mother’s expression was what devastated me: a quiet, blank look that said she had lost everything. I felt the same way, and everybody seemed now to be coming up, like gawkers at the scene of an accident to see what parts were actually missing.

Chunk 6

57 When we got on the bus to go home, my father was humming the busy-bee tune and my mother kept silent. I kept thinking she wanted to wait until we got home before shouting at me. But when my father unlocked the door to our apartment, my mother walked in and went straight to the back, into the bedroom. No accusations. No blame. And in a way, I felt disappointed. I had been waiting for her to start shouting, so that I could shout back and cry and blame her for all my misery.

58 I had assumed that my talent-show **fiasco** meant that I would never have to play the piano again. But two days later, after school, my mother came out of the kitchen and saw me watching TV.

59 “Four clock,” she reminded me, as if it were any other day. I was stunned, as though she were asking me to go through the talent-show torture again. I planted myself more squarely in front of the TV.

60 “Turn off TV,” she called from the kitchen five minutes later. I didn’t budge. And then I decided, I didn’t have to do what mother said anymore. I wasn’t her slave. This wasn’t China. I had listened to her before, and look what happened. She was the stupid one.

61 She came out of the kitchen and stood in the arched entryway of the living room. “Four clock,” she said once again, louder.

62 “I’m not going to play anymore,” I said **nonchalantly**. “Why should I? I’m not a genius.”

63 She stood in front of the TV. I saw that her chest was heaving up and down in an angry way.

64 “No!” I said, and I now felt stronger, as if my true self had finally emerged. So this was what had been inside me all along.

GRAMMAR & USAGE Syntax

Skilled writers take poetic license and break rules of proper syntax. Why do you think Tan uses fragments to describe the acts in the show?

My Notes

fiasco: disaster
nonchalantly: calmly



“Two Kinds” of Cultural Identity

My Notes

65 “No! I won’t!” I screamed. She snapped off the TV, yanked me by the arm and pulled me off the floor. She was frighteningly strong, half pulling, half carrying me towards the piano as I kicked the throw rugs under my feet. She lifted me up onto the hard bench. I was sobbing by now, looking at her bitterly. Her chest was heaving even more and her mouth was open, smiling crazily as if she were pleased that I was crying.

66 “You want me to be something that I’m not!” I sobbed. “I’ll never be the kind of daughter you want me to be!”

67 “Only two kinds of daughters,” she shouted in Chinese. “Those who are obedient and those who follow their own mind! Only one kind of daughter can live in this house. Obedient daughter!”

68 “Then I wish I weren’t your daughter, I wish you weren’t my mother,” I shouted. As I said these things I got scared. It felt like worms and toads and slimy things were crawling out of my chest, but it also felt good, that this awful side of me had surfaced, at last.

69 “Too late to change this,” my mother said shrilly.

70 And I could sense her anger rising to its breaking point. I wanted to see it spill over. And that’s when I remembered the babies she had lost in China, the ones we never talked about. “Then I wish I’d never been born!” I shouted. “I wish I were dead! Like them.”

71 It was as if I had said magic words. Alakazam!—her face went blank, her mouth closed, her arms went slack, and she backed out of the room, stunned, as if she were blowing away like a small brown leaf, thin, brittle, lifeless.

Chunk 7

72 It was not the only disappointment my mother felt in me. In the years that followed, I failed her many times, each time asserting my will, my right to fall short of expectations. I didn’t get straight As. I didn’t become class president. I didn’t get into Stanford. I dropped out of college.

73 For unlike my mother, I did not believe I could be anything I wanted to be, I could only be me.

74 And for all those years we never talked about the disaster at the recital or my terrible declarations afterward at the piano bench. Neither of us talked about it again, as if it were a betrayal that was now unspeakable. So I never found a way to ask her why she had hoped for something so large that failure was inevitable.

75 And even worse, I never asked her about what frightened me the most: Why had she given up hope? For after our struggle at the piano, she never mentioned my playing again. The lessons stopped. The lid to the piano was closed, shutting out the dust, my misery, and her dreams.

76 So she surprised me. A few years ago she offered to give me the piano, for my thirtieth birthday. I had not played in all those years. I saw the offer as a sign of forgiveness, a tremendous burden removed. “Are you sure?” I asked shyly. “I mean, won’t you and Dad miss it?” “No, this your piano,” she said firmly. “Always your piano. You only one can play.”

77 “Well, I probably can’t play anymore,” I said. “It’s been years.” “You pick up fast,” my mother said, as if she knew this was certain. “You have natural talent. You could be a genius if you want to.” “No, I couldn’t.” “You just not trying,” my mother said. And she was neither angry nor sad. She said it as if announcing a fact that could never be disproved. “Take it,” she said.

“Two Kinds” of Cultural Identity

My Notes

Second Read

- Reread the novel excerpt to answer these text-dependent questions.
 - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
1. **Key Ideas and Details:** What is the relationship between Jing-mei and her mother at the start of the narrative? Cite textual evidence that supports your response.
 2. **Key Ideas and Details:** In paragraph 15, what does Jing-mei discover about herself? How does this help develop the theme of the selection?
 3. **Key Ideas and Details:** What conflicts are apparent in chunk 3? What are the reasons for the conflicts?
 4. **Key Ideas and Details:** In chunk 4, how does the relationship between Jing-mei’s mother and Auntie Lindo contribute to the conflict between Jing-mei and her mother in the story?
 5. **Key Ideas and Details:** How does the narrator’s tone shift during chunk 5?

6. **Key Ideas and Details:** Reread the last paragraph of chunk 5. Colons and the word *but* often signal a shift in literature. What shift is happening here? How is it related to the central conflict in the story?
7. **Key Ideas and Details:** To what is “Two Kinds” referring to in paragraph 67? What conflicting perspectives on cultural identity are evident in this scene?
8. **Craft and Structure:** How does the sentence beginning “For unlike my mother, I did not . . .” connect to the first paragraph of the story? Does this suggest that the conflict in the story is primarily internal or external?
9. **Key Ideas and Details:** What is significant about Jing-mei’s discovery in the final paragraphs? What does it reveal about her perspective now? Does this bring resolution to the conflict(s) in the story or not?

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Analyze a particular point of view regarding a cultural experience expressed in literature and art.
- Compare and contrast the representation of a subject in different media.

Preview

In this activity, you will analyze multiple media—a film clip, a biography, a painting, and a poem—to compare and contrast perceptions of cultural identity.

Viewing a Film

In preparation for a discussion on the life, art, and culture of Frida Kahlo, watch a short PBS film clip, *The Life and Times of Frida*. Take notes on the key ideas and details that help you understand Kahlo's life, art, and cultural identity.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- As you read a brief introductory excerpt from Hayden Herrera's biography, *Frida, a Biography of Frida Kahlo*, use metacognitive markers to mark the text. As you mark the text, focus on the details emphasized that help you understand Kahlo's life, art, and cultural identity.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Close Reading,
Metacognitive Markers,
Discussion Groups, OPTIC

My Notes

Biography

From *Frida, a Biography of*

Frida Kahlo

by Hayden Herrera

1 In April, 1953, less than a year before her death at the age of forty-seven, Frida Kahlo had her first major exhibition of paintings in her native Mexico. By that time her health had so deteriorated that no one expected her to attend. But at 8:00 P.M., just after the doors of Mexico City's Gallery of Contemporary Art opened to the public, an ambulance drew up. The artist, dressed in her favorite Mexican costume, was carried on a hospital stretcher to her four-poster bed, which had been installed in the gallery that afternoon. The bed was bedecked as she liked it, with photographs of her husband, the great muralist Diego Rivera, and of her political heroes. Papier-mache skeletons dangled from the canopy, and a mirror affixed to the underside of the canopy reflected her joyful though ravaged face. One by one, two hundred friends and admirers greeted Frida Kahlo, then formed a circle around the bed and sang Mexican ballads with her until well past midnight.



Two Perspectives on Cultural Identity

encapsulates: sums up

gallantry: courage

haute couture: high fashion; expensive and fashionable clothing

My Notes

transmuted: transformed
tempered: made less severe

rhetoric: language

2 The occasion **encapsulates** as much as it culminates this extraordinary woman's career. It testifies, in fact, to many of the qualities that marked Kahlo as a person and as a painter: her **gallantry** and indomitable *alegria* in the face of physical suffering; her insistence on surprise and specificity; her peculiar love of spectacle as a mask to preserve privacy and personal dignity. Above all, the opening of her exhibition dramatized Frida Kahlo's central subject—herself. Most of the some two hundred paintings she produced in her abbreviated career were self-portraits...

3 She dressed in flamboyant clothes, greatly preferring floor-length native Mexican costumes to **haute couture**. Wherever she went she caused a sensation. One New Yorker remembers that children used to follow her in the streets. "Where's the circus?" they would ask; Frida Kahlo did not mind a bit... Frida flaunted her *alegria* the way a peacock spreads its tail, but it camouflaged a deep sadness and inwardness, even self-obsession.

4 "I paint my own reality," she said. "The only thing I know is that I paint because I need to, and I paint always whatever passes through my head, without any other consideration." What passed through Frida Kahlo's head and into her art was some of the most original and dramatic imagery of the twentieth century. Painting herself bleeding, weeping, cracked open, she **transmuted** her pain into art with remarkable frankness **tempered** by humor and fantasy. Always specific and personal, deep-probing rather than comprehensive in scope, Frida's autobiography in paint has peculiar intensity and strength—a strength that can hold the viewer in an uncomfortably tight grip.

5 The majority of her paintings are small—twelve by fifteen inches is not unusual; their scale suits the intimacy of her subject matter. With very small sable brushes, which she kept immaculately clean, she would carefully lay down delicate strokes of color, bringing the image into precise focus, making fantasy persuasive through the **rhetoric** of realism...

6 In the fall of 1977, the Mexican government turned over the largest and most prestigious galleries in the Palace of Fine Arts to a retrospective exhibition of Frida Kahlo's works. It was a strange sort of homage, for it seemed to celebrate the exotic personality and story of the artist rather more than it honored her art. The grand, high-ceilinged rooms were dominated by huge blow-up photographs of incidents in Frida's life, which made the jewel-like paintings look almost like punctuation points.

7 The art—the legend Frida herself had created—won out in the end, however. Because her paintings were so tiny in relation to the photographs and to the exhibition space, the spectator had to stand within a few feet of each one to focus on it at all. And at that proximity their strange magnetism exerted its pull. Taken from separate, poignant moments in her life, each was like a smothered cry, a nugget of emotion so dense that one felt it might explode...

Second Read

- Reread the biography to answer these text-dependent questions.
 - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
1. **Key Ideas and Details:** Based on details in paragraph 1, what inference can you make about Frida Kahlo's character and personality?
 2. **Craft and Structure:** Using context clues from paragraphs 2 and 3, determine the meaning of the word *alegria* as it applies to Kahlo's personality.
 3. **Craft and Structure:** Choose a line of text that best characterizes the biographer's opinion of Kahlo's art and explain your understanding of the opinion.
 4. **Key Ideas and Details:** In paragraph 6, the author describes an exhibition of Kahlo's work as "a strange sort of homage, for it seemed to celebrate the exotic personality and story of the artist rather more than it honored her art." How does this statement help develop the central idea of the text?
 5. **Key Ideas and Details:** What connection does the author make between the outer Frida and the inner one of her art?
 6. **Craft and Structure:** How does the author develop her ideas about Frida Kahlo and her art?

My Notes

Two Perspectives on Cultural Identity

My Notes

Working from the Text

7. Organize your notes from both texts (the film clip and the informational text) so that you can come to the discussion prepared with well-reasoned, text-based responses to address Kahlo's life, art, and cultural identity.

Group Discussion: What did you learn about Frida Kahlo's life, art, and cultural identity? What details are emphasized in each text to support your interpretation of this artist and how she depicts her cultural identity in her work? In your discussion, be sure to:

- Adhere to the class norms for discussions.
- Present thoughtful, well-reasoned ideas.
- Use textual evidence to support responses to questions or statements.

Writing to Sources: Explanatory Text

Explain how Kahlo expresses her cultural identity in her art, drawing on examples from both sources. In your writing, be sure to do the following:

- Begin with a clear thesis that states your position. Include a clear definition of Kahlo's cultural identity, as you understand it.
- Include direct quotations and specific examples from the texts to support your claims. Introduce and punctuate all quotations correctly.
- Include transitions between points and a concluding statement.
- Vary your syntax, using a variety of sentence types.

Group Discussion: Exchange your response to the Writing Prompt with a peer. Consider the syntactical choices they have made in their writing. What is the effect they are trying to achieve? Were they successful? What suggestions do you have for improvement?

ABOUT THE ARTIST

In 1930 Frida Kahlo's husband, Diego Rivera, received several commissions to paint murals in the United States, causing them to move from Mexico to this country. After three years in the United States, Frida was homesick and longed to return to Mexico. This tension between living in one world and longing to be in another inspired her painting *Self-Portrait on the Borderline Between Mexico and the United States*.



WORD CONNECTIONS

Content Connections

The word *medium* has different meanings in art, communication, science, and math. In art, *medium* refers to the mode or material used to communicate artistic expression, such as watercolor or sculpture. In communication, medium is the system of communication, such as newspapers or television. In science, *medium* can be a substance placed in a habitat, such as a petri dish, to help organisms grow. In math, *medium* is used to describe a middle degree or mean.



Like literature, art is a medium that intends to communicate to an audience. Just as every literary work is a conversation waiting to happen, so is a work of art waiting for a listening audience. As a viewer and reader of art, you must consider the elements of the art before making an interpretation.

Introducing the Strategy: OPTIC

OPTIC is an acronym for overview, parts, title, interrelationships, and conclusion. OPTIC is a strategy for analyzing visual texts—including paintings, photographs, advertisements, maps, charts, or graphs—and developing an interpretation regarding the meaning or theme(s) of the text.

8. Use the OPTIC graphic organizer on the next page to analyze this painting.

My Notes

Two Perspectives on Cultural Identity

	<p>Title of Piece: _____</p> <p>Artist: _____ Type of Artwork: _____</p>
Overview	<p>Look at the artwork for at least 10 seconds. Generate questions that you have about the artwork, such as the following: What is the subject? What strikes you as interesting, odd, etc.? What is happening?</p>
Parts	<p>Look closely at the artwork, making note of important elements and details. Ask additional questions, such as the following: Who are the figures? What is the setting and time period? What symbols are present? What historical information would aid understanding of this piece?</p>
Title	<p>Consider what the title and any written elements of the text suggest about meaning. How does the title relate to what is portrayed?</p>
Interrelationships	<p>Look for connections between and among the title, caption, and the parts of the art. How are the different elements related?</p>
Conclusion	<p>Form a conclusion about the meaning/theme of the text. Remember the questions you asked when you first examined it. Be prepared to support your conclusions with evidence.</p>

Two Perspectives on Cultural Identity



WORD CONNECTIONS

Roots and Affixes

The prefix *bi-* comes from Latin and means “both” or “in two parts.” Why does the author begin and end the poem with words that use the prefix *bi-*? What is she saying about her cultural identity?

My Notes

hyphenated: connected

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pat Mora is a poet, writer, and social activist whose works explore issues of heritage and social inequality. An avid traveler, Mora wrote *Communion* (1991) about her experiences traveling in Cuba, India, and Pakistan. A year later, she published her first children’s book about a beloved aunt who taught her to appreciate her own Mexican American heritage.

Poetry

Legal Alien

by Pat Mora

Bi-lingual, Bi-cultural,
 able to slip from “How’s life?”
 to “Me’stan volviendo loca,”
 able to sit in a paneled office

5 drafting memos in smooth English,
 able to order in fluent Spanish
 at a Mexican restaurant,
 American but **hyphenated**,
 viewed by Anglos as perhaps exotic,

10 perhaps inferior, definitely different,
 viewed by Mexicans as alien,
 (their eyes say, “You may speak
 Spanish but you’re not like me”)
 an American to Mexicans

15 a Mexican to Americans
 a handy token
 sliding back and forth
 between the fringes of both worlds
 by smiling

20 by masking the discomfort
 of being pre-judged
 Bi-laterally.

Two Perspectives on Cultural Identity



INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Recommend

As you learn how people express their cultural identity in your independent reading, pay close attention to photographs and artwork as well as text. Use the OPTIC strategy to analyze how effective these images are in helping you understand cultural identity. Use your analysis to recommend a text to your peers.

My Notes

Working from the Text

15. **Group Discussion:** Share your annotated poem within your small group and address the following questions. Remember to follow the class norms for meaningful group discussions.

Create a diagram to synthesize information about the art and the poem as you answer these questions:

- What is emphasized in the art?
- What is emphasized in the poem?
- What ideas and images are present in the poem but absent from the art?
- What ideas and images are present in the art but absent from the poem?

Writing to Sources: Explanatory Text

Write an explanatory essay that explores the similarities and differences in the cultural identity of the artist Frida Kahlo and the poet Pat Mora, as expressed in the painting and the poem. Be sure to:

- Begin with a clear thesis that states your view of the overall similarities and differences between the cultural identities of the two.
- Include direct quotations and specific examples from both the painting and the poem. Introduce and punctuate all quotations correctly.
- Use a coherent organizational structure and employ transitions effectively to highlight similarities and differences.
- Use an appropriate voice and a variety of phrases to add interest to your writing.

Check Your Understanding

Group Discussion: Now that you have studied art and poetry, choose a medium of interest to you and respond to one of the prompts below. After you complete the prompt, you will participate in a small group discussion and present your piece to the group.

Artistic Prompt: What would a self-portrait say about your perspective on your own cultural identity? Create an artistic work that portrays aspects of this identity. You might revisit your Perception Box work from Activity 1.2 as you consider objects to include in your self-portrait. Also, consider techniques and specific images you can use as evidence to depict and/or symbolize potential conflicts that arise when various aspects of your culture collide. Because artwork, like literature, speaks to an audience, keep in mind the message you want your audience to “read” as they view your work.

Creative Writing Prompt: Write a poem emulating the style of Pat Mora and exploring your perspective on a key component of your cultural identity. Be sure to:

- Focus on a specific culturally based conflict, which may be internal, external, or both.
- Structure the poem to use juxtaposition for effect at least once.
- Use diction, syntax, and imagery to present your own voice.

Connecting Cultural Identity to Theme

precarious: unstable or shaky

intimidated: frightened

provincial: unsophisticated

monsoon: rainy season that occurs twice per year in South Asia

insular: limited and narrow

GRAMMAR & USAGE Parallel Structure

Sentences have *parallel structure* when two or more sentence elements of equal rank or importance are expressed in a similar way, as in Julius Caesar’s famous quote “I came; I saw; I conquered.” Stating equal and closely related ideas in parallel constructions adds clarity and smoothness to writing. Notice the parallel structure in the underlined sentence in paragraph 7. The clauses sound like steps (1, 2, 3) that the girls need to take to start school. They have a “matter of fact” tone to them, which belies the importance of leaving behind their language and religion.

What other examples of parallel structure do you see in the text?

3 The headmistress had been in India, I suppose, fifteen years or so, but she still smiled her helpless inability to cope with Indian names. Her rimless half-glasses glittered, and the **precarious** bun on the top of her head trembled as she shook her head. “Oh, my dears, those are much too hard for me. Suppose we give you pretty English names.

4 “Wouldn’t that be more jolly? Let’s see, now—Pamela for you, I think.” She shrugged in a baffled way at my sister. “That’s as close as I can get. And for *you*,” she said to me, “how about Cynthia? Isn’t that nice?”

5 My sister was always less easily **intimidated** than I was, and while she kept a stubborn silence, I said, “Thank you,” in a very tiny voice.

6 We had been sent to that school because my father, among his responsibilities as an officer of the civil service, had a tour of duty to perform in the villages around that steamy little **provincial** town, where he had his headquarters at that time. He used to make his shorter inspection tours on horseback, and a week before, in the stale heat of a typically post-**monsoon** day, we had waved good-bye to him and a little procession—an assistant, a secretary, two bearers³, and the man to look after the bedding rolls and luggage. They rode away through our large garden, still bright green from the rains, and we turned back into the twilight of the house and the sound of fans whispering in every room.

7 Up to then, my mother had refused to send Premila to school in the British-run establishments of that time, because, she used to say, “You can bury a dog’s tail for seven years and it still comes out curly, and you can take a Britisher away from his home for a lifetime and he still remains **insular**.” The examinations and degrees from entirely Indian schools were not, in those days, considered valid. In my case, the question had never come up, and probably never would have come up if Mother’s extraordinary good health had not broken down. For the first time in my life, she was not able to continue the lessons she had been giving us every morning. So our Hindi⁴ books were put away, the stories of the Lord Krishna as a little boy were left in mid-air, and we were sent to the Anglo-Indian school.

8 That first day at school is still, when I think of it, a remarkable one. At that age, if one’s name is changed, one develops a curious form of dual personality. Accordingly, I followed the thin, erect back of the headmistress down the veranda to my classroom feeling, at most, a passing interest in what was going to happen to me in this strange, new atmosphere of School.

9 The building was Indian in design, with wide verandas opening onto a central courtyard, but Indian verandas are usually whitewashed, with stone floors. These, in the tradition of British schools, were painted dark brown and had matting on the floors. It gave a feeling of extra intensity to the heat.

10 I suppose there were about a dozen Indian children in the school—which contained perhaps forty children in all—and four of them were in my class. They were all sitting at the back of the room, and I went to join them. I sat next to a small, solemn girl who didn’t smile at me. She had long, glossy black braids and wore a cotton dress, but she still kept on her Indian jewelry—a gold chain around her neck, thin gold bracelets, and tiny ruby studs in her ears. Like most Indian children, she had a rim of black kohl⁵ around her eyes. The cotton dress should have looked strange, but all I could think of was that I should ask my mother if I couldn’t wear a dress to school, too, instead of my Indian clothes.

³ Bearers carry heavy loads of materials and supplies.

⁴ Hindi is the official language of India.

⁵ Kohl is a dark powder used as eye makeup in the Middle East and India.

11 I can't remember too much about the proceedings in class that day, except for the beginning. The teacher pointed to me and asked me to stand up. "Now, dear, tell the class your name."

12 I said nothing. "Come along," she said, frowning slightly. "What's your name, dear?" "I don't know," I said, finally.

13 The English children in the front of the class—there were about eight or ten of them—giggled and twisted around in their chairs to look at me. I sat down quickly and opened my eyes very wide, hoping in that way to dry them off. The little girl with the braids put out her hand and very lightly touched my arm. She still didn't smile.

14 Most of that morning I was rather bored. I looked briefly at the children's drawings pinned to the wall, and then concentrated on a lizard clinging to the ledge of the high, barred window behind the teacher's head. Occasionally it would shoot out its long yellow tongue for a fly, and then it would rest, with its eyes closed and its belly **palpitating** as though it were swallowing several times quickly. The lessons were mostly concerned with reading and writing and simple numbers—things that my mother had already taught me—and I paid very little attention. The teacher wrote on the easel blackboard words like "bat" and "cat," which seemed babyish to me; only "apple" was new and incomprehensible.

15 When it was time for the lunch recess, I followed the girl with braids out onto the **veranda**. There the children from the other classes were assembled. I saw Premila at once and ran over to her, as she had charge of our lunchbox. The children were all opening packages and sitting down to eat sandwiches. Premila and I were the only ones who had Indian food—thin wheat chapatis,⁶ some vegetable curry,⁷ and a bottle of buttermilk. Premila thrust half of it into my hand and whispered fiercely that I should go and sit with my class, because that was what the others seemed to be doing.



⁶ *Chapatis* are thin griddlecakes of unleavened bread eaten in northern India.

⁷ *Vegetable curry* is a pungent dish of vegetables cooked in a sauce with curry powder.

My Notes

palpitating: beating, throbbing

veranda: an open area outside of a building that has a roof

Connecting Cultural Identity to Theme

My Notes

wizened: dry and wrinkled

16 The enormous black eyes of the little Indian girl from my class looked at my food longingly, so I offered her some. But she only shook her head and plowed her way solemnly through her sandwiches.

17 I was very sleepy after lunch, because at home we always took a siesta. It was usually a pleasant time of day, with the bedroom darkened against the harsh afternoon sun, the drifting off into sleep with the sound of Mother’s voice reading a story in one’s mind, and, finally, the shrill, fussy voice of the ayah⁸ waking one for tea.

18 At school, we rested for a short time on low, folding cots on the veranda, and then we were expected to play games. During the hot part of the afternoon we played indoors, and after the shadows had begun to lengthen and the slight breeze of the evening had come up we moved outside to the wide courtyard.

19 I had never really grasped the system of competitive games. At home, whenever we played tag or guessing games, I was always allowed to “win”—“because,” Mother used to tell Premila, “she is the youngest, and we have to allow for that.” I had often heard her say it, and it seemed quite reasonable to me, but the result was that I had no clear idea of what “winning” meant.

20 When we played twos-and-threes⁹ that afternoon at school, in accordance with my training, I let one of the small English boys catch me, but was naturally rather puzzled when the other children did not return the courtesy. I ran about for what seemed like hours without ever catching anyone, until it was time for school to close. Much later I learned that my attitude was called “not being a good sport,” and I stopped allowing myself to be caught, but it was not for years that I really learned the spirit of the thing.

21 When I saw our car come up to the school gate, I broke away from my classmates and rushed toward it yelling, “Ayah! Ayah!” It seemed like an eternity since I had seen her that morning—a **wizened**, affectionate figure in her white cotton sari,¹⁰ giving me dozens of urgent and useless instructions on how to be a good girl at school. Premila followed more sedately, and she told me on the way home never to do that again in front of the other children.

22 When we got home we went straight to Mother’s high, white room to have tea with her, and I immediately climbed onto the bed and bounced gently up and down on the springs. Mother asked how we had liked our first day in school. I was so pleased to be home and to have left that peculiar Cynthia behind that I had nothing whatever to say about school, except to ask what “apple” meant. But Premila told Mother about the classes, and added that in her class they had weekly tests to see if they had learned their lessons well.

23 I asked, “What’s a test?”

24 Premila said, “You’re too small to have them. You won’t have them in your class for donkey’s years.” She had learned the expression that day and was using it for the first time. We all laughed enormously at her wit. She also told Mother, in an aside, that we should take sandwiches to school the next day. Not, she said, that *she* minded. But they would be simpler for me to handle.

⁸ In India, an *ayah* is a native maid or nanny.

⁹ *Twos-and-threes* is a game similar to tag.

¹⁰ A *sari* is a garment worn by Indian women. It consists of a long cloth wrapped around the body with one end draped over one shoulder or over the head.

25 That whole lovely evening I didn't think about school at all. I sprinted barefoot across the lawns with my favorite playmate, the cook's son, to the stream at the end of the garden. We quarreled in our usual way, waded in the tepid water under the lime trees, and waited for the night to bring out the smell of the jasmine. I listened with fascination to his stories of ghosts and demons, until I was too frightened to cross the garden alone in the semidarkness. The ayah found me, shouted at the cook's son, scolded me, hurried me in to supper—it was an entirely usual, wonderful evening.

26 It was a week later, the day of Premila's first test, that our lives changed rather abruptly. I was sitting at the back of my class, in my usual inattentive way, only half listening to the teacher. I had started a rather guarded friendship with the girl with the braids, whose name turned out to be Nalini (Nancy, in school). The three other children were already fast friends. Even at that age it was apparent to all of us that friendship with the English or Anglo-Indian children was out of the question. Occasionally, during the class, my new friend and I would draw pictures and show them to each other secretly.

27 The door opened sharply and Premila marched in. At first, the teacher smiled at her in a kindly and encouraging way and said, "Now, you're little Cynthia's sister?"

28 Premila didn't even look at her. She stood with her feet planted firmly apart and her shoulders rigid, and addressed herself directly to me. "Get up," she said. "We're going home."

29 I didn't know what had happened, but I was aware that it was a crisis of some sort. I rose obediently and started to walk toward my sister.

30 "Bring your pencils and your notebook," she said.

31 I went back for them, and together we left the room. The teacher started to say something just as Premila closed the door, but we didn't wait to hear what it was.

32 In complete silence we left the school grounds and started to walk home. Then I asked Premila what the matter was. All she would say was "We're going home for good."

33 It was a very tiring walk for a child of five and a half, and I dragged along behind Premila with my pencils growing sticky in my hand. I can still remember looking at the dusty hedges, and the tangles of thorns in the ditches by the side of the road, smelling the faint fragrance from the eucalyptus trees and wondering whether we would ever reach home. Occasionally a horse-drawn tonga¹¹ passed us, and the women, in their pink or green silks, stared at Premila and me trudging along on the side of the road. A few coolies¹² and a line of women carrying baskets of vegetables on their heads smiled at us. But it was nearing the hottest time of day, and the road was almost deserted. I walked more and more slowly, and shouted to Premila, from time to time, "Wait for me!" with increasing peevishness. She spoke to me only once, and that was to tell me to carry my notebook on my head, because of the sun.

34 When we got to our house the ayah was just taking a tray of lunch into Mother's room. She immediately started a long, worried questioning about what are you children doing back here at this hour of the day.

35 Mother looked very startled and very concerned, and asked Premila what had happened.

GRAMMAR & USAGE

Parallel Structure

Focus your attention on paragraph 25. Identify the author's use of parallel structure. What is its effect?

My Notes

¹¹ A *tonga* is a two-wheeled, horse-drawn vehicle.

¹² *Coolies* are workers hired at low wages for unskilled work.

Connecting Cultural Identity to Theme

My Notes

Working from the Text

9. Rau uses a variety of different approaches to draw attention to culture in this narrative. Using the culture web you generated in Activity 1.2 with your peers, map out specific cultural elements Rau describes, placing them into categories, such as clothing, food, language, and values.

Culture

10. Once you have mapped out the various cultural elements from the story, rank which ones seem most important to establishing the characters' cultural identity in a way that sets up the story's conclusion and resulting theme.

11. Which cultural elements do you think would best allow you to describe your own cultural identity to a reader? Why?

Check Your Understanding

Revisit a piece of your writing from this unit and revise it to include parallel structure.

Learning Targets

- State equal and closely related ideas in parallel constructions.
- Revise writing to check for non-parallel structures.

Using Parallel Structure

Sentences have **parallel structure** when two or more elements create a series. Each element in the series is of equal rank or importance, and all elements are expressed in a similar way. Stating ideas in parallel constructions adds clarity and smoothness to writing. Words, phrases, and clauses can all be parallel.

Words

Lists of words in a series should maintain a parallel structure.

1. Label the three parallel and equal parts of the following sentences with a 1, 2, and 3.
 - a. But she still kept on her Indian jewelry—a gold chain around her neck, thin gold bracelets, and tiny ruby studs in her ears.
 - b. Premila and I were the only ones who had Indian food—thin wheat chapatis, some vegetable curry, and a bottle of buttermilk.
2. With a partner, write an observation about what it is that makes each of the parts parallel.

3. Revise the following sentence to make it parallel.

When Santha returned from school, she enjoyed having tea with her mother, playing tag with the cook's son, and to listen to ghost stories.

Clauses

A **clause** is a word group that contains both a subject and its verb. It may or may not express a complete thought. Notice the parallel structure in this sentence.

So our Hindi books were put away, the stories of the Lord Krishna as a little boy were left in mid-air, and we were sent to the Anglo-Indian school.

4. Label the first word of each of the three parallel and equal parts of the sentence with a 1, 2, and 3.
5. With a partner, write an observation about what it is that makes each of the parts parallel.

6. Revise the following sentence to make it parallel.

Premila and her sister did not like their new school, the narrator did not like her new name, or being away from ayah and mother.

Language Checkpoint: Using Parallel Structure

Phrases

A **phrase** is a word group that functions as a specific part of speech but does not contain both a subject and its verb.

7. Label the three parallel parts of the sentence with a 1, 2, 3, and 4.

The ayah found me, shouted at the cook's son, scolded me, hurried me in to supper—it was an entirely usual, wonderful evening.

8. With a partner, write an observation about what it is that makes each of the parts parallel.

9. Revise the following sentence to make it parallel.

The girls trudged home at the hottest time of day, down the dirt path, they went past the dusty hedges and tangles of thorns, and over the ditch by the side of the road.

Revising

Read the paragraph below taken from a student's essay about "By Any Other Name." Work with a partner to check whether the many series maintain parallel structure. Note any mistakes you notice, and then mark the text to show how you would correct the mistakes.

The teacher's prejudices about the girls, and presumably all Indian children, included that they were cheaters and saying their names was too hard. As a result, Premila was not fond of the teacher. Unlike Santha, Premila was not too young to be offended; she was angry about being called Pamela, having to bring sandwiches, and she had to sit in the back of the classroom with the other "cheaters."

On the other hand, Santha was too young to grow angry. She accepted her new name of Cynthia, she offered another Indian girl Indian food, and was following instincts when she ran to her ayah at the end of the day. Premila admonished her for her innocence.

Check Your Understanding

Imagine you are editing a classmate's writing, and you notice these sentences:

When Santha and Premila got home, they went straight to Mother's room to have tea with her, Santha bounced up and down on the bed, and asked what "apple" meant. Because of her youth, being innocent, and naiveté, Santha didn't become as upset as Premila did. Instead, after her siesta, she went out to the lawns, ran barefooted, and was listening to stories of ghosts and demons told by the cook's son.

In your own words, write an explanation so that your classmate understands the mistakes in parallelism and how to revise them. Then add an item to your Editor's Checklist to help you remember to check for parallel structure when you are revising your writing.

Practice

Revisit a piece of your writing from this unit, and revise it to include parallel structure.

Learning Target

- Analyze a mentor text to determine how a writer describes a multiethnic, multicultural heritage.

Preview

In this activity, you will read a mentor text and think about how the writer describes her cultural identity.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- Read the following interview/essay to discover the thesis or central idea. Mark the text to locate supporting information (well-chosen, relevant details that support the thesis).
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

Interview/Essay

Multiculturalism Explained in One Word: HAPA

1 In a guest commentary, the [Tell Me More radio] program's outgoing intern, Kristen Lee, describes how she explains her multicultural roots, and why she embraces the term *HAPA* to describe her heritage.

2 LYNN NEARY, host:

Well, being a part of the Tell Me More team is a real workout for any young journalist. Our summer intern, Kristen Lee, could tell you that. She just recently ended her time with us and as part of our program's tradition, she finished her tenure with a commentary. And what's on Kristen's mind? Dealing with the curiosity and occasional ignorance of people confused by her multiethnic background.

3 KRISTEN LEE: What are you? People say this to me as a pickup line in a bar or a question to prove their own assumptions about my race. I answer with a formula. I'm a quarter Chinese and the rest is Swedish.

4 From my appearance, people assume I am Asian, but how could a quarter measurement define who I am? So can I just tell you? I am a hip-hop-loving piano-playing dancing diva who grew up on a ranch in rural Michigan with some horses, dogs and every kind of hand-sized pet imaginable.

5 I flaunt all of my cultural mix but so many people want me to pick a label. So if I have to choose, I'd choose "HAPA". It means half Asian and half another race. It's actually Hawaiian slang that I picked up in college. It's meant to be slightly **derogatory** but I embrace it as a source of empowerment.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Quickwrite, SOAPStone, Marking the Text, Discussion Groups, Jigsaw

My Notes

derogatory: insulting

Consulting with a Mentor (Text)

predominantly: mostly

My Notes

6 Hawaii is one of the country’s most multiracial states and when I studied there, I was viewed as a local because some of my racial features fit the Hawaiian template. I have almond-shaped eyes, fine dark hair and olive skin that turns butterscotch in the sun. I was a confident and proud HAPA in Hawaii, but when I came back to Michigan, my **predominantly** white peers still saw me as a model minority statistic, exotic foreigner, and a token Asian in the classroom.

7 My style is not as simple as those stereotypes. No, I don’t clunk around in Swedish clogs, and no, I don’t speak a Chinese dialect. And that can be a problem for Asian people who pressure me to prove the legitimacy of my Chinese heritage.

8 Still, I feel like I benefited from white privilege because of my lighter skin. I’ve avoided most racial discrimination, but I do face a different kind of prejudice when walking around with my black boyfriend, like the occasional hard stare or intimidating remark. I feel like a society that focuses on black and white doesn’t recognize my unique multicultural experience. So how do I explain who I am and what being HAPA means to me?

9 I use the universal language of food, and particularly my Swedish mother’s dessert dish: rice pudding. Just as the white rice is baked into the yellow pudding, I, too, am mixed into the U.S. melting pot. Yet, as the pudding bakes, the rice retains its consistency, like I keep my own unique HAPA identity.

10 And yeah, I’m tasty, too.

11 NEARY: Kristen Lee with Tell Me More summer interns. She recently graduated from Michigan State University majoring in journalism. That’s our program for today. I’m Lynn Neary and this is Tell Me More from NPR News. Let’s talk more tomorrow.

Second Read

- Reread the interview/essay to answer these text-dependent questions.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

1. Craft and Structure: How does the writer use a hook for her statement about her heritage?

2. Craft and Structure: How does the writer define her cultural identity?

3. Key Ideas and Details: What is the main idea of this selection?

Consulting with a Mentor (Text)

My Notes

Tone
What is the author's tone, or attitude?

7. Revisit the mentor text, and number each paragraph to help you analyze the organizational structure of the essay. Work with a partner to discuss the purpose of each paragraph, and note your thoughts in the My Notes section.

8. Although SOAPStone can be used to analyze texts written to respond to particular contexts, it can also be used as a planning tool to construct such texts. To help you plan for your upcoming cultural identity essay, try to generate a real-world context for your essay. As with Lee, try to use a real-world incident to help you focus your text as a way to engage or challenge readers. Revisit your work in Activity 1.7 to consider what specific aspects of your culture you may want to include as part of your subject.

Speaker	
Occasion	
Audience	
Purpose	
Subject	
Tone	

Check Your Understanding

What besides race and ethnicity help define or characterize a culture?



Independent Reading Checkpoint

Review the independent reading you have completed for this unit. Connect the authors' understanding of cultural identity with the readings in this unit. What do their viewpoints have in common?

ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment is to write a reflective essay explaining your cultural identity.

Planning/Prewriting: Take time to make a plan for your essay.

- How will you generate ideas about aspects of your culture that might help convey your sense of identity?
- How does your sense of cultural identity compare to that of your parents, your peers, or even strangers?
- How can a cultural conflict—either internal or external—clarify how your cultural identity influences your perspective?
- How might you use a particular cultural element (food, language, clothing, etc.) as a metaphor or central idea to focus your essay?
- What will you include in a preliminary outline of an organizational structure?

Drafting and Revising: Compose your reflective essay.

- How will you use your prewriting and outline to be sure you include all the components identified in your organizational structure, including an effective introduction and conclusion?
- How can you and your writing group peers use the Scoring Guide to help you note areas in need of improvement such as cohesion of ideas, organizational structure, or use of language?
- How will you ensure that you make necessary changes to the draft as you refine your ideas?
- How can you revise for purposeful and clear use of language, including syntax patterns such as parallel structure and phrases?

Editing and Publishing: Prepare a final draft for publication.

- Which resources will you consult (dictionary, thesaurus, spell-check, grammar handbook, style guide) to ensure grammatically correct sentences, appropriate punctuation, correct spelling, and proper text citation?

Reflection

After completing this Embedded Assessment, think about how you went about accomplishing this task, and respond to the following:

- Which aspects of your cultural identity were you already aware of before you began this unit, and which did you discover through your study?
- What are some of the different cultural heritages represented in your class that you became aware of through class discussions or shared writing?

Writing About My Cultural Identity

SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Incomplete
Ideas	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a clear and strongly maintained central idea (e.g., internal/external conflict or central metaphor/concept) to focus the essay uses a range of well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient evidence to create a vivid sense of personal cultural identity. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has an adequately maintained central idea to focus the topic uses a sufficient range of evidence to develop the explanation of cultural identity. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has an unclear or insufficiently maintained central idea and lacks focus uses vague, irrelevant, or insufficient evidence to develop the explanation of cultural identity. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is not coherent and does not clearly maintain a central focus provides little or no evidence to support or develop an explanation of cultural identity.
Structure	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an effective organizational strategy that creates clarity and cohesion introduces ideas smoothly, links them logically, and provides a satisfying conclusion uses appropriate and varied transitions. 	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate organizational strategy that creates a sense of completeness introduces ideas, links them adequately, and provides a conclusion uses some varied transitions. 	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an inconsistent or confusing organization does not introduce, link, and/or conclude ideas uses weak, repetitive, or insufficient transitions. 	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not organize ideas clearly does not link ideas uses weak or no transitions.
Use of Language	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses precise language and appropriate vocabulary to create a distinctive tone or voice uses parallel structure and various types of phrases to convey meaning or add variety and interest demonstrates strong command of conventions of grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. 	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses appropriate vocabulary and generally maintains an appropriate tone/voice uses parallel structure and various types of phrases correctly demonstrates adequate command of conventions; some minor errors in grammar, usage, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning. 	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses simple or inappropriate vocabulary that does not maintain consistent tone/voice does not use parallel structure and/or varied types of phrases correctly demonstrates partial or insufficient command of conventions; errors in grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and/or spelling interfere with meaning. 	<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses vague, imprecise vocabulary and does not maintain consistent or appropriate tone/voice uses no parallel structure or phrases, or uses them incorrectly demonstrates little command of conventions; numerous errors in grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and/or spelling interfere with meaning.

Previewing Embedded Assessment 2 and Preparing for a Writing Prompt

Learning Targets

- Identify the knowledge and skills needed to complete Embedded Assessment 2 successfully.
- Deconstruct a writing prompt.

Making Connections

In the first part of this unit, you have been exploring ideas about cultural identity. In this next part, you will extend your understanding of cultural identity and will read and synthesize information to help you take a position about the extent to which one's culture influences one's view of the world.

Vocabulary Development

Return to the Contents page at the beginning of this unit and note the Academic Vocabulary and Literary Terms you have studied so far. Which words and terms can you now move to a new category on a QHT chart? Which could you now teach to others that you were unfamiliar with at the beginning of the unit?

Essential Questions

How would you answer these questions now?

1. What is my cultural identity?

2. How do cultural experiences shape, impact, or influence our identity and perceptions?

Unpacking Embedded Assessment 2

Read the assignment for Embedded Assessment 2: Writing a Synthesis Paper.

Your assignment is to collaborate with your peers to write an essay that responds to the following synthesis prompt:

To what extent does one's culture inform the way one views others and the world?

Be sure to support your claim with evidence from at least three different texts you have read, viewed, or listened to in this unit, as well as with personal experience and insights.

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

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Quickwrite, Predicting, graphic organizer, QHT

My Notes



INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Respond

With help from your teacher, librarian, and peers, find a novel or memoir that explores a cultural perspective different from your own.

Previewing Embedded Assessment 2 and Preparing for a Writing Prompt

My Notes

Deconstructing a Writing Prompt

Writing prompts often contain many details but little direction. It is easy to get caught up in the details and forget the main task. You may write an excellent response with flawless syntax, but if you do not respond to the prompt, you will not receive a high score.

Five Parts of Every Writing Prompt

When considering any prompt, look for five basic parts. Most, if not all, of the parts will be present. Finding as many as you can will help you determine what you need to do and how to respond to the prompt correctly.

1. **Subject:** What is the subject you need to write about? A well-written prompt will identify the subject, but it may be vague. For example, a prompt might tell you to think of a childhood experience. What common themes or ideas (either implicit or explicit) are associated with the subject?
2. **Speaker:** Who is writing the answer? (You are, but are you writing it as a student, a citizen, an authority?) Use your inferencing skills to determine what perspective you should take as the writer.
3. **Type of Essay:** What kind of response are you writing—explanation, argument, synthesis, narrative? An effective prompt indicates the type of writing you need to do. It may give you a choice. Choose wisely.
4. **Task:** What is the prompt asking you to do? For example, your task may be to take a stand on an issue and write a five-paragraph persuasive essay. Read the details carefully to identify exactly what you need to do.
5. **Hints:** Does the prompt give you suggestions to get started? The prompt may suggest ideas to think about or literary devices to identify and analyze.

After deconstructing the first prompt on the following page as a class, identify all five parts of your assigned prompt with your group. You may use different colored markers to highlight different parts in each prompt or write responses to each component of the prompt in My Notes. Be prepared to share your deconstructed prompt with the other groups.

Previewing Embedded Assessment 2 and Preparing for a Writing Prompt

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Synthesis refers to the act of combining ideas from different sources to create, express, or support a new idea.

My Notes

Synthesis

Now that you understand the expectations of Embedded Assessment 2, you will need to begin working on gathering evidence from the multiple texts in the second half of the unit. These texts will serve as your resources in answering the **synthesis** writing prompt. In order to successfully answer the writing prompt, you will need to incorporate information from multiple sources with your existing ideas into one central idea.

When synthesizing information, you need a focusing idea or question for which you gather ideas from multiple texts or sources of information. For example, what if you were asked to respond to one of the following questions:

- How do parents influence our perspectives on our culture?
- How do writers/artists use conflict to convey theme?

How would you approach this task? In the space below, write down a plan for how you would do so.

Working with a partner, choose one of the questions above that you think you can best answer. Revisit the texts that you read in the first half of the unit, and choose at least two texts that would serve as good evidence to support a response to the question. Be sure to:

- Write a thesis statement for your essay responding to the question.
- Write an outline for your response.
- Explain why you chose the structure you outlined.

Possible outlines/organizations:

Colliding Worlds

jive: a type of fast music that may include slang and informal language

incomprehensible: impossible to understand

promiscuously: in an indiscriminate or loose manner

My Notes

unintelligible: difficult to understand

cordoning: blocking off; barricading



WORD CONNECTIONS

Multiple-Meaning Words

The word *solicitor* is defined as “someone who seeks business.” In England, a solicitor is a type of lawyer who represents people in the lower courts. The word also has a negative connotation as someone who may harass people on the street to sell them something or cheat them.

intoning: speaking or reciting in a singing voice; changing or singing in monotone

tarmac: a paved area at an airport where airplanes are often parked

quarantine: to keep people away from an area where a person or animal has a disease to prevent it from spreading

cacophony: loud, unpleasant sounds

They see Koreans piling into the Taeguk Airport Shuttle and the Seoul Shuttle, which will take them to Koreatown without their ever feeling they’ve left home; they see newcomers from the Middle East disappearing under the Arabic script of the Sahara Shuttle. They see fast-talking, finger-snapping, palm-slapping **jive** artists straight from their TV screens shouting **incomprehensible** slogans about deals, destinations, and drugs. Over there is a block-long white limo, a Lincoln Continental, and, over there, a black Chevy Blazer with Mexican stickers all over its windows, being towed. They have arrived in the Land of Opportunity, and the opportunities are swirling dizzily, **promiscuously**, around them.

3 They have already braved the ranks of Asian officials, the criminal-looking security men in jackets that say “Elsinore Airport Services,” the men shaking tins that say “Helping America’s Hopeless.” They have already seen the tilting mugs that say “California: a new slant on life” and the portable fruit machines in the gift shop.

4 They have already, perhaps, visited the rest room where someone has written, “Yes on Proposition 187. Mexicans go home,” the snack bar where a slice of pizza costs \$3.19 (18 quetzals, they think in horror, or 35,000 dong), and the sign that urges them to try the Cockatoo Inn Grand Hotel. The latest arrivals at Los Angeles International Airport are ready now to claim their new lives.

5 Above them in the terminal, voices are repeating, over and over, in Japanese, Spanish, and **unintelligible** English, “Maintain visual contact with your personal property at all times.” Out on the sidewalk, a man’s voice and a woman’s voice are alternating an unending refrain: “The white zone is for loading and unloading of passengers only. No parking.” There are “Do Not Cross” yellow lines **cordoning** off parts of the sidewalk and “Wells Fargo Alarm Services” stickers on the windows; there are “Aviation Safeguard” signs on the baggage carts and “Beware of Solicitors” signs on the columns; there are even special phones “To Report Trouble.” More male and female voices are **intoning** continuously, “Do not leave your car unattended” and “Unattended cars are subject to immediate tow-away.” There are no military planes on the **tarmac** here, the newcomers notice, no khaki soldiers in fatigues, no instructions not to take photographs, as at home; but there are civilian restrictions every bit as strict as in many a police state.

6 “This Terminal Is in a Medfly **Quarantine** Area,” says the sign between the terminals. “Stop the Spread of Medfly!” If, by chance, the new Americans have to enter a parking lot on their way out, they will be faced with “Cars left over 30 days may be impounded at Owner’s Expense” and “Do not enter without a ticket.” It will cost them \$16 if they lose their parking ticket, they read, and \$56 if they park in the wrong zone. Around them is an unending **cacophony** of antitheft devices, sirens, beepers, and car-door openers; lights are flashing everywhere, and the man who fines them \$16 for losing their parking ticket has the tribal scars of Tigris across his forehead.

7 The blue skies and palm trees they saw on TV are scarcely visible from here: just an undifferentiated smoggy haze, billboards advertising Nissan and Panasonic and Canon, and beyond those an endlessly receding mess of gray streets. Overhead, they can see the all-too-familiar signs of Hilton and Hyatt and Holiday Inn; in the distance, a sea of tract houses, mini-malls, and high rises. The City of Angels awaits them.

Second Read

- Reread the essay to answer these text-dependent questions.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

Colliding Worlds

My Notes

Check Your Understanding

Summarize your understanding of the literary term *allusion*. Provide support from Iyer's essay in your summary.

Language and Writer's Craft: Colon and Semicolon

Writers use colons and semicolons to vary sentence structure and to add emphasis.

Use a **colon** to introduce a series in a list after an independent main clause.

Example: "The blue skies and palm trees they saw on TV are scarcely visible from here: just an undifferentiated smoggy haze, billboards advertising Nissan and Panasonic and Canon, and beyond those an endlessly receding mess of gray streets."

Use a **semicolon** to connect two closely related independent clauses or to connect two clauses when one is preceded by a conjunctive adverb (*however, consequently*).

Example: "There are no military planes on the tarmac here, the newcomers notice, no khaki soldiers in fatigues, no instructions not to take photographs, as at home; but there are civilian restrictions every bit as strict as in many a police state."

PRACTICE Create a sentence using a colon and another using a semicolon and record them below.

Colon:

Semicolon:

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

An **argument** is a set of statements, each supporting the other, that presents a position or viewpoint. A **claim** is a position taken on an arguable viewpoint.

Argument

In order to be successful on Embedded Assessment 2, you will need to craft an argumentative response to a writing prompt. To be valid, your **argument** must have a debatable **claim**, evidence in support of that claim, and it must address the opposition to its claim by acknowledging counterclaims. You will learn more about counterclaims in the next activity, for now we are going to focus on the first two requirements of an argument: the claim and its supporting evidence.

For a claim to be debatable, people should be able to hold differing opinions about it. If your claim is something that is generally agreed upon or accepted as fact, then there is no reason to try to convince people. An example of a debatable claim is *At least twenty-five percent of the federal budget should be spent on funding limiting air pollution*. This claim is debatable because reasonable people could

Language Checkpoint: Using Punctuation Within Sentences

Learning Targets

- Use colons, semicolons, and dashes within sentences to punctuate pauses.
- Recognize and correct errors of usage with colons, semicolons, and dashes.

Exploring the Use of Colons

1. Create a short list of places where you have seen a colon being used. Briefly describe what the purpose of the colon was in each of those places.

2. Reread this sentence from Pico Iyer’s essay “Where Worlds Collide.” Describe what kind of information comes after the colon.

The blue skies and palm trees they saw on TV are scarcely visible from here: just an undifferentiated smoggy haze, billboards advertising Nissan and Panasonic and Canon, and beyond those an endlessly receding mess of gray streets.

3. Read another sentence from the same essay. Again, describe what kind of information comes after the colon.

Out on the sidewalk, a man’s voice and a woman’s voice are alternating an unending refrain: “The white zone is for loading and unloading of passengers only. No Parking.”

4. Begin to compile a list of uses for the colon. Share your list with others to modify or expand it.

Exploring the Use of Semicolons

5. Read the following sentence from Iyer’s essay. Find the semicolon, and describe the structure of the text before and after it.

They come out, blinking, into the bleached, forgetful sunshine, in Dodgers caps and Rodeo Drive T-shirts, with the maps their cousins have drawn for them and the images they’ve brought over from *Cops* and *Terminator 2*; they come out dazed, disoriented, heads still partly in the clouds, bodies still several time zones—or centuries—away, and they step into the Promised Land.

6. Write a rule about when to use a semicolon. Share your rule with others to modify or expand it.

Language Checkpoint: Using Punctuation Within Sentences

Revising

Read the paragraph in the left column, which is a student's reflection after finding herself in a new environment. For every number, identify the revision in the right column that would work best.

[1] It was the first day of school, don't get me started, and I really just wanted to be back in bed. [2] Most of my friends had gone to the high school downtown, but I had been forced like a caged animal to attend the high school near the airport. [3] Everything about this place screamed at me to leave the peach walls, the old laminate tile, and the funny smell that refused to dissipate no matter what turn you took. [4] I headed into first period the only class I got to pick on my schedule. [5] There was no disguising the purpose of this room—the shelves were lined with old bottles of paint, the floor was covered in paint splatters, and old aprons dotted with paint hung on hooks by the back window. [6] I glanced around and quickly inventoried the students who'd already chosen their seats. I didn't see a single person oh, wait. What about that seat? [7] She looked normal whatever that was to me. She seemed just as unhappy as I was to be there. [8] Perfect. I'd found a friend. I just knew it, and we hadn't even spoken yet.

1. a. NO CHANGE
b. day of school—don't get me started—and I
c. day of school—don't get me started, and I
d. day of school, don't get me started; and I
2. a. NO CHANGE
b. I had been forced, like a caged animal,
c. I had been forced—like a caged animal—
d. I had been forced; like a caged animal—
3. a. NO CHANGE
b. to leave—the peach walls,
c. to leave: the peach walls,
d. to leave, the peach walls,
4. a. NO CHANGE
b. first period: the only class I got
c. first period, the only class I got
d. first period—the only class I got
5. a. NO CHANGE
b. of this room the shelves were lined
c. of this room, the shelves were lined
d. of this room: the shelves were lined
6. a. NO CHANGE
b. I didn't see a single person, oh, wait.
c. I didn't see a single person—oh, wait.
d. I didn't see a single person: oh, wait.
7. a. NO CHANGE
b. looked normal—whatever that was—to me.
c. looked normal, whatever that was, to me.
d. looked normal: whatever that was, to me
8. a. NO CHANGE
b. found a friend, I just knew it,
c. found a friend: I just knew it,
d. found a friend; I just knew it—

Check Your Understanding

Pretend you are helping to peer edit your partner's paragraph on analyzing the effect one's background has on perceiving situations. As you are reading, you come across the following sentence:

How we view the world is affected by our culture something we cannot avoid.

Correct the sentence, and write a sentence stating why the edit is necessary. Then add the note to your Editor's Checklist.

Practice

Reread the paragraph you wrote in Activity 1.10 analyzing the effect one's background has on perceiving situations. Check to make sure you correctly used a semicolon to combine two related sentences and a colon to introduce a series in a list. Strengthen your writing by revising or rewriting sentences to correctly use colons, semicolons, and dashes.

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Think-Pair-Share, Predicting, graphic organizer, SIFT, Group Discussion

Literary Terms

Imagery is the verbal expression of sensory experience. It is created by details that appeal to one or more of the five senses.

Figurative language is imaginative language not meant to be taken literally, such as similes and metaphors.

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Analyze a poem and a short story for the authors' use of literary devices to explain how specific stylistic choices support the development of tone and theme.
- Compare and contrast how two different authors explore similar subjects and themes.

Preview

In this activity, you will read a poem and a short story to compare and contrast their treatment of similar subjects and themes.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- Writers use symbols, **imagery**, and **figurative language** to help develop meaning in a story. As you read, underline lines that you think are particularly important in establishing the meaning of the quilts to the speaker.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in 1949 in McGregor, Texas, poet Teresa Paloma Acosta grew up listening to family stories about working in and living near cotton fields. She came from a family of hardworking men and women. The women were known particularly for their sewing skills. Paloma Acosta combines her love for her Mexican heritage and her family's quilting and storytelling abilities in her poem "My Mother Pieced Quilts."

Poetry

my mother
pieced quilts



by Teresa Paloma Acosta

they were just meant as covers
in winters
as weapons
against pounding january winds

- 5 but it was just that every morning I awoke to these
october **ripened** canvases
passed my hand across their cloth faces
and began to wonder how you pieced
all these together

ripened: ready or finished

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

My Notes

tuberculosis: a lung disease that causes fever, cough, and difficulty in breathing

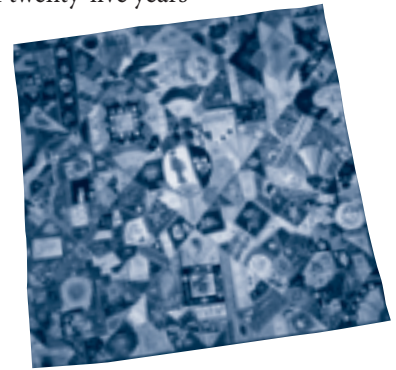
taut: tight; stiff

oh mother you plunged me sobbing and laughing
into our past
into the river crossing at five
into the spinach fields

50 into the plainview cotton rows
into **tuberculosis** wards
into braids and muslin dresses
sewn hard and **taut** to withstand the thrashings of twenty-five years

stretched out they lay

55 armed/ready/shouting/celebrating
knotted with love
the quilts sing on



Second Read

- Reread the poem to answer these text-dependent questions.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

1. **Key Ideas and Details:** How do the pieces of the quilt embody cultural heritage?

2. **Craft and Structure:** Which words does the speaker use to compare her mother to a painter? Why do you think she makes this comparison?

Working from the Text

3. Use the following graphic organizer to analyze the poem using the SIFT strategy. As you closely read the poem for examples of symbolism, imagery, figurative language, tone, and theme, be sure to write the actual words from the poem and your interpretation of their significance.

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

My Notes

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- As you read the story, apply the skills you used in your analysis of the poem to analyze the author’s development of tone and theme. Annotate the text for symbols, images, figurative language, and tone.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alice Walker (b. 1944) is a novelist, poet, and essayist who has published numerous works, including *Living By the Word*, a collection of essays, and *Horses Make a Landscape More Beautiful*, a book of poems. Walker established her reputation with the publication of *The Color Purple* (1982), which won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award. The novel tells of a young woman’s efforts to overcome the obstacles posed by racism, sexism, and poverty. Critics have praised Walker’s sensitivity to the points of view and problems of characters from different walks of life.

Short Story

Everyday Use

by Alice Walker

1 I will wait for her in the yard that Maggie and I made so clean and wavy yesterday afternoon. A yard like this is more comfortable than most people know. It is not just a yard. It is like an extended living room. When the hard clay is swept clean as a floor and the fine sand around the edges lined with tiny, irregular grooves, anyone can come and sit and look up into the elm tree and wait for the breezes that never come inside the house.

2 Maggie will be nervous until after her sister goes: She will stand hopelessly in corners, **homely** and ashamed of the burn scars down her arms and legs, eyeing her sister with a mixture of envy and awe. She thinks her sister had held life always in the palm of one hand, that “no” is a word the world never learned to say to her.

3 You’ve no doubt seen those TV shows where the child who has “made it” is **confronted**, as a surprise, by her own mother and father, **tottering** in weakly from backstage. (A pleasant surprise, of course: What would they do if parent and child came on the show only to curse out and insult each other?) On TV mother and child embrace and smile into each other’s faces. Sometimes the mother and father weep; the child wraps them in her arms and leans across the table to tell how she would not have made it without their help. I have seen these programs.

homely: plain and simple

confronted: faced or forced to see
tottering: moving slowly and weakly



4 Sometimes I dream a dream in which Dee and I are suddenly brought together on a TV program of this sort. Out of a dark and soft-seated limousine I am ushered into a bright room filled with many people. There I meet a smiling, gray, sporty man like Johnny Carson and he shakes my hand and tells me what a fine girl I have. Then we are on the stage, and Dee is embracing me with tears in her eyes. She pins on my dress a large orchid, even though she had told me once that she thinks orchids are **tacky** flowers.

5 In real life I am a large, big-boned woman with rough, man-working hands. In the winter I wear flannel nightgowns to bed and overalls during the day. I can kill and clean a hog as mercilessly as a man. My fat keeps me hot in zero weather. I can work outside all day, breaking ice to get water for washing; I can eat pork liver cooked over the open fire minutes after it comes steaming from the hog. One winter I knocked a bull calf straight in the brain between the eyes with a sledgehammer and had the meat hung up to chill before nightfall. But of course all this does not show on television. I am the way my daughter would want me to be: a hundred pounds lighter, my skin like an uncooked **barley** pancake. My hair glistens in the hot bright lights. Johnny Carson has much to do to keep up with my quick and witty tongue.

6 But that is a mistake. I know even before I wake up. Who ever knew a Johnson with a quick tongue? Who can even imagine me looking a strange white man in the eye? It seems to me I have talked to them always with one foot raised in flight, with my head turned in whichever way is farthest from them. Dee, though. She would always look anyone in the eye. Hesitation was no part of her nature.

7 “How do I look, Mama?” Maggie says, showing just enough of her thin body enveloped in pink skirt and red blouse for me to know she’s there, almost hidden by the door.

8 “Come out into the yard,” I say.

9 Have you ever seen a lame animal, perhaps a dog run over by some careless person rich enough to own a car, **sidle** up to someone who is ignorant enough to be kind to him? That is the way my Maggie walks. She has been like this, chin on chest, eyes on ground, feet in shuffle, ever since the fire that burned the other house to the ground.

10 Dee is lighter than Maggie, with nicer hair and a fuller figure. She’s a woman now, though sometimes I forget. How long ago was it that the other house burned? Ten, twelve years? Sometimes I can still hear the flames and feel Maggie’s arms sticking to me, her hair smoking and her dress falling off her in little black papery flakes. Her eyes seemed stretched open, blazed open by the flames reflected in them. And Dee. I see her standing off under the sweet gum tree she used to dig gum out of, a look of

My Notes

tacky: cheap or not stylish

barley: a kind of grain

sidle: creep up

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

dingy: shabby

My Notes

dimwit: a person who does not display intelligence

rawhide: cow's skin before it is crafted into leather

furtive: quiet and secretive

concentration on her face as she watched the last **dingy** gray board of the house fall in toward the red-hot brick chimney. Why don't you do a dance around the ashes? I'd wanted to ask her. She had hated the house that much.

11 I used to think she hated Maggie, too. But that was before we raised the money, the church and me, to send her to Augusta to school. She used to read to us without pity, forcing words, lies, other folks' habits, whole lives upon us two, sitting trapped and ignorant underneath her voice. She washed us in a river of make-believe, burned us with a lot of knowledge we didn't necessarily need to know. Pressed us to her with the serious ways she read, to shove us away at just the moment, like **dimwits**, we seemed about to understand.

12 Dee wanted nice things. A yellow organdy dress to wear to her graduation from high school; black pumps to match a green suit she'd made from an old suit somebody gave me. She was determined to stare down any disaster in her efforts. Her eyelids would not flicker for minutes at a time. Often I fought off the temptation to shake her. At sixteen she had a style of her own: and knew what style was.

13 I never had an education myself. After second grade the school closed down. Don't ask me why: In 1927 colored asked fewer questions than they do now. Sometimes Maggie reads to me. She stumbles along good-naturedly but can't see well. She knows she is not bright. Like good looks and money, quickness passed her by. She will marry John Thomas (who has mossy teeth in an earnest face), and then I'll be free to sit here and I guess just sing church songs to myself. Although I never was a good singer. Never could carry a tune. I was always better at a man's job. I used to love to milk till I was hooked in the side in '49. Cows are soothing and slow and don't bother you, unless you try to milk them the wrong way.

14 I have deliberately turned my back on the house. It is three rooms, just like the one that burned, except the roof is tin; they don't make shingle roofs anymore. There are no real windows, just some holes cut in the sides, like the portholes in a ship, but not round and not square, with **rawhide** holding the shutters up on the outside. This house is in a pasture, too, like the other one. No doubt when Dee sees it she will want to tear it down. She wrote me once that no matter where we "choose" to live, she will manage to come see us. But she will never bring her friends. Maggie and I thought about this and Maggie asked me, "Mama, when did Dee ever *have* any friends?"

15 She had a few. **Furtive** boys in pink shirts hanging about on washday after school. Nervous girls who never laughed. Impressed with her, they worshiped the well-turned phrase, the cute shape, the scalding humor that erupted like bubbles in lye. She read to them.

16 When she was courting Jimmy T, she didn't have much time to pay to us but turned all her faultfinding power on him. He *flew* to marry a cheap city girl from a family of ignorant, flashy people. She hardly had time to recompose herself.

17 When she comes, I will meet—but there they are!

18 Maggie attempts to make a dash for the house, in her shuffling way, but I stay her with my hand. "Come back here," I say. And she stops and tries to dig a well in the sand with her toe.

19 It is hard to see them clearly through the strong sun. But even the first glimpse of leg out of the car tells me it is Dee. Her feet were always neat looking, as if God himself shaped them with a certain style. From the other side of the car comes a short, stocky man. Hair is all over his head a foot long and hanging from his chin like a kinky mule tail. I hear Maggie suck in her breath. "Uhhnnh" is what it sounds like. Like when you see the wriggling end of a snake just in front of your foot on the road. "Uhhnnh."

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction



My Notes

doctrine: idea or belief

- 29 “But who was *she* named after?” asked Wagero.
- 30 “I guess after Grandma Dee,” I said.
- 31 “And who was she named after?” asked Wagero.
- 32 “Her mother,” I said, and saw Wagero was getting tired. “That’s about as far back as I can trace it,” I said. Though, in fact, I probably could have carried it back beyond the Civil War through the branches.
- 33 “Well,” said Asalamalakim, “there you are.”
- 34 “Uhhnnh,” I heard Maggie say.
- 35 “There I was not,” I said, “before ‘Dicie’ cropped up in our family, so why should I try to trace it that far back?”
- 36 He just stood there grinning, looking down on me like somebody inspecting a Model A car. Every once in a while he and Wagero sent eye signals over my head.
- 37 “How do you pronounce this name?” I asked.
- 38 “You don’t have to call me by it if you don’t want to,” said Wagero.
- 39 “Why shouldn’t I?” I asked. “If that’s what you want us to call you, we’ll call you.”
- 40 “I know it might sound awkward at first,” said Wagero.
- 41 “I’ll get used to it,” I said. “Ream it out again.”
- 42 Well, soon we got the name out of the way. Asalamalakim had a name twice as long and three times as hard. After I tripped over it two or three times, he told me to just call him Hakim-a-barber. I wanted to ask him was he a barber, but I didn’t really think he was, so I didn’t ask.
- 43 “You must belong to those beef-cattle peoples down the road,” I said. They said “Asalamalakim” when they met you, too, but they didn’t shake hands. Always too busy: feeding the cattle, fixing the fences, putting up salt-lick shelters, throwing down hay. When the white folks poisoned some of the herd, the men stayed up all night with rifles in their hands. I walked a mile and a half just to see the sight.
- 44 Hakim-a-barber said, “I accept some of their **doctrines**, but farming and raising cattle is not my style.” (They didn’t tell me, and I didn’t ask, whether Wagero—Dee—had really gone and married him.)



45 We sat down to eat and right away he said he didn't eat collards, and pork was unclean. Wangero, though, went on through the chitlins and corn bread, the greens, and everything else. She talked a blue streak over the sweet potatoes. Everything delighted her. Even the fact that we still used the benches her daddy made for the table when we couldn't afford to buy chairs.

46 "Oh, Mama!" she cried. Then turned to Hakim-a-barber. "I never knew how lovely these benches are. You can feel the rump prints," she said, running her hands underneath her and along the bench. Then she gave a sigh, and her hand closed over Grandma Dee's butter dish. "That's it!" she said. "I knew there was something I wanted to ask you if I could have." She jumped up from the table and went over in the corner where the churn stood, the milk in it **clabber** by now. She looked at the churn and looked at it.

47 "This churn top is what I need," she said. "Didn't Uncle Buddy whittle it out of a tree you all used to have?"

48 "Yes," I said.

49 "Uh huh," she said happily. "And I want the dasher, too."

50 "Uncle Buddy whittle that, too?" asked the barber.

51 Dee (Wangero) looked up at me.

52 "Aunt Dee's first husband whittled the dash," said Maggie so low you almost couldn't hear her. "His name was Henry, but they called him Stash."

53 "Maggie's brain is like an elephant's," Wangero said, laughing. "I can use the churn top as a centerpiece for the alcove table," she said, sliding a plate over the churn, "and I'll think of something artistic to do with the dasher."

54 When she finished wrapping the dasher, the handle stuck out. I took it for a moment in my hands. You didn't even have to look close to see where hands pushing the dasher up and down to make butter had left a kind of sink in the wood. In fact, there were a lot of small sinks; you could see where thumbs and fingers had sunk into the wood. It was beautiful light-yellow wood, from a tree that grew in the yard where Big Dee and Stash had lived.

55 After dinner Dee (Wangero) went to the trunk at the foot of my bed and started rifling through it. Maggie hung back in the kitchen over the dishpan. Out came Wangero with two quilts. They had been pieced by Grandma Dee, and then Big Dee and me had hung them on the quilt frames on the front porch and quilted them. One was in the Lone Star pattern. The other was Walk Around the Mountain. In both of them were scraps of dresses Grandma Dee had worn fifty and more years ago. Bits and pieces of Grandpa Jarrell's paisley shirts. And one teeny faded blue piece, about the size of a penny matchbox, that was from Great Grandpa Ezra's uniform that he wore in the Civil War.

56 "Mama," Wangero said sweet as a bird. "Can I have these old quilts?"

57 I heard something fall in the kitchen, and a minute later the kitchen door slammed.

58 "Why don't you take one or two of the others?" I asked. "These old things was just done by me and Big Dee from some tops your grandma pieced before she died."

59 "No," said Wangero. "I don't want those. They are stitched around the borders by machine."

60 "That'll make them last better," I said.

My Notes

clabber: sour milk

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

My Notes

snuff: chewing tobacco

61 “That’s not the point,” said Wangero. “These are all pieces of dresses Grandma used to wear. She did all this stitching by hand. Imagine!” She held the quilts securely in her arms, stroking them.

62 “Some of the pieces, like those lavender ones, come from old clothes her mother handed down to her,” I said, moving up to touch the quilts. Dee (Wangero) moved back just enough so that I couldn’t reach the quilts. They already belonged to her.

63 “Imagine!” she breathed again, clutching them closely to her bosom.

64 “The truth is,” I said, “I promised to give them quilts to Maggie, for when she marries John Thomas.”

65 She gasped like a bee had stung her.

66 “Maggie can’t appreciate these quilts!” she said. “She’d probably be backward enough to put them to everyday use.”

67 “I reckon she would,” I said. “God knows I been saving ’em for long enough with nobody using ’em. I hope she will!” I didn’t want to bring up how I had offered Dee (Wangero) a quilt when she went away to college. Then she had told me they were old-fashioned, out of style.

68 “But they’re *priceless!*” she was saying now, furiously; for she has a temper. “Maggie would put them on the bed and in five years they’d be in rags. Less than that!”

69 “She can always make some more,” I said. “Maggie knows how to quilt.”

70 Dee (Wangero) looked at me with hatred. “You just will not understand. The point is *these* quilts, these quilts!”

71 “Well,” I said, stumped. “What would you do with them?”

72 “Hang them,” she said. As if that was the only thing you *could* do with quilts.

73 Maggie by now was standing in the door. I could almost hear the sound her feet made as they scraped over each other.

74 “She can have them, Mama,” she said, like somebody used to never winning anything or having anything reserved for her. “I can ’member Grandma Dee without the quilts.”

75 I looked at her hard. She had filled her bottom lip with checkerberry **snuff**, and it gave her face a kind of dopey, hangdog look. It was Grandma Dee and Big Dee who taught her how to quilt herself. She stood there with her scarred hands hidden in the folds of her skirt. She looked at her sister with something like fear, but she wasn’t mad at her. This was Maggie’s portion. This was the way she knew God to work.

76 When I looked at her like that, something hit me in the top of my head and ran down to the soles of my feet. Just like when I’m in church and the spirit of God touches me and I get happy and shout. I did something I never had done before: hugged Maggie to me, then dragged her on into the room, snatched the quilts out of Miss Wangero’s hands, and dumped them into Maggie’s lap. Maggie just sat there on my bed with her mouth open.

77 “Take one or two of the others,” I said to Dee. But she turned without a word and went out to Hakim-a-barber.

78 “You just don’t understand,” she said, as Maggie and I came out to the car.

79 “What don’t I understand?” I wanted to know.

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

My Notes

6. **Key Ideas and Details:** What theme or central idea is suggested by the conversation about Dee's name in paragraphs 25–36?

7. **Key Ideas and Details:** In paragraphs 61–72, how does the conversation between Dee and Mama about the quilts develop the theme?

8. **Craft and Structure:** What does the word *priceless* mean, based on the way it is used in paragraph 68?

Working from the Text

9. Complete the SIFT chart with your group members.

SIFT	Textual Detail	Analysis or Interpretation
Symbols		
Images		
Figures of Speech		
Tone/Theme		

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Check Your Understanding

Explain the meaning of the title “Everyday Use” in the context of the short story.

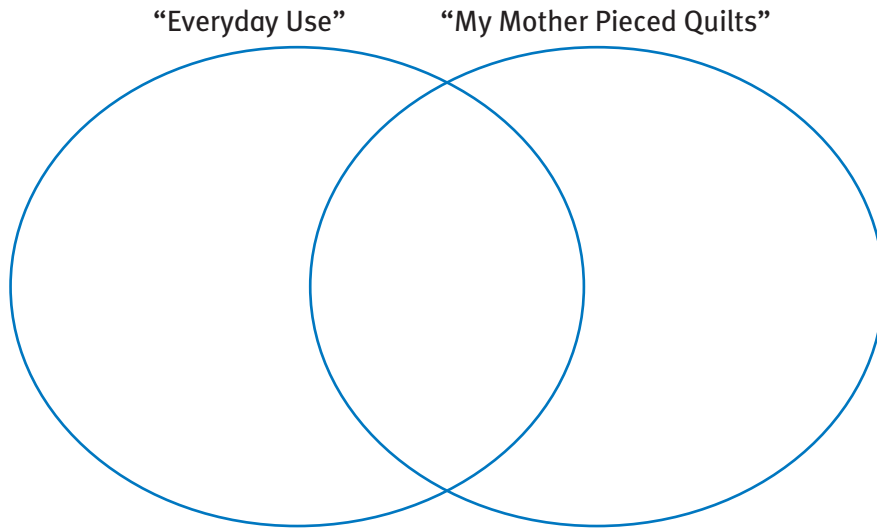
My Notes

Perspectives on Heritage: Poetry and Fiction

My Notes

Comparing Texts

10. The quilts in “Everyday Use” and “My Mother Pieced Quilts” take on symbolic significance. What does the quilt in each story represent? How does each quilt convey the family’s heritage? Use the Venn diagram to compare and contrast how the two texts explore a similar theme.



Comparing Claims

For Embedded Assessment 2, you will be constructing an argument. One key element of argumentation that differentiates it from mere persuasion is that, in addition to presenting claims, arguments present **counterclaims**. A counterclaim asserts a different—sometimes conflicting—interpretation, explanation, or position. Both should be supportable with evidence, although you might use evidence to refute the counterclaim.

Consider the topic for Embedded Assessment 2: To what extent does one’s culture influence the way one views others and the world? Study the sample claim and counterclaim below, and then create your own claim and counterclaim, using “Everyday Use” or “My Mother Pieced Quilts.”

Potential Claim: In Harper Lee’s novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, most of the characters in the novel are afflicted with Maycomb’s “usual disease,” racism, showing that culture strongly influences a person’s views of what is right or wrong in the world.

Possible Counterclaim: While racism may be widespread, Scout’s character shows that a person’s family more strongly influences a person’s views of others than the broader culture does.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

A **counterclaim** is an opposing viewpoint.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Close Reading

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Compare and contrast characters in a nonfiction text.
- Draw conclusions about individuals' responses to culture and explain conclusions in an essay.

Preview

In this activity, you will read a personal essay and draw conclusions about the characters' perspectives on culture.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- As you read Mukherjee's "Two Ways to Belong in America" with your collaborative discussion team, you will take on the alternating roles of reader, responder, and listener. After one individual reads, the next will respond to the reading by summarizing, questioning, clarifying, or connecting with the text. The responder will then become the reader, the reader will become the listener, and so on until the essay is read in its entirety.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bharati Mukherjee was born in India in 1940 to wealthy parents. Reading and writing by the age of three, she knew she wanted to write professionally by the age of 10. Mukherjee attended the University of Calcutta, the University of Baroda, and the University of Iowa, where she met her husband. Both writers, they reside in California where Bharati Mukherjee is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Personal Essay

Two Ways to Belong in America

by Bharati Mukherjee

1 IOWA CITY—This is a tale of two sisters from Calcutta, Mira and Bharati, who have lived in the United States for some 35 years, but who find themselves on different sides in the current debate over the status of immigrants.

2 I am an American citizen and she is not. I am moved that thousands of long-term residents are finally taking the oath of citizenship. She is not.

3 Mira arrived in Detroit in 1960 to study child psychology and pre-school education. I followed her a year later to study creative writing at the University of Iowa. When we left India, we were almost identical in appearance and attitude. We dressed alike, in **saris**; we expressed identical views on politics, social issues, love and marriage in the same Calcutta convent-school accent. We would endure our two years in America, secure our degrees, then return to India to marry the grooms of our father’s choosing.

4 Instead, Mira married an Indian student in 1962 who was getting his business administration degree at Wayne State University. They soon acquired the labor certifications necessary for the green card of hassle-free residence and employment.

5 Mira still lives in Detroit, works in the Southfield, Mich., school system, and has become nationally recognized for her contributions in the fields of pre-school education and parent-teacher relationships. After 36 years as a legal immigrant in this country, she clings passionately to her Indian citizenship and hopes to go home to India when she retires.

6 In Iowa City in 1963, I married a fellow student, an American of Canadian parentage. Because of the accident of his North Dakota birth, I bypassed labor-certification requirements and the race-related “quota” system that favored the applicant’s country of origin over his or her merit. I was prepared for (and even welcomed) the emotional strain that came with marrying outside my ethnic community. In 33 years of marriage, we have lived in every part of North America. By choosing a husband who was not my father’s selection, I was opting for **fluidity**, self-invention, blue jeans and T-shirts, and renouncing 3,000 years (at least) of **caste**-observant, “pure culture” marriage in the Mukherjee family. My books have often been read as unapologetic (and in some quarters overenthusiastic) texts for cultural and psychological “mongrelization.” It’s a word I celebrate.

7 Mira and I have stayed sisterly close by phone. In our regular Sunday morning conversations, we are **unguardedly** affectionate. I am her only blood relative on this continent. We expect to see each other through the looming crises of aging and ill health without being asked. Long before Vice President Gore’s “Citizenship U.S.A.” drive, we’d had our polite arguments over the ethics of retaining an overseas citizenship while expecting the permanent protection and economic benefits that come with living and working in America.

My Notes

sari: an Indian garment for women

fluidity: changing often or easily
caste: class into which a Hindu person is born

unguardedly: speaking honestly

Perspectives on Heritage: Nonfiction

superficial: not deep or without substance

scapegoating: unfairly blaming someone for something done by others

scrutiny: study; examination

discretion: judgment

manipulated: controlled

curtailing: restricting; limiting

subtext: an underlying meaning or message

divergence: difference

demotion: lower position or rank

referendum: the practice of voting for or against a law on a specific issue

GRAMMAR & USAGE Syntax

Commas, which separate words and phrases in a passage, can play an important role in syntax. Notice the use of commas in the paragraphs beginning with “Mira’s voice.” In just three sentences, Mukherjee uses fourteen commas and hardly any conjunctions. This speeds up the pacing of the writing, focusing attention on the issue of immigrant status.

Mukherjee’s use of commas—often to separate items in a list—helps to express her tone. What adjectives would you use to describe the author’s tone after rereading this paragraph?

8 Like well-raised sisters, we never said what was really on our minds, but we probably pitied one another. She, for the lack of structure in my life, the erasure of Indianness, the absence of an unvarying daily core. I, for the narrowness of her perspective, her uninvolvedness with the mythic depths or the **superficial** pop culture of this society. But, now, with the **scapegoating** of “aliens” (documented or illegal) on the increase, and the targeting of long-term legal immigrants like Mira for new **scrutiny** and new self-consciousness, she and I find ourselves unable to maintain the same polite **discretion**. We were always unacknowledged adversaries, and we are now, more than ever, sisters.

9 “I feel used,” Mira raged on the phone the other night. “I feel **manipulated** and discarded. This is such an unfair way to treat a person who was invited to stay and work here because of her talent. My employer went to the I.N.S. and petitioned for the labor certification. For over 30 years, I’ve invested my creativity and professional skills into the improvement of this country’s pre-school system. I’ve obeyed all the rules, I’ve paid my taxes, I love my work, I love my students, I love the friends I’ve made. How dare America now change its rules in midstream? If America wants to make new rules **curtailing** benefits of legal immigrants, they should apply only to immigrants who arrive after those rules are already in place.” To my ears, it sounded like the description of a long-enduring, comfortable yet loveless marriage, without risk or recklessness. Have we the right to demand, and to expect, that we be loved? (That, to me, is the **subtext** of the arguments by immigration advocates.) My sister is an expatriate, professionally generous and creative, socially courteous and gracious, and that’s as far as her Americanization can go. She is here to maintain an identity, not to transform it.

10 I asked her if she would follow the example of others who have decided to become citizens because of the anti-immigration bills in Congress. And here, she surprised me. “If America wants to play the manipulative game, I’ll play it too,” she snapped. “I’ll become a U.S. citizen for now, then change back to Indian when I’m ready to go home. I feel some kind of irrational attachment to India that I don’t to America. Until all this hysteria against legal immigrants, I was totally happy. Having my green card meant I could visit any place in the world I wanted to and then come back to a job that’s satisfying and that I do very well.”

11 In one family, from two sisters alike as peas in a pod, there could not be a wider **divergence** of immigrant experience. America spoke to me—I *married* it—I embraced the **demotion** from expatriate aristocrat to immigrant nobody, surrendering those thousands of years of “pure culture,” the saris, the delightfully accented English. She retained them all. Which of us is the freak?

12 Mira’s voice, I realize, is the voice not just of the immigrant South Asian community but of an immigrant community of the millions who have stayed rooted in one job, one city, one house, one ancestral culture, one cuisine, for the entirety of their productive years. She speaks for greater numbers than I possibly can. Only the fluency of her English and the anger, rather than fear, born of confidence from her education, differentiate her from the seamstresses, the domestics, the technicians, the shop owners, the millions of hard-working but effectively silenced documented immigrants as well as their less fortunate “illegal” brothers and sisters.

13 Nearly 20 years ago, when I was living in my husband’s ancestral homeland of Canada, I was always well-employed but never allowed to feel part of the local Quebec or larger Canadian society. Then, through a Green Paper that invited a national **referendum** on the unwanted side effects of “nontraditional” immigration, the Government officially turned against its immigrant communities, particularly those from South Asia.

14 I felt then the same sense of betrayal that Mira feels now. I will never forget the pain of that sudden turning, and the casual racist outbursts the Green Paper elicited. That sense of betrayal had its desired effect and drove me, and thousands like me, from the country.

15 Mira and I differ, however, in the ways in which we hope to interact with the country that we have chosen to live in. She is happier to live in America as an expatriate Indian than as an immigrant American. I need to feel like a part of the community I have adopted (as I tried to feel in Canada as well). I need to put roots down, to vote and make the difference that I can. The price that the immigrant willingly pays, and that the exile avoids, is the trauma of self-transformation.

Second Read

- Reread the personal essay to answer these text-dependent questions.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

1. Key Ideas and Details: Based on paragraph 5, what inferences can you draw about Mira’s attitude to the United States?

2. Craft and Structure: What is the meaning of *mongrelization* as it is used in paragraph 6? What connotations does the word have?

3. Craft and Structure: Explain the meaning and significance of the sentence beginning “We were always unacknowledged . . .” in paragraph 8.

4. Key Ideas and Details: How does the final paragraph reflect the central idea of the selection?

5. Craft and Structure: What is the author’s purpose in writing this piece?



WORD CONNECTIONS

Etymology

The word *expatriate* comes from the French word *expatrier*, which means “to banish.” The prefix *ex-* means “out of,” and the root *patrie* means “native land.” *Patrie* can be traced back to Latin *pater*, meaning “father.” In 1818, *expatriate* meant “one who has been banished.” Today it refers to someone who chooses to live in another country.

My Notes



INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Respond

Look for evidence in your independent reading of how the experience of living in a different culture can change people’s perspective of their own cultural identity. List examples of how this new perspective clashes with family members who resist change.

Perspectives on Heritage: Nonfiction

My Notes

Working from the Text

6. With your group, revisit the text to complete the chart below to help you analyze the two different approaches to belonging in America.

Bharati		Mira
	Birthplace	
	Citizenship	
	Dress	
	Area of Study	
	Marriage	
	Views on Heritage	
	Attitudes Toward “Citizenship U.S.A.” Drive	
	Attitude Toward Living in America	

Check Your Understanding

Beyond comparing the two sisters in “Two Ways to Belong in America,” compare the sisters in this nonfiction text with those you met in “Everyday Use.” What, if any, similarities do you observe in the way the sisters view their heritage? How many parallels can your discussion group discover between these fiction and nonfiction texts?

Argumentation in “An Indian Father’s Plea”



WORD CONNECTIONS

Content Connections

The word *culture* has different meanings in the arts, social studies, business, and science. In the arts, culture refers to a developed appreciation of such art forms as dance, opera, classical and jazz music, and the fine arts. In social studies, culture refers to the beliefs, customs, forms of communication, and artistic products of a particular country, ethnic group, or time period. In business, culture refers to a shared set of goals and values in a company or institution. In science, a culture is a living organism, such as bacteria or mold, grown in nutrients in a lab.

intuitive: sensitive and insightful
faculties: talents or abilities
regalia: special cultural dress

My Notes

integrated: well put together

4 The traditional Indian baby basket became his “turtle’s shell” and served as the first seat for his classroom. He was strapped in for safety, protected from injury by the willow roots and hazel wood construction. The basket was made by a tribal elder who had gathered her materials with prayer and in a ceremonial way. It is the same kind of basket that our people have used for thousands of years. It is specially designed to provide the child with the kind of knowledge and experience he will need in order to survive in his culture and environment.

5 Wind-Wolf was strapped in snugly with a deliberate restriction upon his arms and legs. Although you in Western society may argue that such a method serves to hinder motor-skill development and abstract reasoning, we believe it forces the child to first develop his **intuitive faculties**, rational intellect, symbolic thinking, and five senses. Wind-Wolf was with his mother constantly, closely bonded physically, as she carried him on her back or held him in front while breast-feeding. She carried him everywhere she went, and every night he slept with both parents. Because of this, Wind-Wolf’s educational setting was not only a “secure” environment, but it was also very colorful, complicated, sensitive, and diverse. He has been with his mother at the ocean at daybreak when she made her prayers and gathered fresh seaweed from the rocks, he has sat with his uncles in a rowboat on the river while they fished with gill nets, and he has watched and listened to elders as they told creation stories and animal legends and sang songs around the campfires.

6 He has attended the sacred and ancient White Deerskin Dance of his people and is well-acquainted with the cultures and languages of other tribes. He has been with his mother when she gathered herbs for healing and watched his tribal aunts and grandmothers gather and prepare traditional foods such as acorn, smoked salmon, eel, and deer meat. He has played with abalone shells, pine nuts, iris grass string, and leather while watching the women make beaded jewelry and traditional native **regalia**. He has had many opportunities to watch his father, uncles, and ceremonial leaders use different kinds of colorful feathers and sing different kinds of songs while preparing for the sacred dances and rituals.

7 As he grew older, Wind-Wolf began to crawl out of the baby basket, develop his motor skills, and explore the world around him. When frightened or sleepy, he could always return to the basket, as a turtle withdraws into its shell. Such an inward journey allows one to reflect in privacy on what he has learned and to carry the new knowledge deeply into the unconscious and the soul. Shapes, sizes, colors, texture, sound, smell, feeling, taste, and the learning process are therefore functionally **integrated**—the physical and spiritual, matter and energy, conscious and unconscious, individual and social.

8 This kind of learning goes beyond the basics of distinguishing the difference between rough and smooth, square and round, hard and soft, black and white, similarities and extremes.

9 For example, Wind-Wolf was with his mother in South Dakota while she danced for seven days straight in the hot sun, fasting, and piercing herself in the sacred Sun Dance Ceremony of a distant tribe. He has been doctored in a number of different healing ceremonies by medicine men and women from diverse places ranging from Alaska and Arizona to New York and California. He has been in more than 20 different sacred sweat-lodge rituals—used by native tribes to purify mind, body, and soul—since he was 3 years old, and he has already been exposed to many different religions of his racial brothers: Protestant, Catholic, Asian Buddhist, and Tibetan Lamaist.

Argumentation in “An Indian Father’s Plea”

My Notes

Second Read

- Reread the essay to answer these text-dependent questions.
 - Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
1. **Craft and Structure:** What is the author’s purpose in paragraphs 2–10, where he describes and explains the kinds of things Wind-Wolf has been taught outside school?
 2. **Key Ideas and Details:** What element of argument is displayed in the sentence beginning “Although you in Western society . . .” in paragraph 5?
 3. **Knowledge and Ideas:** What element of an argument is displayed in the underlined sentences in paragraph 10? How do they improve the effectiveness of the speakers claim?
 4. **Craft and Structure:** In paragraph 11, what is the author’s claim? How does he support this claim?
 5. **Craft and Structure:** How does the tone shift in paragraph 13? How does the author achieve this shift? In terms of argumentative structure, what is the author trying to achieve?
 6. **Key Ideas and Details:** Summarize what the father is asking the teacher to do.

Synthesis: Drafting Your Position

My Notes

4. Working with your group, brainstorm three different ways one could respond to this type of prompt—by defending, challenging, or qualifying it.

Response #1 (Defend):

Response #2 (Challenge):

Response #3 (Qualify):

5. Share your personal responses to the prompt so everyone has a chance to hear perspectives that he or she may not have considered. Reach a consensus by asking each team member to vote for his or her position. Give 3 points to the first choice, 2 to the second, and 1 to the third. Total the points of the group to determine the most popular position.

Write your group position here:

6. Now that you have a position, brainstorm stories, essays, poems, or real-life incidents that support your position. Make a list of the texts you might use, and then pass a pen and paper around the table while each member writes one supporting idea. Each member needs to add a new piece of evidence or support.

Check Your Understanding

After reaching a consensus and brainstorming support for your position, construct a well-crafted thesis statement that asserts your group's position. Write it below.

Synthesis: Presenting Your Position

My Notes

3. Report your findings to your group, and listen as they share their works and ideas. After discussing your answers, write your revised thesis in the My Notes.
4. Revisit the components of an argumentative essay in Activity 1.13, Argumentation in “An Indian Father’s Plea.” How will your group organize the different elements of an argumentative essay to make the strongest possible case in support of your claim? Work together to create your organizational framework. Consider the following questions as you plan your essay:
 - How will we organize our supporting ideas: by idea or by source? Consider how you may offset the challenges of a group essay as you answer this question.
 - Will our concessions and refutations be a separate paragraph from the supporting paragraphs? Or will concessions and refutations be incorporated into the paragraphs that offer explicit support for our claim?
 - Keep in mind as you make your plan that you will each be writing a separate “chunk” of your argumentative essay. How will you create cohesion between paragraphs?

Check Your Understanding

Write your organizational plan below by creating an outline for a synthesis paper and describing how your group will complete the task.



Independent Reading Checkpoint

Review your independent reading and select examples that you can use as evidence in your argumentative essay to support the position that culture has a strong or weak influence on how people view others and the world.

ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment is to collaborate with your peers to write an essay that responds to the following synthesis prompt:

To what extent does one's culture inform the way one views others and the world?

Be sure to support your claim with evidence from at least three different texts you have read, viewed, or listened to in this unit, as well as with personal experience and insights.

Planning and Prewriting: Take time to make a plan for your essay.

- In the texts you have studied, how have the attitudes and actions of the authors or characters been influenced by their cultural backgrounds?
- How will your group reach a consensus to write a preliminary thesis (claim) on the extent to which culture shapes perspective?
- How will you select an organizational structure that addresses the key elements of an argument—hook, claim, support, concessions/refutations, and call to action?
- Once your organizational framework is clear to all members of your group, how will you assign each individual a section to compose? For example, do you plan to write the body paragraphs separately and then synthesize your information in order to compose your opening and conclusion as a group?

Drafting and Revising: Compose your synthesis paper.

- How will you ensure that each group member contributes a section that supports the thesis with evidence identifying cultural influences?
- How will you incorporate textual evidence from your readings into the section you will contribute to the essay?
- How can you work with your group to share and respond to the individual sections in order to revise and synthesize a cohesive draft?
- How can you and your group use the Scoring Guide to develop questions that will focus your discussion and revision?

Editing and Publishing: Prepare your essay in final form.

- How can you work collaboratively as well as individually to improve sentence variety with parallel structure, phrases, or semicolons?
- How will you check that you have embedded source material using correct punctuation and in-text parenthetical citations?
- Which resources (including peer editing) can help you edit for correct grammar, appropriate punctuation and capitalization, and correct spelling?

Reflection

After completing this Embedded Assessment, respond to the following:

- What were the benefits and challenges of writing collaboratively, and what would you do differently if faced with a similar task in the future?
- Of the texts you studied in this unit, which author or character's perspective could you relate to or understand best? Did that person have a cultural heritage similar to yours? Explain.

Writing a Synthesis Paper

SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Incomplete
Ideas	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a clearly stated and strongly maintained claim that takes a specific position • develops the argument effectively by integrating relevant evidence from a variety of texts and personal insights. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes an effective claim with a specific position • develops an argument sufficiently by integrating evidence from a variety of texts and personal experiences. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has an unclear or insufficiently maintained claim, lacks focus, or does not take a position • uses vague, irrelevant, or insufficient evidence to develop the argument. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is not coherent and does not make a clear claim or state a position • provides little or no evidence to develop an argument.
Structure	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses an effective organization that establishes clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence • introduces ideas smoothly, develops claims and counterclaims fairly, and provides a satisfying conclusion • uses appropriate and varied transitions. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses an adequate organization that establishes relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence • introduces ideas, develops claims and counterclaims, and provides a conclusion • uses some varied transitions. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses an inconsistent or confusing organization • does not develop claims and counterclaims and/or conclude ideas • uses weak, repetitive, or insufficient transitions. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a confusing organization and/or does not link ideas • does not develop claims and counterclaims or provide a conclusion • uses weak or no transitions.
Use of Language	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses diction and syntax that convey a formal, authoritative voice • correctly embeds and punctuates parenthetical citations • demonstrates strong command of conventions for grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses diction and syntax that convey a formal voice • uses generally correct parenthetical citations, with appropriate punctuation • demonstrates adequate command of conventions for grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not use appropriate diction or formal voice • omits parenthetical citations • demonstrates partial or insufficient command of conventions; errors in grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and/or spelling interfere with meaning. 	<p>The essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses inappropriate diction and informal voice • omits parenthetical citations • demonstrates little command of conventions; numerous errors in grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and/or spelling interfere with meaning.