

Writing for Change: An Advanced ELL Resource



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INÉS POBLET

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To the Educator

Dear English Language Teacher,

I am so honored and humbled to be able to offer up some resources in the work of anti-racism and decolonization in the field of English language teaching, to be able to contribute in a small way to the larger work. This work is inherently a collective effort. And it is in each one of us taking on this charge that change happens.

As you begin reviewing this resource, I would like to make space for you to know me as the author of this text, beyond my name and position title, as your fellow human being. And so, I have included a narrative introduction as a way of telling my story and building a bridge of connection. Please note, I've included this narrative introduction in Chapter 1 as a sample for students to work with.

Me llamo Inés. I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The street name sticks to my mind like glue, a familiar sound with a rhyme and pattern that speaks of home. I couldn't tell you how to find the street or what highway to take (we moved away when I was just 8 years old), but I can tell you the sing-song feeling of the name of la calle de Yapeyu.

My family, my parents being both teachers, moved from Argentina to a tiny town of Ayolas, in Paraguay, where we had to close the gates in front of our house to keep the cows out of our yard. I would like to tell you about the downpouring rain of beetles, falling from the trees because of the Amazonian heat in that little town. And how those few years there formed me.

I would like to tell you about the day we got off an airplane in LA, where my mother's side of our family, Mexican-American from Jalisco, welcomed us with open arms. Fierce and loving people I did not know yet. My tía fitting us in her pickup truck (was it all of us in one car?) and me staring up and out at the tall buildings, the throngs of cars and sprawling freeways.

I want you to know about my living in my abuelos' house, the grey stone burro that lived in the rock lawn of their front yard, greeting us as we walked up the steep steps, one ear missing but still cheerful. The quesadillas and chocolate milk I would have with my abuela at the kitchen counter, as me and my sisters talked about our school day.

The way my name would feel as it found its awkward way out of my white teacher's tongue. AYE-NEZ. Pain. Immediate. Every first day of school.

I could tell you about learning to challenge that pain and the spaces that caused it as I got older. It was a long journey of hiding, learning, forming so that I was neither yelling nor whispering myself. Our LA life, so sudden, so magical, and so painful all at once.

I would like you to know me. My immigrant story because they are pieces of memory that make up my being. They are culture and identity, they are stories that we tell and retell and relive. They are me.

When we unpack the narratives that brought us to who we are today, we begin the work of growing with and caring about human kind. We come to understand our intersections. We see a system that does not serve us: and we become informed, aware, and active in that conversation. We make a path for liberation possible, liberation for ourselves, for our students, for our schools.

To be fully present in the whole-body work of anti-racist teaching practices, in order to be able to move within that framework, we, as educators, really need to start with ourselves, our positionality, our experience walking through the world. We have to unpack how we navigate a system that holds the “white body” (as *Resmaa Menakem so aptly puts it) at the center of a false narrative of success. The lie of this is embedded in all of us.

In my own personal growth in creating this resource, I am having to dig deeper into the various and complex parts of my own identity. When I make space for this inner dialogue, my sense of awareness becomes heightened, it takes longer, the process is slower and more intentional, I practice at it, and know I will fail. I try again, and I certainly learn.

My hope is that we, as educators, never stop practicing this awareness, and that the inner work brings us to action in all facets of our lives, in our respective spheres of power and in our experiences of oppression.

Below, I’ve put together some resources and reflection tasks for the educator on identity and its impact on our lives and in our teaching. If at all possible, I would strongly encourage a chance to talk with fellow educators about your reflections, building a culture of collectivism, growth and trust that will fuel the good work of teaching and living in an actively anti-racist way.

Identity Work for the Educator:



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Part A: Warm-up Questions: Reflect on the following questions to begin thinking about the parts of your identity.

1. How do you identify? What are some key parts of your identity that come to mind with this question?
2. Have you come across the term “intersectionality”? What do you know about the term?
3. Review some of the media resources listed below. As you do so, consider the following guiding question: How can learning more about intersectionality and identity as well as its impact on our lives, support your own work and growth as an English language teacher?

Identity Resources:

Resource 1: Video: Kimberlé Crenshaw: What is Intersectionality?

Resource 2: TED Talk/Video: The urgency of intersectionality

Resource 3: Article: [Teaching at the Intersections by Monita K. Bell](#)

Resource 4: Podcast: [Notice the Rage; Notice the Silence - Resmaa Menakem*](#)

Resource 5: Article: [The Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture](#)

Part B: Reflection Activity: Having reviewed some of the resources above (and possibly finding additional resources to inspire this conversation), take a moment to reflect on the pieces of your own identity and intersections using either or both of the templates provided. See what works best for you.

Consider the following aspects of identity to help guide you: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, religious or spiritual affiliation, citizenship, age, socio-economic class, education, etc.

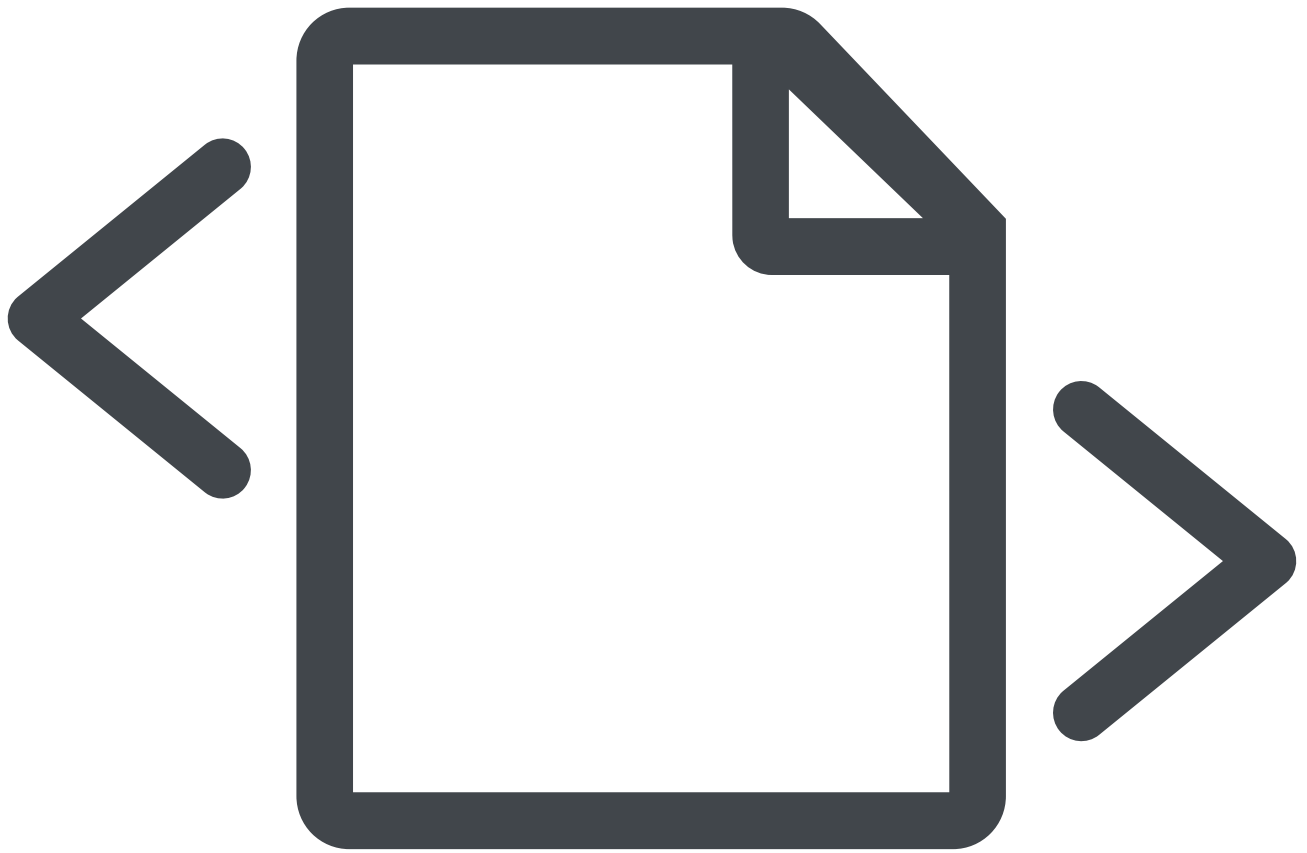
As you move through this activity, consider how this practice can support your work in the classroom context or with colleagues in the field.

Template 1 (see PDF file embedded here)

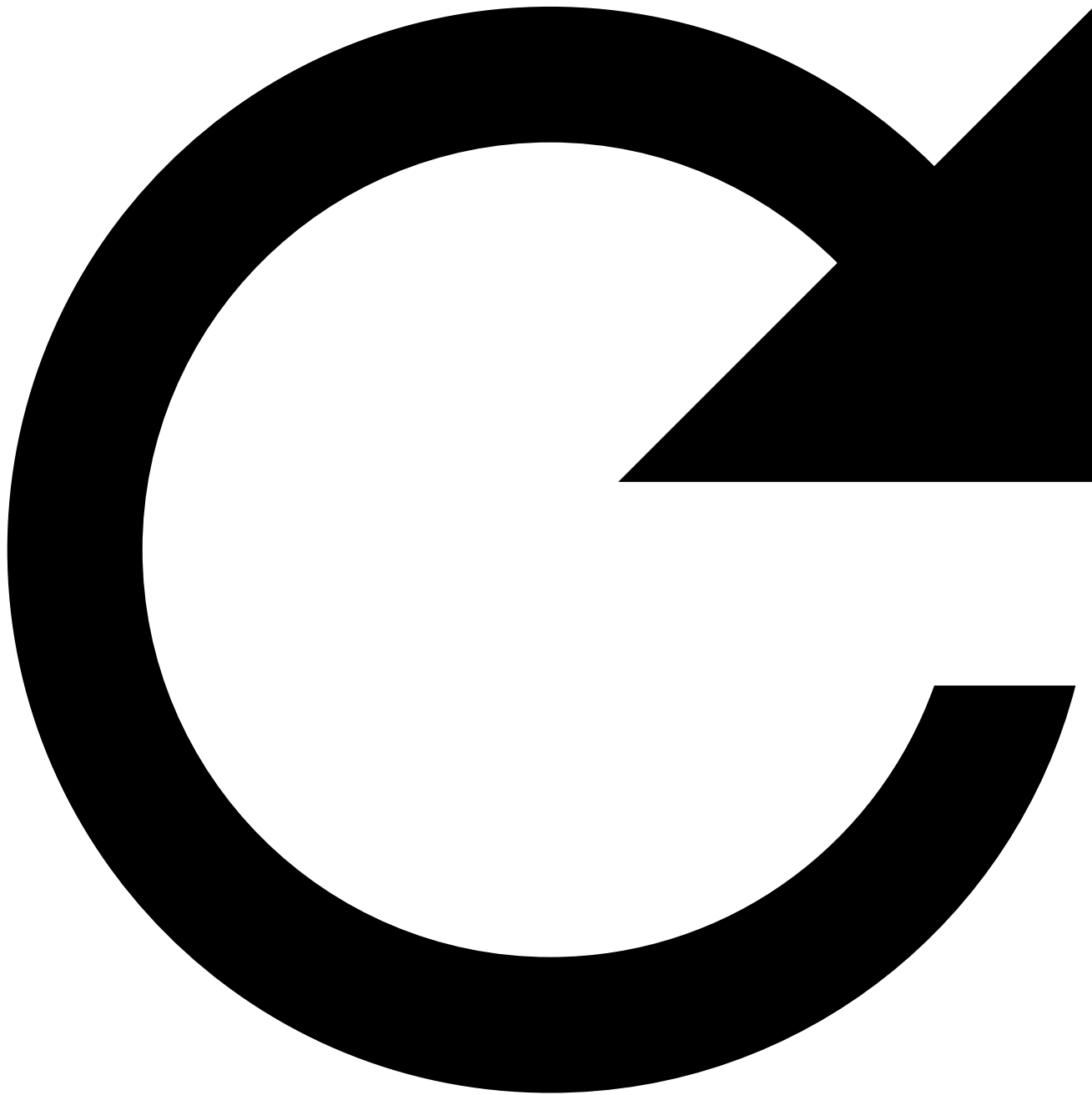
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<http://textbooks.whatcom.edu/ipoblet/?p=4>



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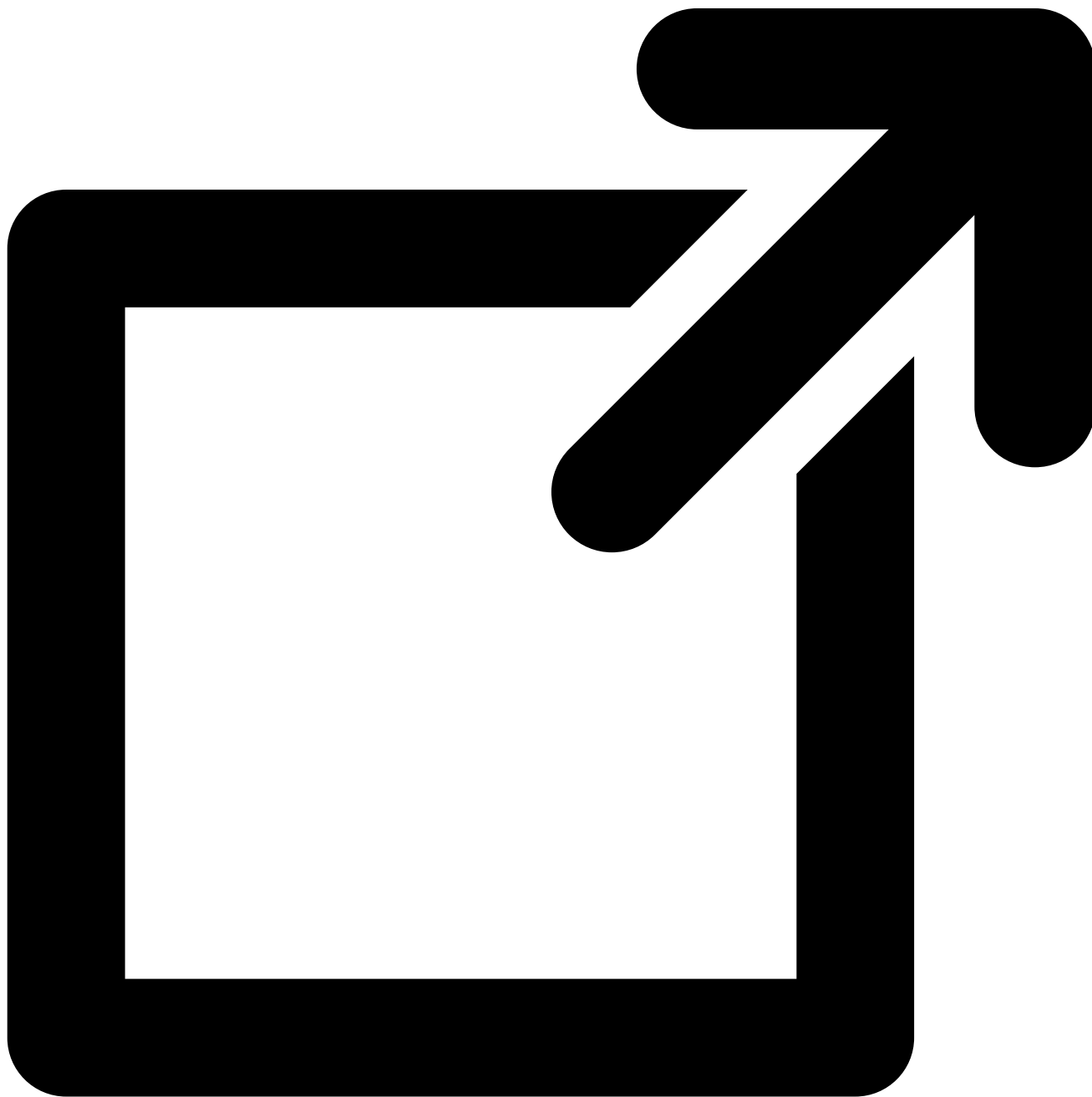


Taking too long?



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Template 2 (see chart below) from Social Justice in English Language Teaching - p.157 - CH.
12 Understanding Privilege

Contents

Religion

Economics

Language

Race

Gender

Part C: Post-Activity Discussion Questions: With a partner or in a small group, discuss what you wrote down regarding the different pieces of your identities. You may choose to use the following questions to guide the conversation:

1. Which identities do you think about every day? Which do you not think about often?
2. Which parts of your identity impact the way you see the world? Which parts of your identity impact the way you are seen by the world?
3. How do these identities play into your role as a language teacher? What do you bring to the classroom with you within the context of your identities and intersections?
4. Do you have an opportunity to find out more about your students' identities and intersections at the start of a quarter or term?
5. What type of dialogues exist in the start of the term to make room for this type of introduction to one another? What could that look like?

Concluding Notes:

The inner work of unpacking our identities and how they play out in our lives is a constant process of listening, reflecting, and growing. It is about naming how we either benefit from systemic oppression or suffer from systemic oppression. There is no neutrality.

Often, when I find myself reacting strongly to something, when I feel triggered, it is a signal to me that there is something I need to unpack. It takes time, patience, honesty and humility to go there, to go where things are nebulous, muddy, and uncomfortable, to the heart of things. Often, it is in this space where we grow most.

In the end, we all suffer when we contribute to and perpetuate a system that does not serve all. I would invite you, dear colleague, to consider how you might continue learning and growing in the work of identity with me, with your fellow English language colleagues. We have so much more to go. We have so much more to change about what and how we teach. We have to tear down a foundation of white supremacy and colonialism in ELT to be able to build up something we can feel proud to be a part of, to be **anti-racist English language teachers**.

During my own journey, and when I have felt the most vulnerable and overwhelmed by the realities of systemic oppression, I have clung to the following guidance given by Erin Jones, a brilliant fellow educator and Washingtonian who I had the honor of hearing speak to students, faculty, and staff at Whatcom Community College in the spring of 2020. In her virtual key note, I had asked a question to the note of feeling overwhelmed at the changes that needed (need) to happen at our campuses, in a time of racial reckoning during a world-wide pandemic, during the uprisings against an oppressive system in the U.S., and while at the same time, witnessing the strength and resilience of the Black Lives Matter movement in the midst of it all, I asked: How do I start impacting change? Where do I start? What do we (educators) focus on first? To this she said (and I'm paraphrasing here): **unpack your story, think about who you are serving, who is silent, who is not being served. Then take actions to change the system.**

This book has been a part of that pandemic journey with a goal of building English language learner resources, gathering up what I have learned about anti-racist, culturally responsive, and decolonization approaches. I know that I have not nearly met this goal in this single resource and that there is so much more to do. I am simply starting on the collective path and am so humbled to join fellow colleagues in the work of rewriting the myths and false narratives of our field. I invite you, my colleagues both in and outside of the field, to join the collective work.

This OER text includes the following:

- an introduction to creating a **collectivist culture** to support learning
- models and activities about **multiple ways of organizing ideas** in an essay.
- short readings and discussion **highlighting the work of community organizers, activists, and social justice movements**
- writing **prompts that ask learners to synthesize, reflect on, and connect** to the topics
- projects inviting learners to **apply the content to their community environment**
- additional resources offering **multiple modalities for further learning** including videos, articles, and podcasts
- a contrastive and **multilingual approach to exploring grammar patterns** to support writing

The chapters can be used in whichever order you and your students prefer and are by no means exhaustive or complete. I envision fellow educators continuing to add more OER texts for English Language Learning, Together, we can continue to lift up the power of the collective within an anti-racist

and decolonization framework. Use what is helpful for your classroom needs.

In addition, please refer to the Appendix of this OER text for further reading on decolonizing English language teaching. **Lastly, do not hesitate to reach out to me with your questions, comments, and ideas for future collaborations.** I am so looking forward to building community with you in the work and movement of change.

Sincerely,

Inés Poblet (she, her, ella), M.A. TESOL

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Creating Our Classroom Culture

Welcome! This section of this textbook is designed to support our classroom culture so that we can learn, support, and grow with one another. The activities below will focus on:

- talking about our classroom culture
- developing shared values
- planning for collective care
- setting learning goals



““鲜味 Prawn Cracker with Black Pepper” / 鲜味 鲜味 Chinese Food Culture / SML.20130211.EOSM.01866” by See-ming Lee (SML) is licensed with CC BY 2.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

A. Warm up: Have you heard of the words *collectivist* or *collectivism*? Do an internet search for this word to find a short definition. Then check your definition with your classmates and instructor.

This class will work with a collectivist approach to learning. This means we will place special emphasis on:

- *Whole group success*
- *Group members as resources*
- *Interaction*
- *Conversation*
- *Collaboration*
- *Relationship and trust building*

These features of our class will help us build community and the skills we need to succeed!

B. Shared Values Activity: Follow the steps below to begin talking about your values and those you may share with your classmates and instructor.

1. Make a list of the things that are important for you in a learning environment. What values do you want to see in this learning environment? (Some examples may include: making sure every person gets a chance to speak, supporting the learning of your classmates, etc.)
2. Then, join a small group of your classmates to share and discuss your ideas.
3. With your classmates, create a poster (or another type of visual aid) in the classroom to show the key values you have listed.
4. Review the items listed and discuss which items are a priority for the class. Is there anything to add or modify?
5. Refer to these shared values during class activities and interactions.

C. Planning for Self-Care and Support: As we learn, it is often challenging to remember to take care of our health, this includes our minds and bodies. Being a student can be really stressful.

1. With a small group or partner, make a list of actions you can take weekly to help take care of yourself as a learner.
2. Share your ideas with your instructor and the class. How many self-care actions did you come up

with together?

3. Which actions can you practice daily, weekly, monthly, etc.?
4. What can you do if it becomes difficult to practice self-care during your studies?
5. Keep this list of actions so that you can refer to it as needed.

D. Setting Personal and Collective Goals: Goal setting can be a really helpful way to plan for success and keep motivated in learning. Share your ideas with your classmate(s) and instructor.

Think about what goals you have for yourself in this class. Write down between 1-3 goals you would like to focus on in your learning.

Goals for this class:

- -
 -
-

Now think about how you will work to achieve these goals. Write down some steps you can take to reach the goals you listed above.

Steps I can take:

- -
 -
-

Lastly, think about what you may need from your classmates, teacher, and/or community to help you reach your goals. Remember that this is a learning community built on collective support. Help us understand how we can support you!

Support I may need from my community:

- -
 -
-

Note: Your instructor can do this goal setting activity too! We all have goals we want to reach!

Preparing to Write

This section of this textbook will present information on **preparing to write an essay**. It includes the following topics:

- understanding the assignment
- generating ideas
- introductions and thesis statements
- body paragraphs
- conclusions

How we organize our ideas reflects our culture and perspectives. There are certainly **more ways to organize ideas in a essay** than what is included below.

What have you learned about organizing ideas in writing? Talk to your instructor and classmates about your ideas to see what information and knowledge you can gather collectively about organizing ideas in writing. **Together, your knowledge base is a powerful resource for learning!**

Part 1: Understanding the Assignment



"Good morning. Ready, set, write." by Mandajuice is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. Do you have any strategies you use when you read through the instructions of an assignment? What are they?
2. What are some other ways to find support when the directions for an assignment feel unclear?

B. Five Steps > Looking for the Pieces: Reading the directions for an assignment can sometimes feel overwhelming. There are usually many important details to consider and it can be challenging to know where to focus and how to get started. Often, this may feel like you are trying to find the pieces of a puzzle, to put it all together. Imagine you are looking for puzzle pieces to understand the whole picture of the assignment. Use the following five steps to help you:



“Puzzle” by ellajphillips is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Five Steps!

1. Use a highlighter to mark key words that seem important in the assignment details.
2. Underline the phrases that show what you need to do in order to complete the assignment well.
3. Talk with your classmate(s) about what you highlighted and underlined. Did you mark the same words and phrases?
4. Review the assignment one more time. Circle anything that you have questions about or would like to know more about. Which parts did you circle?
5. Ask your instructor and check with your classmates about your questions.

Note: Most often, your questions will help your classmates understand the assignment better and will help the instructor improve their assignment instructions and materials. Your questions are important! Do not hesitate to ask them!

C. Sample Assignment #1: Here's a sample assignment from an English language class. Use the Five Steps in Part B to identify the key details you need to know in order to succeed. Check what you marked and noticed with your classmate(s).

Essay #1: Assignment Details

For your first writing assignment in this course, we will work on writing an essay and on using a source to support your ideas. Having read the article "Three Steps for Finding Your Perfect Job" by Lana Mena, think of the ideal job for you. Now think of reasons why this would be a good job for you. Write an essay to explain why this is your ideal job. Support your essay using your own ideas as well as some from the article.

Requirements:

- *Use MLA format requirements (refer to the syllabus for details)*
 - *Include an original title (and the Essay draft #)*
 - *Write an essay with an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion*
 - *Edit for sentence structure and clarity of ideas.*
 - *Refer to the article source in your essay.*
-

D. More Practice! Choose another assignment from a course you are taking. Practice finding the "puzzle pieces" using the *Five Steps* strategy to help better understand the assignment. Talk to the instructor, a writing center tutor, or classmate(s) about your notes.

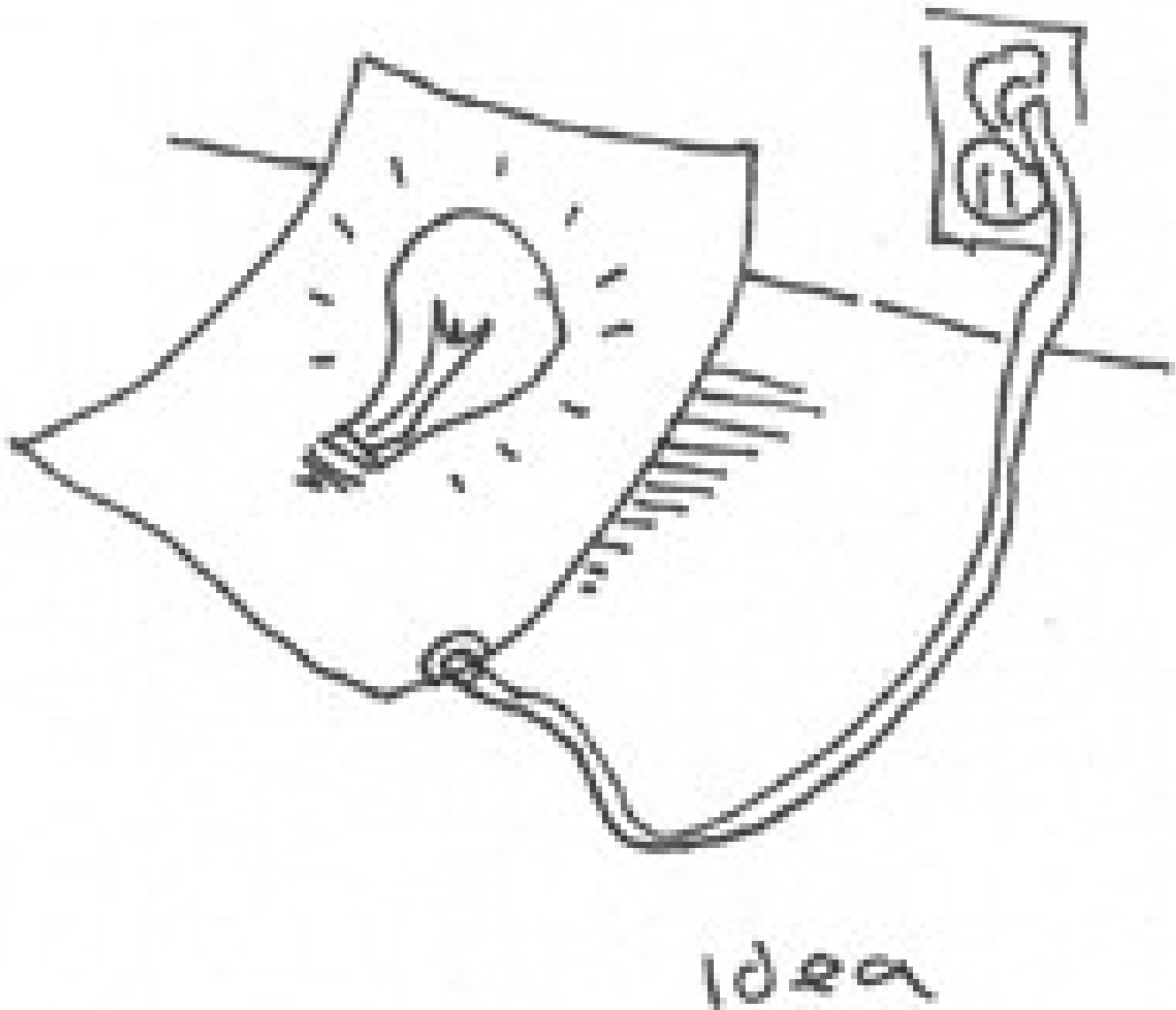
Part 2: Generating ideas: Brainstorming



“The Journey’, Australia, Wilson Promenade” by WanderingtheWorld (www.ChrisFord.com) is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

A. Warm up: How do you usually come up with ideas for a topic? Do you have any strategies that help you generate thoughts, feelings, and examples related to a topic? Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

B. Getting Started: The first step in beginning to write, whether you are writing a paragraph, an essay, a letter, or any other type of longer piece of writing, is to make time to think deeply about the topic. This requires time to think of your ideas. Teachers sometimes call this “brainstorming.”



“idea” by [Tony Dowler](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

Tip! Consider brainstorming **in whichever language you feel most comfortable in**. You could even brainstorm **using multiple languages together**. This is called **code meshing** (combining two languages for communication). You may also try **code switching** (switching from one language to another based on the topic, situation or environment). Many multilingual speakers find code meshing, code switching and other mixings of language helpful and natural for communicating freely.

The main goal of brainstorming is to **allow yourself space and time to think without boundaries, limitations, or judgments**. Do what you need to make that possible and see how many ideas you can think of. In the brainstorming phase, you should not worry about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. This is because, when we start to think about rules like these, we create a limit to our thinking. The most important part of brainstorming is the ideas that come from the practice!

C. Brainstorming Styles: There are many ways to brainstorm on a topic. Try a few different brainstorming styles to see which fits you best. Here are some brainstorming techniques to try:

Style 1: Listing

List your ideas using bullet points or numbers with short phrases or words.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Style 2: Clustering

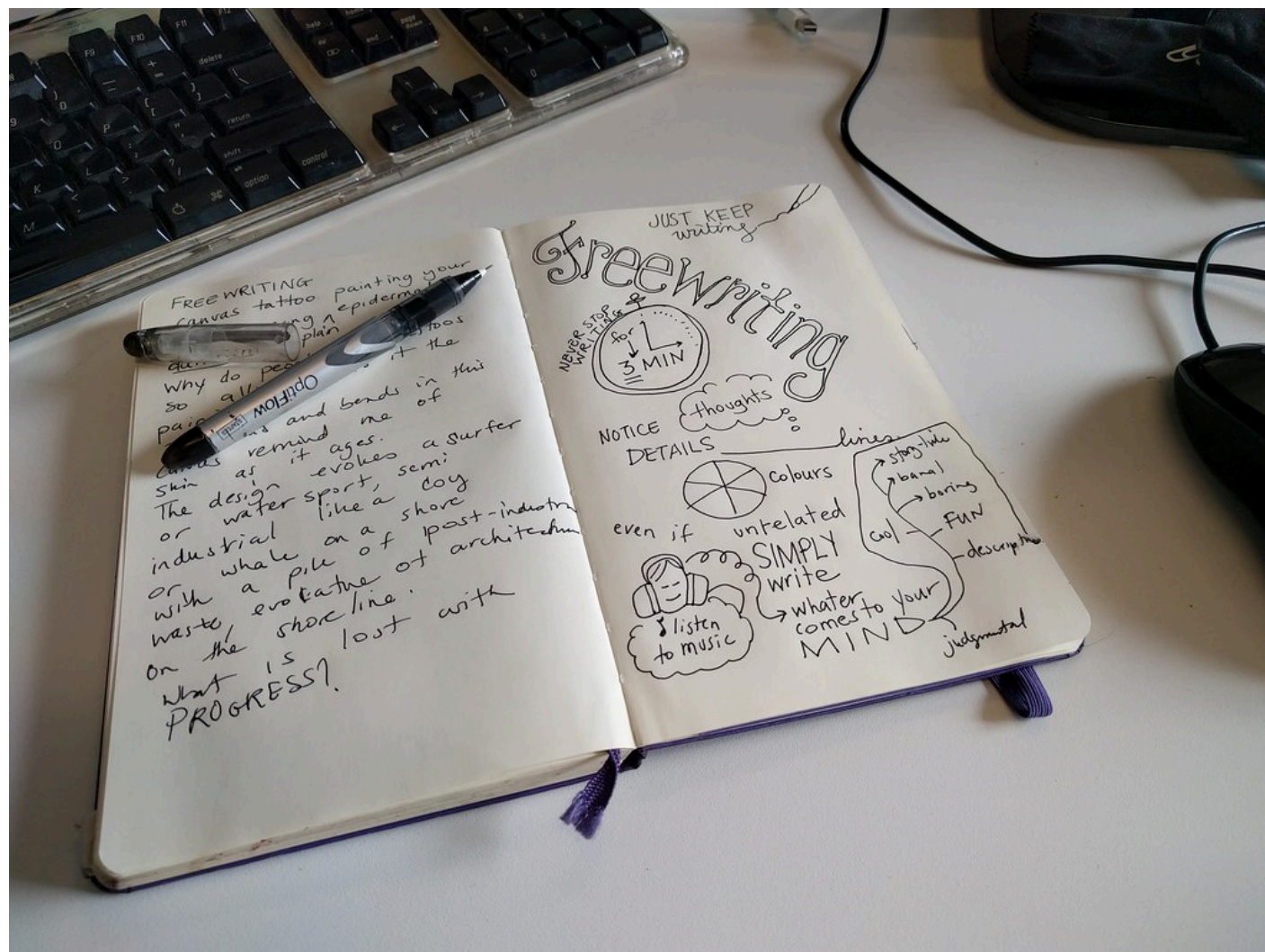
Use a web diagram with circles to show your ideas related to your topic.



"Career-Mind-map-Chalk" by flazingo_photos is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Style 3: Freewriting

Write about the topic without stopping to see what ideas come to mind. Try to keep writing without thinking too carefully about grammar, punctuation or vocabulary.



"#Freewriting" by giulia.forsythe is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Here are some additional ways to generate ideas.

- Some learners generate ideas about a topic by using their body to help them think. You might go for a walk or do some stretching and then come back to the topic to see what ideas came to mind as you connected your mind and body.
- Others might prefer to talk and think out loud with a partner (a family member, a classmate, a friend, etc.) about the topic. You might consider recording yourself using an audio recorder to keep track of the ideas that come to your mind.
- **Refer to this helpful resource to find out more about brainstorming techniques.**

Note: If you are finding it difficult to think of ideas related to a topic, it might be a good idea to consider another topic that you have more to say about. Talk to your instructor if and when you feel stuck or unsure about brainstorming on a topic. Sometimes the first step is the hardest one, so please don't hesitate to ask for support!

Part 3: Introductions



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A. Warm up: What type of information do you usually include in the first paragraph, the introduction, of an essay? List a few things that you would expect to see in an introduction. Then check your notes with your classmate(s) or with your instructor. Did you list the same things? Talk about your ideas.

B. Multiple Ways of Building an Introduction: An introduction in an essay introduces your reader to the topic you will be writing about. Imagine that your goal is to help your audience become familiar

with the general topic of your essay. It also delivers the goal and focus of the body paragraph(s) of your essay. In this section, we will explore different ways of building an introduction to help your reader follow your ideas and plan for writing. Some of the items that are usually included in the introduction of an essay are:

- an attention getter (sometimes called “a hook”, making the reader want to read more)
 - a quote, a statistic, an interesting fact, a question, a brief story, a scenario, etc.
- general information about the topic
- a thesis statement (see Part 4 for more information about what a thesis statement is)

The order and length of these items can vary. For longer essays and research papers, for example, an introduction, sometimes will include multiple paragraphs. For now, we will work on multiple organizational patterns that can present the topic and thesis statement to your reader. It is important to note that there is no one way to write an introduction, but rather, *multiple* ways to build on your ideas and prepare your reader for the body paragraphs of your essay. Here are some example styles using the topic of community organizer Dolores Huerta, from a chapter in this textbook. Notice that the thesis statements have been underlined.

Style 1: Hook, General Information, Thesis Statement

Have you heard of Dolores Huerta? What about Cesar Chavez? In the United States, most people are familiar with Cesar Chavez, but not many people know who Dolores Huerta is or what her contributions have been to the farmworkers movement. Dolores Huerta is the co-founder of the National Farmworkers Association (now called the United Farm Workers). She created the union chant ¡Si, Se Puede! and was a key leader in negotiating farm workers’ rights in California. She has also been awarded multiple national awards. There are three major contributions that civil rights activist Dolores Huerta has made to the community.

Style 2: Thesis Statement, General Information

Civil rights activist Dolores Huerta has made remarkable contributions to our community. In the United States, most people are familiar with Cesar Chavez, but not many people know who Dolores Huerta is or what her contributions have been to the farmworkers movement. Dolores Huerta is the co-founder of the National Farmworkers Association (now called the United Farm Workers). She created the union chant ¡Si, Se Puede! and was a key leader in negotiating farm workers’ rights in California. She has also been awarded multiple national awards.

Style 3: General Information, Thesis Statement

In the United States, most people are familiar with Cesar Chavez, but not many people know who Dolores Huerta is or what her contributions have been to the farmworkers movement. Dolores Huerta is the co-founder of the National Farmworkers Association (now called the United Farm Workers). She

created the union chant ¡Si, Se Puede! and was a key leader in negotiating farm workers' rights in California. She has also been awarded multiple national awards. Civil rights activist Dolores Huerta has made remarkable contributions to our community.

Style 4: Hook, Thesis Statement, General Information

Have you heard of Dolores Huerta? What about Cesar Chavez? In the United States, most people are familiar with Cesar Chavez, but not many people know who Dolores Huerta is or what her contributions have been to the farmworkers movement. Civil rights activist Dolores Huerta has made remarkable contributions to our community. Dolores Huerta is the co-founder of the National Farmworkers Association (now called the United Farm Workers). She created the union chant ¡Si, Se Puede! and was a key leader in negotiating farm workers' rights in California. She has also been awarded multiple national awards.

C. Reflection: Are some of the sample styles in Part B more familiar or comfortable for you than others? Which style(s) do you think you would like to try? Are there any additional patterns for organizing an introduction that you know about?

Part 4: Thesis Statements



“Kennington goal” by tubb is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

A. Warm up: Discuss the questions with a partner or in a small group. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. What do you think a thesis statement is?
2. What do you think is the purpose of a thesis statement?

B. Thesis Statements: A thesis statement is a sentence (sometimes more than one) that tells your

reader the focused topic you will write about in the body paragraphs of the essay. A thesis states the topic and what you will say about the topic. Generally, thesis statements can be divided into two types: implied or stated. Keep in mind that as with most writing, there certainly are other approaches to writing a thesis statement. Think of the following styles of thesis statements as building blocks to get you started and feeling confident. Your instructor may have other samples and styles to share.

Implied Thesis: this type of thesis names the general focus of the essay and is usually shorter in length.

EX 1: In this essay, I will explain the key elements of my identity.

EX 2: There are three key elements to my sense of identity.

Stated Thesis: this type of thesis names the focus and exact points of the essay and is usually a bit longer. Note: A stated thesis may also involve using a colon “:” to introduce the points that will follow in the body paragraphs)

EX 1: There are three key elements to my identity: my Latina heritage, spoken languages, and collectivist culture.

EX 2: My Latina heritage, spoken languages, and collectivist culture are important parts of my identity.

It may also be helpful to **think in threes** when you are creating a thesis statement. In other words, think of the 3 points (or 2 or 4, etc.) you will develop in your essay. This might look like three parts of a story, three causes, three characteristics, three effects etc., depending on the topic. Imagine **the thesis as a road map** that tells your reader **which direction you are going so that they can join you** on the journey you are taking them.

C. Practice! For each (writing topic below), write one stated and one implied thesis. Then reflect on which thesis style you think will work best for you.

Topic 1: What does it mean to be successful to you? Does it mean having a lot of money, being healthy, being happy, having a lot of friends, changing the world? Explain what your personal definition is of happiness.

- Implied:
- Stated:

Topic 2: What is a social justice issue that you care deeply about? Tell why you care about this issue and how our community can help address it.

- Implied:
- Stated:

Topic 3: Taking an online class can be both exciting and challenging. Explain the benefits or disadvantages of taking classes online. Give reasons to support your opinion.

- Implied:
- Stated:

Part 5: The Body Paragraphs



"Flying in the same direction" by Infomastern is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

A. Warm up: Discuss the questions with a partner or in a small group. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. What is a body paragraph?
2. Where is it usually located in an essay?
3. What types of information do body paragraphs usually provide?
4. What questions do you have about writing the body paragraphs in an essay?

B. The Body Paragraph(s): The body of the essay is made up of one or more paragraphs. Each of these paragraphs has a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and sometimes a concluding sentence. Each of the body paragraphs supports the thesis statement. There are many ways to support a thesis statement in the body paragraph(s). Read the sample thesis statement. Then review the topic sentences as well as some of the supporting points for each body paragraph .

Sample Thesis Statement: My mother is the strongest person I know; There are so many reasons why I admire her.

First, my mother cares deeply for everyone in our family.

- Support/Detail: Sends notes of love and support to her daughters
- Support/Detail: Makes special meals for our family

Second, she worked hard to get a good job and faced many obstacles.

- Support/Detail: Did not finish college
- Support/Detail: Passed the court interpreter's examination – bilingual

Also, another reason why I admire my mother is that she speaks her mind.

- Support/Detail: Not shy, has strong opinions
- Support/Detail: Teaches me to stand up for myself

C. Developing Support: It can sometimes feel difficult to know what type of support we can include in the body paragraph(s) of an essay. Imagine that your reader does not know about the topic and it is up to you to help guide the reader through your points by showing examples and details that will make your points clear.

Here are some ways to support the points of a body paragraph:

- With a story that shows your point or ideas
- With detailed language that describes something (adjectives and figurative language)
- With metaphors, analogies or similes
- With examples from your life or imagined examples to show your point
- With research, quotes and/or statistics

D. Practice! Read the sample implied thesis statements below. Imagine you are preparing to write an essay about the topic using the thesis statements provided. Write a topic sentence for each supporting body paragraph and add possible supporting details for each point.

Note: The underlined sections in each sample thesis show the topic/focus of the essay. The italicized words show the way you might organize the body paragraphs.

A college education should be free for all studentsfor several reasons.

1. _____

Support/Detail:

Support/Detail:

2. _____

Support/Detail:

Support/Detail:

3. _____

Support/Detail:

Support/Detail:

My culture has many strengths and values *that I feel very proud of.*

1. _____

Support/Detail:

Support/Detail:

2. _____

Support/Detail:

Support/Detail:

3. _____

Support/Detail:

Support/Detail:

E. Reflection: There are many different ways to provide support. Can you think of other ways to support the body paragraphs of an essay? Do you have any questions about developing support in an essay?

Part 6: Conclusions

A. Warm up: Discuss the questions with a partner or in a small group. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. What is a conclusion paragraph?
2. What types of information does a conclusion usually provide?
3. What questions do you have about writing a conclusion paragraph in an essay?

B. The Conclusion Paragraph(s): To conclude means to finish or end something. A concluding paragraph ends the essay for the reader. This may include:

- using a key phrase to show your essay is ending (i.e. In the end, In conclusion, Finally, etc.)
- repeating the key points you have made in the essay to be sure the reader understands and remembers them (try using alternative language here to rephrase the thesis points).
- adding a final comment about the topic in general, giving your reader something to think about or reflect on in the future (this could be a prediction, a personal reflection, a piece of advice for your reader).

There is no exact formula for what a conclusion must include. It can be one paragraph or sometimes more than one paragraph (usually this depends on the overall length of the essay). The main goal is to be sure your reader is reminded of what your essay focused on and why it matters. Here is a sample conclusion based on a sample thesis statement:

Sample Thesis: My sister has several characteristics that make her a wonderful person.

Sample Conclusion: In conclusion, there are many great things about my sister. She is kind, intelligent, and serious about her goals. I have learned a lot about what it takes to be a good person from her. In the future, I hope I can model after her examples and make the same impression on others.

C. Practice! Read the sample thesis statement (see below). Imagine you need to write the concluding paragraph about the topic using the thesis statement provided. Write your sample conclusion in the space. Keep in mind the examples and notes in Part B to guide you.

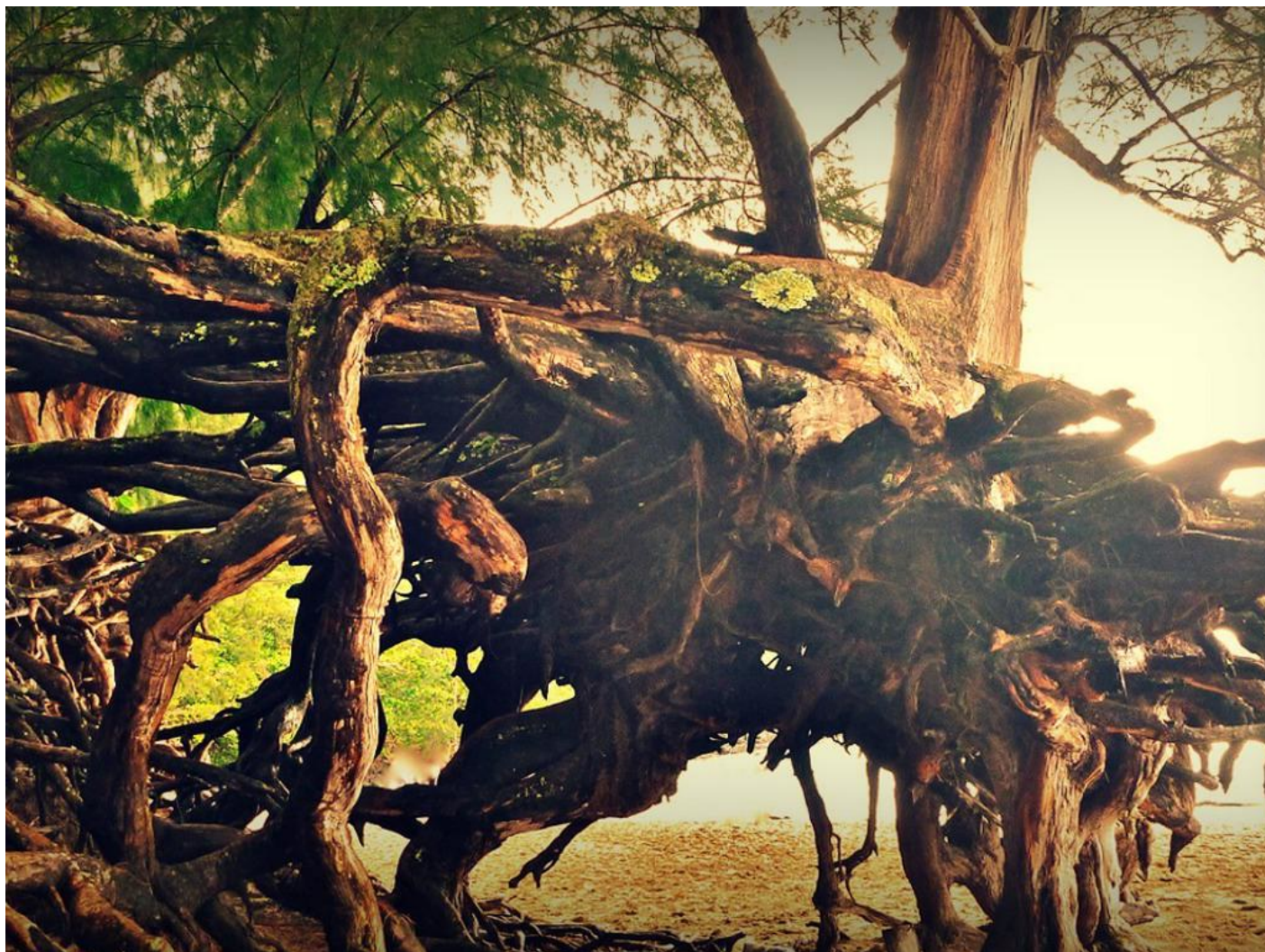
Sample Thesis: My classmates in this English language class are some of the most intelligent, hard-working, and kind students at our community college.

Sample

Conclusion:

D. Reflection: There are certainly more ways to write a concluding paragraph than what has been presented in this section. Can you think of other ways to finish an essay? Do you have any questions about writing a conclusion paragraph?

Chapter 1: Identity



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A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. What does the word “identity” mean to you?
2. Do you spend a lot of time thinking about your identity?
3. What are some important parts of your own identity?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **Identity (noun)**

- **Authentically (adjective)**
- **Narrative (noun)**
- **Code Meshing (noun)**

C. Read all about it!

When we meet new friends, co-workers, or classmates, we often need to introduce ourselves. This is the start of sharing pieces of our identity. Think about the information you usually give in a basic introduction: your name, your occupation, where you are from, sometimes you might share a general fact about your favorite food or hobbies, etc. These are some basic pieces of our **identity**. But do we really know one another when we share only the basic information about ourselves?

In order to build community with one another, in order to learn with each other, we may need more time to develop relationships of trust and sharing. This can start with telling some of our story to one another, sharing what we think will help our listeners and readers connect and know us more **authentically**. Here is an example (written by the author of this textbook) of what a story or **narrative** introduction could look like. In this sample, the author talks about her strongest memories growing up and her experiences as an immigrant moving to a new country. You'll also note that the author uses some words in her home language, Spanish, and uses *italics* to let the reader know she is "**code meshing**" (this means incorporating one language into another language to communicate an idea). This serves as a tool for expressing the writer's identity more fully.

—

Sample Narrative Introduction:

Me llamo Inés (My name is Inés). I want you to know me beyond my title, my job, my name. I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The street name sticks to my mind like glue, a familiar sound with a rhyme and pattern that speaks of home. I couldn't tell you how to find the street or what highway to take (we moved away when I was just 8 years old), but I can tell you the sing-song feeling of the name of la calle de Yapeyu.

My family moved from Argentina to a tiny town of Ayolas, in Paraguay, where we had to close the gates in front of our house before bed to keep the cows out of our yard. I would like to tell you about the downpouring rain of beetles, falling from the trees because of the Amazonian heat in that little town. And how those few years there formed me.

I would like to tell you about the day we got off an airplane that brought us to LA, where my mother's side of our family, Mexican-American from Jalisco, welcomed us with open arms. Fierce and loving people I did not know yet. My tía fitting us in her pickup truck (was it all of us in one car? No recuerdo), and me staring up and out at the tall buildings, throngs of cars and sprawling freeways.

I want you to know about my living in my abuelos' house, the grey stone burro that lived in the rock lawn of their front yard, greeting you as you walked up the steep steps, one ear missing but still cheerful. The quesadillas and chocolate milk I would have with my abuela at the kitchen counter, as me and my sisters talked about our school day.

The way my name would feel as it found its awkward way out of my white teacher's tongue. AYE-NEZ. Pain, Immediate. Every first day of school. I could tell you about learning to challenge that pain and the spaces that caused it as I got older. It was a long journey of hiding, learning, forming so that I was neither yelling or whispering myself. Our LA life, so sudden, so magical, and so painful all at once.

I would like you to know me. My immigrant story because they are pieces of memory that make up my being. They are culture and identity, they are stories that we tell and retell and relive. They are me.

—

How does the sample narrative introduction contrast from the types of introductions we may be more used to? The above sample is just one way a writer might choose to introduce themselves and their story. The key goal is to share in a way that helps build community with your reader(s). Think about what your narrative introduction might look and sound like. What parts of your story would you like to tell? How would you tell your story?

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)
- time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)
- facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
- speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)

1. What do you think the word "narrative" means?
2. What makes this introduction different?
3. Briefly list some of the different parts of the writer's story. What does she share about her life?

4. What does the sample narrative introduction share about the writer's experience of every first day of school?
5. Why do you think it might be important to reflect on and talk about our stories and our identities?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in "Getting Ready to Write" to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. Write your own narrative introduction (this could be similar to or different from the sample narrative introduction). Tell your reader the different parts of your story that you want to share. Organize your story into different sections to help the reader better know you.
2. Write about your name. This could be your chosen or given name, your family name or your first or middle name if you have one. Does your name have a special significance or meaning? What stories, traditions or family connections come with your name? How do you feel about your name? What experiences have you had with your name in school or socially?
3. Write about the key parts of your identity that make up who you are and explain them with details and examples from your life. You may choose to use the Social Identity Wheel template in Part F to help you reflect on some of the parts of your identity.
4. Think about your identity now and the identity you carried in the past (a year ago, two years ago, etc.). Has your sense of identity (the things that define you) changed or stayed the same? Write an answer to this question with details and examples from your life.

F. Project! Reflect on the different aspects of your identity. Use the handout: Social Identity Wheel (template from the University of Michigan - Inclusive Teaching to help you). Make a presentation about some of the parts of your identity to your classmates and instructor.

G. Additional Resources:

- TED Talk/Video: "My identity is my superpower"
- Video: "Gender Identity and Pronouns: What will you teach the world?"

Chapter 2: World Englishes



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A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. How many languages do you speak? Which languages, dialects, or accents do you use at home? Which do you use at school?
2. How many languages are spoken in your country?
3. Have you heard of the word standard/standardized? What do you think they mean?
4. Does your home language have a “standard” language? Are there different dialects, regional variations or accents?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **Multilingual (Noun)**
- **Dialects (Noun)**
- **Accents (Noun)**
- **Variations (Noun)**
- **Standard (Noun)**

C. Read all about it!

Today, non-natives speakers outnumber “native” speakers of English by 3:1. We are **multilingual**. So then, who really has ownership over a standard English? What is a native speaker? Who decides?

The English language is spoken all around the world. That includes varieties such as British English, Australian English, South African English, Caribbean English, American English and so many more. In the United States, a country of over 300 million people, there are many **dialects** and **accents** of English. The **variations** reflect regions and social groups as well as social identities (some examples of this include Chicano English, African-American English, and Southern English to name a few).

There is great value in knowing more about these different types of *Englishes* (World *Englishes*) in the United States and internationally as well. These varieties of English show both the cultural values of the speakers. They also show innovation in adapting and adding new words and language patterns to make English relevant to the speaker’s everyday experiences in the world.

When a textbook refers to a “**Standard**” English, we as learners, have the knowledge and power to think critically about whose standard we are referring to. It is a much bigger conversation than who or what is right or wrong. More often, those who have economic and political power make decisions over which standard is the “right” one to use.

The idea of what “Standard English” is will actually depend on the region where the English is spoken. Regional dialects and variations of English are, in fact, the norm. Linguists, people who study and learn about language, point out that many types of variations of language are *not only* acceptable *but also* incredibly interesting, powerful, and critical since they reflect people wanting to communicate

meaningfully within their identity and social groups.

The false narrative, or false story of their being only one dominant English dialect is what world renowned author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie might call a “single story.” To learn more about what a “single story” means, watch the [TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#).

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)
 - time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)
 - facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
 - speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)
1. Write about the different “standards” of your home language. What variations do you know of? Are there different languages, dialects, or accents spoken in your home? Explain.
 2. What types of English have you learned about or heard? What do you know about the different types of Englishes around the world?
 3. How can varieties of a language, like English, for example, show a people’s innovation and adaptation and culture? Write about the positive things that can come from acknowledging multiple varieties of a language like English.
 4. Watch the [TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#). What did Adichie share about the “single story”? What stood out to you from her talk?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in “Getting Ready to Write” to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. Write about what you learned from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s TED Talk on the danger of a “single story.” What are some of the key ideas that you remembered that grabbed your attention?
2. Write about the dialects and regional varieties of language(s) that exist in your home country or region. What key ideas can you share about the dialects and varieties spoken and used in your context? Use your notes from Part F to help you write about this. Include what you would like to about your family and friends related to this topic.
3. Write a response to the reading. Share your questions, ideas, and reactions to the idea of a standard form of language (such as English) based on what you have read in this unit. See if you can integrate some of the vocabulary from this lesson to your response.
4. Write about what you learned about the different standards and dialects in your household, in your region, and/or in your country. Make sure to include what questions and thoughts you have about the idea of a “standard” English based on what we’ve learned so far.

F. Project! Talk to a family member, a friend or do an internet search about the following:

1. How many dialects exist in your home country?
2. How many dialects of your home language do you speak?
3. Do your family members speak different dialects? What are they?
4. In your home language, are there different regional accents that you know of?
5. Talk to your classmates and/or instructor about what you learned by interviewing family member(s), friends or searching the internet about the dialects and regional accents that exist in your home country.

G. Additional Resources:

- Multiple Articles: [Do you speak American?](#)
- Interactive Map: [What dialect do you speak? A map of American English](#)
- TED Talk/Video: [3 ways to speak English](#)
- Article: [There's no such thing as Standard English](#)

Chapter 3: Power and Poetry



"magnetic poetry" by surrealmuse is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. Do you like poetry? Why/Why not?
2. Who are some famous poets or poems that you know about?
3. Have you ever written a poem?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **capture (verb)**
- **accessible (adjective)**
- **ancestors (noun)**

- **contributed** (verb)
- **themes** (noun)

C. Read all about it!

Poetry has a power to **capture** and communicate a message like no other form of art. A poem can speak to important issues that all human beings care about: love, loss, inspiration, and so much more. It is also a form of art that is **accessible** to everyone. We all use words, we all want to communicate, we all have the power to do so. Maya Angelou and Amanda Gorman are two outstanding poets who have **contributed** the power of their poetic voices to our communities.

Amanda Gorman is the youngest inaugural poet (this is the name of a person who reads a poem at the inauguration of a new president) in U.S. history. In a TED Talk (an educational video) titled "Using your voice is a political choice", Gorman asks her audience: "Whose shoulders do you stand on?" and "What do you stand for?" She explains that poetry is alive for us. She says that it is a way for everyday people to stand up for and honor our **ancestors**. Gorman has used poetry as a way to break the silence and use all her strength to speak when it is necessary. She insists that anyone can create poetry and explains how poetry can be a bridge to connection. Poetry is for all of us. We have a choice to be heard. She adds that we can choose which stories we tell, when and how to tell them, and even if we tell them. In fact, the poems and poets that are read in school tell us about which stories have political power and which do not. Gorman encourages us to use our power, our voice, and to write our own poetry to talk about what we stand for and whose voices we honor.

Maya Angelou was an incredible writer and activist. She is best known for her book "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" an autobiographical novel. She is also well known for her contributions to the Civil Rights Movement alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She has written on **themes** of Black beauty, the strength of the human spirit and about womanhood. In an interview, Angelou talks about the power of words and writing, about translating what we feel into words. She says "words cannot contain all that I mean." Many of us, who speak more than one language, can certainly relate to this feeling, of trying to explain the sound and taste of words. Angelou talks about the hard work of writing and says there is no such thing as being a "natural writer." Everyone uses words, so we have to work hard to use them in the way we want, to make feelings come alive in them.

Gorman and Angelou show that poetry has power to change the things that need to be changed in our world. Imagine writing your own poetry. What words, messages, and themes would you have the power to communicate? What do you need to say?

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)
- time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)

- facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
- speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)

1. What does Amanda Gorman say about the poems and poets we traditionally read in school?
2. Gorman states the poetry is alive for us. What do you think this means?
3. What are some of the themes that Maya Angelou writes about?
4. How does Maya Angelou talk about words?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in “Getting Ready to Write” to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. In the TED Talk: “Using your voice is a political choice”, Amanda Gorman asks the question: “Whose shoulders do you stand on?” Write about your ancestors, your elders that came before you and that made it possible for you to be who and where you are now. Tell your reader about the important elders in your family.
2. In the TED Talk: “Using your voice is a political choice”, Amanda Gorman asks the question: “What do you stand for?” Write about the things that you care about and stand for most. Explain why those things matter to you.
3. We’ve read about two outstanding poets, Amanda Gorman and Maya Angelou. Their contributions focus on bringing social change. They show poetry belongs to all people and that words have power. Write about a poet (or writer) that you find inspiration from. Explain why you admire this poet (or writer).
4. Maya Angelou says “words cannot contain all that I mean.” As a multilingual speaker, do you agree with this statement? Sometimes, trying to translate a word from one language to another doesn’t quite serve to explain the meaning fully. Think about a word that doesn’t translate well into English from your other spoken languages. Write about this word and try to explain what it means and why it is hard to translate.

F. Project! Write your own poem in which, as Maya Angelou describes, you try to explain the sound and taste of words. Write about what you know. Use the power of your words. If you feel comfortable doing so, share it with your classmates and instructor!

G. Additional Resources:

- Video and Poem: [Amanda Gorman’s, January 20, 2021 Inaugural Poem “The Hill We Climb”](#) from CNN.com
- Article: [“Poet Amanda Gorman Inspires Young People to Write and Express Themselves”](#) from VOANews.com
- Poem: [“Caged Bird”](#) by Maya Angelou
- Poem: [“And Still I Rise”](#) by Maya Angelou

Chapter 4 ¡Si, Se Puede!



“Dolores Huerta” by Freedom To Marry is licensed with CC BY 2.0.

A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

- Are there farm lands and farmworkers where you live?
- What types of working conditions do farm workers usually experience?
- What do you know about community organizing? What do you think a community organizer does?
- Have you ever heard of or taken part in a boycott?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **icon (noun)**
- **strike (verb and noun)**
- **boycott (verb and noun)**
- **farmworker (noun)**
- **community organizing (noun)**
- **feminism (noun)**

C. Read all about it

Dolores Huerta is an **icon**. She was co-founder of the United Farm Workers Association and was one of the most impactful labor rights organizers of our time. She was a key figure in the Chicano civil rights movement along with César Chávez, who both wanted to support farmworker rights.

Huerta led **strikes** and **boycotts** to gain better wages and safer working conditions for **farmworkers** in California. Huerta witnessed injustices as a teacher of immigrant children. She noticed the poor living and working conditions of the farmworker community and with training in **community organizing**, decided to help change it. The results of those efforts have made possible something that had never existed before: health care benefits, unemployment, and fair pay and timed breaks. Huerta helped to organize a strike that involved 5,000 workers who picked grapes for the Delano Farm company. Huerta fought for safe working conditions to protect workers from exposure to the pesticides being used on crops.

In talks and interviews, she emphasizes the role of **feminism** and talks about using our collective power to make change happen, to bring equity and rights to vulnerable members of the community. Huerta has received numerous national awards for her tremendous work as an activist including: the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She has served on the board of the Feminist Majority Foundation, as the Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus of the United Farm Workers of America, as well as President of the Dolores Huerta Foundation. Dolores Huerta also created the Dolores Huerta Foundation to help low-income communities receive organizing training.

Her battle cry: “¡Si, Se Puede!”, which translates to “We can do it!” in English, has been a shared statement of power and solidarity for change.

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)
- time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)
- facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
- speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)

1. How did Dolores Huerta first get involved with supporting farmworkers?

2. What were some of the farmworker rights that Dolores Huerta fought for?
3. The reading talks about Huerta's training in community organizing. Have you ever heard of community organizing? What do you think it means?
4. What is feminism? Why do you think Dolore focuses on feminism as a tool for power?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in "Getting Ready to Write" to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. Dolores Huerta shares that community organizing is what has inspired and motivated her to solve the issues in her community. She talks about taking power for change. Write about something that you would like to change in your community. What type of power do you have to make that change happen?
2. In Dolores Huerta's activist work, she focused on fighting for basic human rights and necessities for farmworkers (some examples of these rights include access to water, restrooms, rest, and the right to organize while working in the fields). Write about a human right that not all people in your community have access to (for example affordable housing, a job with fair pay, clean water, etc.) and why it is essential.
3. In an award speech, Dolore Huerta was quoted in saying: "Don't wait to be invited. Step in there." Huerta often talks about knowing and using our own power for change. Write about a time in your life (or in your friend or family member's life) when you did not wait to be invited, but instead, stepped in bravely.
4. Dolores Huerta created a chant that was used for years as a phrase of solidarity for social change: "¡Si, Se Puede!" which translates to "We can do it!" or "Yes, we can." Write about a chant, motto, or saying that motivates you. Who created the chant or saying? For what purpose?

F. Project! Search for information online about another community organizer, important boycott or strike in your region that has made a contribution to social change. Make a presentation about this to your classmates and instructor.

G. Additional Resources:

- Video: [Dolores Huerta Interview](#) - Los Angeles Public Library
- Video: [Still an Activist at 82, Dolores Huerta Calls Herself 'a Born-Again Feminist'](#)
- Video: [Labor of Love: Activist Dolores Huerta still fighting for changes](#)
- TED Talk/Video: [How to overcome apathy and find your power](#)
- Article: [Dolores Huerta Foundation](#)

Chapter 5: Food Deserts



"Food Desert Challenge: Day 1" by Mark Bonica is licensed under CC BY 2.0

A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. What is the closest grocery store or supermarket to where you live?
2. How do you travel to that supermarket? How long does it take?
3. What are some of the challenges you experience to eating healthy foods?
4. Have you ever heard of the term "food desert"? What do you think it might mean?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **access (noun)**
- **obstacles (noun)**
- **inflated (adjective)**

- **urban (adjective)**
- **impact (verb and noun)**

C. Read all about it!

To live a long and healthy life, we know that we need to eat fresh fruits and vegetables as well as whole grains. What we eat impacts our overall health and our life span. This means we should try to avoid processed foods and junk food as much as we can. Sounds easy, right? Not exactly.

Research from the U.S. The Department of Agriculture shows that more than 23 million people live in areas without healthy eating options. Communities without access to supermarkets and healthy food are known as “Food Deserts.” This is an issue related to **access** because it has to do with communities being able to get the things they need easily. Here are some examples of **obstacles**: not having a car and having to take public transportation to a supermarket outside of your neighborhood, having a low income and not being able to afford fresh and healthy foods because they cost more than processed foods, experiencing limited time to shop for and cook healthy foods because of a long work day, only being able to do local shopping at a liquor store or gas station market where individual items like bananas and apples are sold individually and at an **inflated** price, etc.

There are other considerations to think about related to food deserts too. For example, an **urban** environment (a downtown setting) is less likely to have a grocery store because of the cost of retail space. Rural areas are less likely to have healthy food options too; fewer people may mean fewer options for food shopping. Overall communities that have a lower-income experience the greatest **impact** from food deserts with fewer grocery stores compared to higher-income neighborhoods. These are also usually areas with many communities of color.

Food deserts are all over the United States usually in communities that have high unemployment rates, lower levels of education among residents, and abandoned homes. Food deserts also bring higher rates of obesity, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and weaker immune systems overall.

So what can we do about food deserts? Some actions we can take to support communities living in food deserts include building a community garden so that people can grow fresh fruit and vegetables at an affordable price, promoting a farmer’s market to help the community exchange goods, improving access to reliable transportation so that people can travel to supermarkets when they need to, and actively calling for a change in city planning so that supermarkets can open in these neighborhoods.

The first step to helping everyone live healthier and longer lives is learning about the problem and educating ourselves about how we can help to fix this in our communities.

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)

- time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)
- facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
- speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)

1. What is a food desert? Try to use your own words to describe this.
2. Talk about your own area or neighborhood: Are fresh fruit and vegetables accessible? Do you think you live in a food desert?
3. What are some of the negative impacts that come with experiencing life in a food desert?
4. What are some solutions we can be a part of to help fix the problem of food deserts in our communities?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in “Getting Ready to Write” to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. Imagine that you are teaching a friend, family member, or classmate about the term “food desert.” Explain what it is and why it matters.
2. Reflect on the information you have learned about food deserts both from the reading in Part C and from the Additional Resources in Part G of this chapter (see below). Write about some key solutions to the problem. What ideas do you have about how to help solve the problem of food deserts that impacts our communities?
3. Watch the TED talk “A guerilla gardener in South Central LA” by Ron Finley. Write about how Finley transformed his neighborhood. Here are some questions you might consider writing about: What challenges did Finley face in the garden project? How did he and his community work to overcome these challenges? What key points does Finley make to educate the audience about the problem of food deserts?
4. Choose a local market (one that is closest to where you live currently). Conduct a research study in which you find out the answers to these questions and write an essay about the results. Write about what you discovered about the market closest to your neighborhood. Do you live in a food desert?
 1. How far is the market?
 2. How can you travel to get to this market?
 3. Does the store have fresh fruits?
 4. Does the store have fresh vegetables?
 5. Does the store have whole grains?
 6. Where are the fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains located in the store?
 7. Does the store have an organic section?
 8. Are the above items sold in bulk or separately by item?
 9. Are the above items affordable?
 10. Is the market open at convenient times for you/for customers?
 11. Is the market clean and sanitary?

F. Project! Search for information about community garden projects in your area. Is there a community garden? Where? If not, is there an interest in creating one? Make a presentation about this to your classmates and instructor.

G. Additional Resources:

- TED Talk/Video: [TED talk “A guerilla gardener in South Central”](#)
- Article: [Food Deserts](#) from the Food Empowerment Project
- Article: [What are Food Deserts?](#) from Verywellhealth

Chapter 6: Protecting Mauna Kea



“Mauna Kea Sunrise – Hawaii” by Anish Patel Photo is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. Are there special lands and waterways where you live? What are they called? Where are they?
2. Have you heard of the word “Indigenous” before? What do you think it means?
3. Who are the Indigenous people of the lands you live on?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **sacred (adjective)**
- **ecosystem (noun)**
- **demonstrators (noun)**
- **elders (noun)**
- **protest (noun and verb)**
- **truce (noun)**
- **ancestral (adjective)**

C. Read all about it!

On the Big Island of Hawai'i, there is a **sacred** mountain called Mauna Kea. The mountain is a cultural treasure to the Native Hawaiians, the indigenous people of Hawai'i. Astronomers planned to build a Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea and had gotten permission from the state and from the University of Hawai'i who leased the land to do so. This newest telescope would be in addition to several others that have been built in that area. The first was built in 1968. There are now 13 telescopes on the mountain. The Thirty Meter Telescope would be the biggest and most advanced ever made, reaching eighteen stories in height, but Native Hawaiians are calling for the development to stop.

The Native Hawaiian people have serious concerns about the irresponsible measures being used in the construction on sacred land and say this is a human rights issue. Mauna Kea is a unique **ecosystem** with sacred waters. It is also a burial site for Native Hawaiian ancestors.

During the groundbreaking ceremony of the construction for the newest telescope, in July of 2019, **demonstrators** gathered to block the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope. **Elders**, young people, family, friends banded together peacefully to stop construction trucks from bringing building materials up the Native Hawaiian sacred mountain. They stood and sat in the roadway, using their bodies as **protest**. They prayed, sang traditional songs, shared food, and guarded the mountain together, building support from other communities supporting Indigenous rights around the world. Elders were arrested first, they bravely insisted on being on the front line. Then others took their place to continue blocking the road. There were hundreds and hundreds of protesters. News about the protests spread on social media with the hashtag: "We are Mauna Kea" around the world. Celebrities started coming to support the action. The construction was stopped temporarily with a **truce** agreement.

The native people of Hawai'i' will continue to stand together as an example for fellow Indigenous communities around the world to support their voices in caring for **ancestral** lands.

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)
- time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)
- facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
- speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)

1. What is the significance of Mauna Kea to Native Hawaiians?
2. How many telescopes have astronomers built on Mauna Kea so far? What is special about the newest telescope?
3. What concerns do the Indigenous people of Hawai'i have about the Thirty Meter Telescope?
4. What actions did demonstrators take together in protest of the construction of the newest

telescope?

5. What questions do you have about the issue?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in “Getting Ready to Write” to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. Imagine you are writing to someone who has not heard about the movement in Mauna Kea. Explain the issue and the reasons why Native Hawaiian people protested the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope.
2. The action to protect Mauna Kea required many people to be united and organized. Write about the key actions the Native Hawaiian people took to stop the development of the Thirty Meter Telescope. Why do you think these actions were important?
3. Mauna Kea is a sacred mountain to Native Hawaiians. Write about a place that is sacred or special to your community. Tell why it is important to you and/or your culture.
4. Search for information about actions to protect Indigenous lands and waters in your area. Who are the Indigenous people in the area? What land or waterway are they protecting? Which communities are supporting this cause? Why? What has been the outcome of the action?

F. Project! Native Hawaiians are the Indigenous people of the state of Hawai'i. What ancestral lands do you live on? Who are indigenous people of your area? (Note: If you are not sure, use this [online map tool](#) to find out.). Make a presentation about the information you found to your classmates and instructor.

G. Additional Resources:

- Video: [We Are Mauna Kea](#)
- Article: [Hawaii activists prepare to protest start of telescope construction](#)
- Podcast Series: [All My Relations Podcast series – For the Love of the Mauna](#)

Chapter 7: Black Lives Matter



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A. Warm up: Think about the questions below to prepare you for the topic. Talk about your ideas with your classmate(s).

1. Have you seen the hashtag “#BlackLivesMatter” on social media?
2. What do you know about the Black Lives Matter movement?
3. Have you heard of the expression “go viral” related to something on social media? What do you think this means?

B. Vocabulary Preview: Search for definitions and/or translations of the words. Review the new terms with your instructor and classmates.

- **unjustly (adverb)**
- **activists (noun)**
- **hashtag (noun)**

- **go viral (verb expression)**
- **anti-Black racism**

C. Read all about it!

On February 26th, 2012, a 17 year old African-American teenager named Trayvon Martin was walking home to his father's house. A man named George Zimmerman, who was also a neighborhood watch community member (a volunteer who watches the neighborhood), noticed him, followed him, and called 911, reporting a "suspicious person" in the area. The 911 operator had told Zimmerman to stay on the phone and wait until the police came, but he did not listen. Zimmerman shot and killed the young teenager and claimed that he was protecting his property. Martin had no weapon and posed no threat. He died **unjustly** for being Black, male, and wearing a hoodie a few steps away from his home.

Zimmerman was tried in court but not charged for murder. Three **activists**: Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Cullors created the #BlackLivesMatter **hashtag**. After hearing the news that Zimmerman had not been charged for murder, Garza wrote a post on Facebook that read: "Black people. I love you. I love us. We Matter. Black lives matter." Cullors added a hashtag to that statement and it soon **went viral**. They are the original founders of The Black Lives Matter movement, a human rights movement to change the conditions that Black communities experience.

In a radio interview, Cullors shares that the fight to stop the murder of Black people in our communities is not new but the level of attention and awareness from more and more people around the United States and beyond is. The hashtag and slogan of the Black Lives Matter awakened a nation. The New York Times wrote that it is "the largest movement in United States history." It is also international. In 2020, following the murder of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police, solidarity actions took place in England, South Africa, Germany, Spain, and Kenya to name a few.

The Black Lives Matter movement is more than a hashtag. In a TED Talk interview, Cullors says: "Black Lives Matter is our call to action. It is a tool to reimagine a world where Black people are free to exist, free to live. It is a tool for our allies to show up differently for us." It is a call for real change, a call to stop **anti-Black racism**. There is a real possibility for this type of change when we notice, care and act together to end this unjust violence impacting Black lives. The movement for Black lives is for everybody.

Here is a resource to learn the names and stories of Black brothers and sisters that have been killed by police.

D. Discussion: Talk to your partner(s) about the following questions. Consider choosing roles for the discussion:

- note-taker (write down key ideas that come up)
- time-keeper (make sure you are on track with time)

- facilitator (make sure everyone gets a chance to share and keep the conversation going)
- speaker (share the key ideas from the discussion with the larger class)

1. Who are the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement? How did it get started on social media?
2. What are some ways in which the movement is unique?
3. Have you heard about or seen solidarity action for the Black Lives Matter Movement where you live?
4. How can we take action as community members against anti-Black racism?

E. Topics for Writing: Choose a topic to write about. Be sure to practice the five steps in “Getting Ready to Write” to get started with the topic(s) you choose.

1. Imagine you are writing to someone who has not heard about the Black Lives Matter movement. Explain what the movement is and the reasons why it is important. Include what information you know about the Black Lives Matter movement in your country if possible.
2. Social Media can be a powerful tool for change. Tell your reader about a social media movement that you care about that has brought change to your community. Explain what it is, how it started, and why you feel it is important.
3. Do a search online to find out more about activists Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and/or Patrisse Cullors. Choose one activist or research all three. Tell about their backgrounds, expertise and experiences. How have they been leaders for change?
4. Write about an activist (a person who is leading change) that you care about. Tell us about the person and about their cause. Explain who they are and what contributions they have made to making change in the world.

F. Project! Find out about a #hashtag social justice or social change movement on social media that you are interested in (this could be in English or in another of your spoken language(s) – whichever you prefer!). What is the message of this movement? Who are the leaders of the movement? What are the goals of the movement? Make a presentation about the information you found to your classmates and instructor.

G. Additional Resources:

- Video: [How a Hashtag Defined a Movement](#)
- Article & Video: [US Race Solidarity Protests Erupt in Cities Worldwide](#)
- TED Talk/Video: [An Interview with the Founders of Black Lives Matter](#)
- Podcast: [Code Switch: A Decade of Watching Black People Die](#)
- National Public Radio Clip: [All Things Considered: Black Lives Matter Founders](#)

Appendix: Decolonizing ELT



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