

Success through Sacrifice: Empowering English Learners through Creative Nonfiction

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Having reached the pinnacle of the K-12 experience, twelfth graders are ready to leave school far behind, that is if they have spent those years in an American school, reading, writing, speaking, and listening to English. I have the distinct pleasure of teaching twelfth graders who are experiencing their first, second, or third year in the American K-12 school system. These kids are motivated! They want to learn English, and they want to learn it fast. The mandated Common Core based curriculum is a challenge with its heft of subject matter, vocabulary, and information that relies on background knowledge taught to American middle-schoolers. I plan to overcome that obstacle by having my unique group of twelfth graders form relationships with the content and use those relationships to produce writings and oral presentations that will showcase my students – who they are, where they came from, and where they are going. The unit will use readings from the twelfth grade *Collections* text and *Close Reader*, and the activities that stem from those readings include a friendly letter, a personal poem, and a personal narrative. A StoryCorps interview is included and will model the interview my students will create. *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson will act as a basis for pronunciation practice. Students' work will be assessed based on the quality of work they contribute at their individual English language proficiency level.