Exploring Culture Through an English Learner's Lens

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Introduction

I have always been fascinated with family connections, relationships, and feeling attached to roots, culture, and issues of identity. I am positive this is because I am adopted, and my adoptive family's European background was so different from mine. I am half-Asian; my biological father was from India. Not only did I not look like my fair-haired immediate or extended family members, my ethnicity and race were different enough that I often felt that I did not belong to them, even though I knew they loved me and they were vocal to me about their feelings. I craved a connection to this family that I bore no resemblance to, and also to myself and my developing conceptions of self and identity.

When I was 10 years old, my family moved for my father's job to rural northwestern Iowa from a diverse urban area of Michigan, where I had attended a parochial school since kindergarten. The region of Iowa that we settled in was at that time largely Caucasian and far from any type of urban center. The nearest shopping mall was over an hour away, and an airport was a three-hour drive in one direction. There were no people of color in the area, and I struggled to answer my new classmates' questions of where I came from, and what I was. Not only did I feel uncomfortable being singled out, I also did not know how to articulate my background and how I myself felt about it.

I felt further alienated by my more formal clothes, since the parochial school I had attended in Michigan did not allow casual clothes, jeans, or sneakers. At my new public school in Iowa, I was viewed as a sort of racial and stylistic outsider. Additionally, I was academically behind my fellow 5th-grade classmates, especially in math and language arts, and had to work very hard to catch up to the more advanced curriculum (which I never did in math, and am convinced this is why I am still terrified of algebra!).

Eventually, I made good friends and acquired a more modern wardrobe, which on the surface, helped me blend in. But I still sensed that I existed somewhere on a border, outside of my social groups and communities, continually marked by my physical differences and internal feelings of not completely belonging. I was not certain then where I fit, or where I felt the most comfortable.

I am sure that these experiences influenced my decision to teach English as a Second Language (ESL), a career in which I have taught students of all ages from all over the world. I feel connected with their efforts to find the right place and sense of identity in a completely new country, with its own cultural, linguistic, behavioral, familial and social

expectations and norms. These feelings even affect students from other countries who already speak English, or a non-standard United States version of it; they may not be as linguistically isolated, but still wrestle with how to fit in.

The goal of this unit is for students to understand their origins and articulate their feelings about culture, and their place and membership in their communities. In doing so, it is my hope that they will learn to find their voices and talk about, write and visually express themselves and their backgrounds, and perhaps even enjoy the writing process and their own creativity.

Background

I am an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at George Read Middle School in New Castle, Delaware, which is in the Colonial School District. George Read is a Title 1 (Title 1, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) school—nearly 41% of its 775 students are identified as being low-income.[1] Almost 9% of the student population are English Learners (ELs), with Spanish being the first language of the majority of them. In addition, over one-quarter of George Read's students are Hispanic, and a high percentage of those students are bilingual in Spanish and English.

The EL students I see are those with intermediate to high English skills who are placed in the same section of an ELA class in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. I usually have about 15 ELs in each section of those classes, and I also service some 6th and 7th grade ELs who are additionally identified as Special Ed, and who have been placed in a Special Ed ELA class. I typically service about 50 ELs each year in grades 6-8. A few of the students I teach have been transitioned out of the Colonial School District's "Newcomer" EL program for middle school that is housed at McCullough Middle School and taught by my ESL colleagues there. Students in grades 6-8 who are new immigrants or migrant students with limited English proficiency (as identified by the WIDA Screener for English proficiency[2] and the HMH Reading Inventory[3]) are recommended to the Newcomer program at McCullough, regardless of their district feeder middle school. They are in a sheltered classroom all day for all content areas that are taught in English, and are not transitioned out into mainstream classes or back to their feeder middle schools until their English test scores have risen, and they demonstrate the academic, social, and emotional skills that would indicate success in the general school population.

Students at George Read come from diverse backgrounds and face many challenges in their school and home environments. My ELs come from an array of countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, as well as Mexico. The students in my classes represent many facets of the EL population: first-generation English learners who have been in the United States for about three years; students who were born in the United States or another country speaking a language other than English and who are now bilingual; and those born in the United States into bilingual or multigenerational families. Students in

the latter group may have the least exposure to their families' native language(s) and countries, and may express that they don't speak a language other than English very well, or that they have never met many of their extended family members. I also have a few students who are in the ESL program though their only language is English; most of them are from countries in Africa or the Caribbean, and speak what is termed "non-U.S. English."

Regardless of their language knowledge and whether they are conversationally bilingual, all students grapple with the increasing rigor of academic English and the demands of state and English proficiency tests. Many of them struggle to express themselves verbally and through writing, and their WIDA ACCESS writing and speaking scores are often what keeps them in the EL program.

Rationale

Most students feel disconnected from their writing and speaking tasks and subject matter; they feel there is no significance in it for them. They do not get a chance to share, through writing, oral presentation or visual and media arts, their rich life experiences with their teachers and fellow students. ELs must tackle numerous challenges that mainstream students do not: learning English, grasping academic content, and making connections between their native countries and their new home, all while handling different social and cultural situations.

Oral literacy and proficiency in English is a heavily stressed standard on the annual WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. The Speaking portion of ACCESS requires students to wear a headset with a microphone and verbally respond to a series of questions and prompts. [4] Students' answers are recorded and digitally evaluated by national WIDA test experts. My students detest this aspect of the ACCESS test, and are understandably concerned about speaking into a headset. In fact, in 2017, WIDA made ACCESS significantly more difficult for students to master, leading many states to lower their exit scores because student retention in ESL programs was leading to budget and staffing issues. [5] It is a problem that Delaware is also facing: Only 0.3% of Delaware ELs received a passing score on the Speaking test during the 2017 testing period. However, unlike other WIDA consortium member states, Delaware has not lowered its exit criteria of a comprehensive 5.0 score on the annual ACCESS test. [6]

Students must demonstrate an expanding verbal academic range in the quantity and quality of their oral exchanges—both in testing and everyday interactions—and my objective is that the oral part of this project will help them. Separate from the testing environment is the fact that students do not practice speaking skills because of smartphone use and the popularity of social media and texting, and are becoming more verbally and socially isolated. They are starting to lack the ability to detect social cues because they are not spending enough time on actual verbal communication. [7] Students

need to practice good speaking skills, and it is something they will have to master for success in life and their careers, as Zoom and other telecommunication programs are often the first interview phase for employers. Students are not taught *how* to speak well, and need implicit instruction to speak effectively.[8] This is particularly true for ELs, who may have struggled to learn and speak English for several years.

The Colonial School District ELA Speaking and Listening standards also require that students *gain, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information, ideas, and evidence through listening and speaking as well as through media* and integrate *skills related to media use (both critical analysis and production of media).*[9] Consequently, students will be interviewed and will record their interviews through Google's Video Recorder feature on Google Drive as part of this curriculum unit.

Students at George Read do not get the opportunity to express themselves through the arts; as part of the Colonial School District's middle school redesign, George Read has been designated as the Culinary/Agriculture school.[10] While students do have the ability to learn about animal and plant science and explore culinary arts, there are no visual or performing arts options at George Read. English Learners and students struggling with language mastery cannot communicate through artistic expression, which can be an important part of ELs' literacy skills, bridging a gap between written and oral language.[11] Furthermore, research has shown a correlation between arts instruction and literacy skills,[12] as well as established that the brain stores verbal-based information and image-based information distinctly.[13] It stands to reason that learning is improved and enriched when these contrasting parts of the brain connect. Using visuals and pictures is a customary ESL strategy, but one that is minimized when students achieve an intermediate level of English. However, most of the students I have worked with, irrespective of their English level, have always responded well to artistic language assignments.

As Lydia Breiseth states,

> Yet just as ELLs need to access content in science and math and social studies, they can benefit from a rich arts education experience as well, with the opportunity to develop their language, literacy, and writing skills by interacting with different forms of art and media...the benefits aren't strictly academic, however—the arts can also provide ELLs with a chance to build confidence and express themselves in ways that showcase strengths that aren't necessarily apparent in the classroom setting.[14]

For these reasons, my curriculum unit will integrate art images of the immigrant experience so that students can develop and extend their own and others' human experiences.

Many of my ELs have been taught to forego cultural traditions in favor of assimilating to life in the United States. They wrestle with learning to navigate American cultural and educational expectations, and how to connect and fuse that with their established cultural principles. Several of my students already work in family businesses during the school year and summer vacations, and have expressed that they will not need to continue their secondary educations to continue working for their families. For example, it is very difficult for them to see how academic speech and writing a thesis and supporting details will aid them in the future. Additionally, gender roles and opportunities in the United States can wildly vary from students' established family attitudes and positions.

Even students who are second-generation immigrants have difficulty navigating familial and cultural perceptions with American ones. My ELs possess such a rich range of expertise on ethnography, cultural codes, and societal roles, of which they are unaware; their experience has been that they are "*limited* English proficient" and deficient in the academic learning and standards (especially writing and speaking) that are required of them in the United States. I can only imagine how surprised they would be to have me tell them that they will get a chance to be educators in a unit, and drive some of the curriculum. It would be an outstanding experience to sit down with them and have them share their experiences with me as I demonstrate some aspects of the ethnographic approach, which is describing a culture and learning from people from their *native point of view*. [15] Instead of me presenting and depositing information *into* them in what Freire termed the "banking model of education,"[16] students will have more of an opportunity to guide their learning and outcomes.

My objective is for my students to be motivated to come to class and work on a speaking, writing and visual project, and get a chance to express themselves and explore their cultures and families. Many of my ELs come from immigrant families who have been separated from their cultures and backgrounds in an effort to fully acclimate to life in their new country. Often, students are conditioned not to talk about their native countries and cultures or to ask their family members questions. Many of my students— especially those who are newest to the United States—struggle with behavioral and societal norms and bridging what they knew in their native countries to the reality of their current situations.

I am also concerned that today's bipartisan political landscape is affecting my ELs at George Read. Many of my students rarely learn about their peers' cultures and often point out their differences. They will even denigrate students who have been in the Colonial School District, but at other middle schools, as the "enemy." I will expose my students to a larger worldview that will enable them to draw parallels and see similarities between contemporaries, who seem on the surface to be so disparate.

Unit Objectives

This unit is designed for middle school students, but could be modified for upper elementary grades and high school students. It is a visual and writing project in which they share their feelings about life in their new country; the union of the two mediums would mirror the cultural synthesis the students must undertake daily. Possible anchor questions could be:

- What was strange or surprising to you about the United States? What are some things that Americans do that you do not understand? What is an American custom that is very different from one in your country?
- What are some things you do to feel more connected to your native country? What do you miss the most about life there? If you could blend the best aspects of both countries, what would they be, and why?
- What does your family do to stay connected to your culture? What do you do to find the products (such as food) that are most like those in your native country?
- How does social media here compare to what exists in your native country? How have you used it to connect to both populations?

Students will record their responses to these questions on Google Recorder and share them with me. Google Recorder is a visual recording application on Google Drive, which is a platform I chose because all George Read students have their own school-assigned Google Chromebooks. Students throughout Colonial School District have used Chromebooks for several years, and are familiar with Google's design features and platforms.

Students will then transfer their oral answers to paper and use this writing as the text to accompany their own drawings or those they find through research. The final project will resemble a type of graphic novel in which they use writing and visuals to illustrate their experiences in American schools and society.

Writing and Speaking standards will be taken from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)[17] and the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards for Speaking and Writing and Listening and Reading;[18] art standards will come from the National Core Arts Standards.[19] I will also incorporate aspects of the Colonial School District's mission for student learning, some of which were stated above.

Content

Students will be reading excerpts from two nonfiction books, Reyna Grande's *The Distance Between Us* [20] and *Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town,* by Warren St. John.[21] They will also use *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, which is a wordless graphic novel about the immigrant experience[22] and *The Anti-*

Coloring Book,[23] a book of creative writing and drawing activities by Susan Striker and Edward Kimmel.

Grande's *The Distance Between Us* is a memoir that tells of her impoverished childhood in Mexico and how she came to the United States as an illegal immigrant. It is poignant and at times painful to read; Grande's grandparents treat Grande and her siblings cruelly when they are left in their care in Mexico. When the children finally rejoin their father in America, he flies into alcoholic rages and abuses them. She also struggles to learn English, and constantly fears deportation. However, Grande perseveres and becomes the first person in her family to attend and graduate from college. I know my students will immediately relate to Grande and her family's problems; this academic year, a handful of George Read students have had to return to their native countries because of immigration issues.

Most of my ELs are "soccer crazy," having come from countries that have a rich history with the world's most popular sport.[24] I have known students with a very low level of English who have joined their school's soccer team, excited to find a commonality with other students and feel an inclusion on the playing field that is missing from their academic experiences. I have seen EL students of all backgrounds and genders make friendships and connections from playing soccer that they otherwise would not have gotten to experience. For these reasons, I believe that *Outcasts United* will be pertinent to students and help them get in touch with feelings of displacement and attachment.

We will be using *The Arrival* extensively as a model for the type of graphic art I would like the students to create or find, and to help them begin to think about the type of art that could mirror the answers they gave to their interview questions. *The Arrival* is a wordless graphic novel that depicts the immigrant experience in six parts, from leaving a native country to settling in and adjusting to a new country. The main character is a man who leaves his family behind for better prospects and settles alone in a new country, where so much is perplexing and odd. In time, he makes friends and becomes acquainted with other immigrants, and is eventually able to send for his family. The book is an amazing work of art and unlike anything I have seen, and I believe my students will relate to the man's bewilderment as he tries to make sense of his new landscape. His confusion is somewhat open to interpretation, because the writing system, animals and cuisine of his new home are unlike any in the world. Most of my students have often moved—whether it was internationally, inside the United States or Delaware—and have undergone similar feelings.

Students will also use some of the drawings in the *Anti-Coloring Book* as a template to help them create their graphic novels. *The Anti-Coloring Book* (and its several subsequent versions) is full of writing prompts and only partially drawn pictures, so that students can individually complete a drawing and interpret it exclusively independently. For example,

some of the prompts in the book are: "You are a space pioneer. Design a flag for your new planet;" "Design a family crest that tells something about you and your family;" and "Design a wrapper and make up a name for a delicious new candy bar." Every completed drawing would be distinct to each person, and would represent singular emotions, perceptual awareness, and visual styles. The *Anti-Coloring Book* will also help those students who do not feel comfortable drawing on their own or who need some artistic inspiration.

By reading and discussing excerpts from these three selections, in addition to answering the anchor questions, students will begin to make connections about their experiences as ELs and the ritual of culture and cultural codes.

Strategies

Most of my students are intermediate- to high-level ELs, but they still need reading strategies that will help them comprehend and access unfamiliar vocabulary words, context, and background knowledge. While we will not have enough time to read more than a couple of excerpts from the two books, presenting texts in partial "chunks" is a research-proven way to increase comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. Students need to have reading materials separated into smaller segments in order to increase their comprehension, particularly those who are continuously learning language and vocabulary.[25]

For the selections from the two texts we will be reading, I will have students make connections between themselves and the protagonists; build background knowledge so they can understand the excerpts; discuss and highlight new vocabulary words, and have them use the new words in class. These words and associations will help them later in the unit when they create their own graphic novels, or apply them to the images in *The Arrival*.

Students at George Read have ample exposure to technology through various online learning programs and learning management systems, and are accustomed to taking assessments online. However, they still need exposure to visual and audio supports in order to grasp academic content, which they have an increased chance of doing with their own school-assigned Chromebooks. In designing this unit, I wanted to find a way to capitalize on using technology, as it increases English proficiency and leads to increased motivation and confidence. [26] Students will get a chance to hear and see themselves during the interview process on Google Video Recorder, which I am hoping will help them feel more comfortable during the ACCESS Speaking test, as well as encourage them to literally find their voices and express themselves. Once they have answered and recorded the questions, they will write down their answers and revisit them later when they are working on their graphic novels.

During our exploration of *The Arrival*, we will discuss mutual feelings and reactions that many immigrants share, such as *confusion*, *isolation,* and *anxiety*, which may be some of the emotions they identified while answering and recording their interview questions. At this point, I may ask them to draw a picture that illustrates this emotion, and to create a sentence using each word. All worksheets and graphic organizers are included at the end of the unit under Appendix B.

Classroom Activities (designed for a daily 60-minute ELA class)

Day One: Introduction to Culture

Warm-Up

Students will use their classroom Chromebooks to log on to Schoology, the Learning Management System (LMS) that Colonial School District extensively uses for its students. They will go to our class section and answer the following Warm-Up questions: *What are some things that Americans do that you do not understand? What is an American custom that is very different from one in your country? What was strange or surprising to you about the United States?*

Discussion

After students have finished typing their answers on Schoology, they will "turn and talk" with their shoulder partners about their experiences. Then, students will share out some of their answers for the class.

Extension

Students will get back on Schoology and answer *Did you find any similarities (the same things) between your experiences and those of your classmates? If so, what were they?*

Unit Explanation

I will tell the students that they will be creating and producing their own graphic novel based on their experiences and ideas of life and culture in the United States, using focus questions I will ask them. I will explain to them that they will record their answers on Google Recorder, and that they will then transfer some of their oral thoughts and feelings to their own graphic novels.

Day Two: Shared Cultural Experiences

To get the students thinking about what culture consists of—both in their native and adopted countries—I will have the students watch clips from some television and Internet

series, such as Australia's *Meet + Eat*,[27] *New American Girls* on PBS,[28] and *First Gen*.[29] *Meet + Eat* features transplanted Australians who talk about adopting Australian customs while trying to stay true to their native cultures; at the end of the video, they get together to eat foods from a variety of cultures. The subjects of *New American Girls* are teenagers or young women who are undocumented immigrants and face deportation; they talk about life in the United States and what it means to them to have a chance to get an education and help their families. *First Gen* is an Internet comedy written by a Nigerian immigrant and relates the protagonist's struggle to find her identity while accommodating her family's traditional values and wishes. The website for the show also features interviews from immigrants and what it was like for them when they first came to the United States.

Discussion

After watching the clips, students will log on to Schoology and answer the following discussion questions: *What kinds of similar situations or feelings to the ones you saw in the video have you experienced? How have your native language and culture influenced your beliefs or experiences in the United States?*

Day Three: Introduction to Material and Nonmaterial Culture

Warm-Up: Notes

Students will use their ELA notebooks to take the following notes that I will project on the Smartboard and have adapted to student friendly language:

What is Culture?

Material Culture includes all the physical things that people create in a culture, such as clothes, homes, tools, art, machines, jewelry, technology, etc., and to which they attach meaning.[30]

 Nonmaterial Culture includes non-physical things (you can't touch them or pick them up) in a culture, like social roles, beliefs, and gestures (for example, a hand movement for "go away" or "come here").[31] Often, nonmaterial culture can be very different in different countries.

Class Activity

As examples of material culture, I will show the students some objects I have brought from home, such as a picture, hair blow dryer, decorative candle, or a coffee mug, and ask them what these things tell us about our culture. I can also use some of the students'

own possessions, like backpacks, pencil cases, or phones, as well as some classroom objects, to illustrate this point.

Next, I will show the students some video clips of social interactions and situations from television sitcoms like *Seinfeld* [32] and *Outsourced* [33] and again ask them whether they are material or nonmaterial (they are the latter).

I will then give students a graphic organizer (see Appendix B), which will help them remember what material and nonmaterial culture is. (I often incorporate sentence starters in graphic organizers, due to students' varying levels of English proficiency.)

Day Four: Reading, Vocabulary, and Comprehension

Students will read excerpts with their partner of the first chapter of Part Two of *Reyna Grande's The Distance Between Us*, which describes Grande's first days in a U.S. school. As before, students will log on to Schoology and answer vocabulary and comprehension questions like *What were your first few days like at your new school in the United States/Delaware? Can you find any instances of material or nonmaterial culture in this chapter that caused Grande to have any misunderstandings? What does the word "cowering" mean on page 166?*

As students read from Grande and our other selections, they will use a vocabulary graphic organizer like the one in Appendix B under Day Four to define words with which they are unfamiliar, use those words in a sentence, an possibly sketch or find pictures online of what this word means to them. Starting to draw or use figures to represent word meanings will help them become more comfortable as they design their graphic novels later in the unit. Students can use a classroom dictionary, or a good online source, such as Merriam-Webster's Learners Dictionary. [34]

Day Five: Reading, Vocabulary, and Comprehension

Students will read excerpts with their partner of Chapter 11 of *Outcasts United*, which is titled "Figure it Out so You Can Fix it." This chapter describes teenage members of the soccer team who are struggling with identity issues, and what it means to attempt to belong to two different cultures. While they read, students will continue to fill out their Vocabulary Journal and will then go on Schoology to discuss the following questions*: On p. 122, Mandela decides to wear different clothes at school and at home. Why does he do this? Do you think it's OK to act this way? Have you ever felt or acted the same way? Is this an example of material or nonmaterial culture?*

Day Six: Practicing the Interview Questions

Now that students have had some opportunities to reflect on culture and what it is and means to them, they can start to answer the questions that they will use as the basis for their graphic novels.

I will hand out a worksheet (see Appendix B) that includes the anchor questions I noted in the Unit Objectives section above. We will discuss the questions as a class so students know what they mean and do not have any misunderstandings about them. Students can begin to write down possible thoughts or answers to some of the questions. Even one-word associations can be useful at this point.

Day Seven: Using Google Recorder

Students will use their school district Google email accounts to access the Google Drive app Google Recorder. They will answer and record the above questions and send them to me at my school email address.

Days Eight and Nine: Student Conferences and *The Arrival* Connections

Before class, I will watch and listen to each student's recording and then have individual conferences with them. We will discuss areas they could expand on, sentence and grammar corrections, and any new questions they might have. While I am meeting with individual students, other students can begin to look at *The Anti-Coloring Book* and *The Arrival*. I will have students focus on Chapter 3 of *The Arrival*, which shows the main character in his new country, confused by everything around him. They can fill out the graphic organizer in Appendix B; if students are reluctant to draw, they can use some of the pre-drawn templates in *The Anti-Coloring Book*.

Days Ten, Eleven and Twelve: Introduction to Graphic Novel Templates and Beginning to Create

I will give students the graphic novel templates found in Appendix B (there are also countless free templates online), which they can begin to illustrate with how they want to interpret their enduring understandings of how they have experienced nonmaterial and material culture, their thoughts and feelings about immigration, and how they have bridged multiple cultures. If students really feel reluctant to sketch their own pictures or look for images on the Internet, they can use templates from *The Anti-Coloring Book*. Students who have found Internet pictures they would like to use can email them to my school account and I will print them out so they can be cut and pasted in the Graphic Novel template. Additionally, teachers may bring in magazines for cutting and pasting.

Day Thirteen: Display and Gallery Walk

Students will display their Graphic Novels in the classroom and look at each others' work. They can take notes while looking at their classmates' products.

Day Fourteen: Discussion and Written Reflection

I will lead the students in a discussion of their classmates' work; questions could be *What were common themes in your experiences? What did you learn about your classmates? What else would you like to know about someone's experience with culture?*

Computer Activity

Students will log on to Schoology and answer the following discussion questions: *What new information did you learn about yourself and how you have navigated different cultures? How do you see yourself now as a result? What is something you can do in the future to express your culture(s)?*

Resources

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Appendix A

Implementing District Standards, Common Core State Standards, WIDA English Language Development Standards, and National Core Arts Standards

Colonial School District ELA Speaking and Listening standards:

Students will gain, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information, ideas, and evidence through listening and speaking, as well as through media, and integrate skills related to media use (both critical analysis and production of media).

Common Core State Standards

RI.8.3: Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories). Make inferences and draw conclusions about information in the text.

   SL.8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

   RA.SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

   RA.W.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing, as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

WIDA English Language Development Standards

The WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards for Listening and Reading and Speaking and Writing that I will utilize include compound, complex grammatical constructions (e.g., multiple phrases and clauses); a broad range of sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas; rich descriptive discourse with complex sentences; and organized, cohesive and coherent expression of ideas.

National Common Core Arts Standards

VA:Cr1.2.8a: Collaboratively shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art and design.

   VA:Cr2.3.8a: Select, organize, and design images and words to make visually clear and compelling presentations.

VA: Cn10.1.8a: Make art collaboratively to reflect on and reinforce positive aspects of group identity.

Appendix B

Student Resources

Day Three

Name: **Date:**

Material and Nonmaterial Culture

Directions: Write down the items Ms. Gallo brought in from class, as well as what happened in the video examples, in the chart below. Answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

Material Culture	Nonmaterial culture

Questions

1. Can you think of something *nonmaterial* from your native country that is very different from something *nonmaterial* in the United States?

Some nonmaterial features of my native country that are different from those in the U.S. are

_____

_____

_____

2. Ms. Gallo once had a university student from Saudi Arabia living with her who would stand too close to Ms. Gallo (in Ms. Gallo's perspective) when they were talking; "personal space" was different in the student's culture. Write about a time this may have happened to you or a friend/family member.

An example of nonmaterial culture that I experienced or saw was when

_____

_____

_____

Day Four

Name: **Date:**

Vocabulary Journal

Word	Where I found it:	Dictionary Definition	Picture
cowering	Grande, p. 166	To move back or bend your body down because you are afraid.	

Sentences:
- The cat was <u>cowering</u> behind the chair because her owner yelled at her for knocking the trash can over.
-

Day Six

Name: **Date:**

Interview Questions

Look at the questions below and begin to think about how you want to verbally answer them on Google Recorder. You will record your answers tomorrow on your Chromebooks and share them with me via email.

You can take notes or underline any words or phrases that you think are important.

1. What are some things you do to feel more **connected** to your native country? What do you miss the most about life there? If you could **blend** the best aspects (parts) of both countries, what would they be, and why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What does your family do to stay connected to your culture? What do you do to find the products (such as food) that are most like those in your native country?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. How does social media here compare (what is the same and what is different?) to what exists in your native country? How have you used it to **express** your culture in both countries?

   _____

4. What kinds of things do you think exist in **all cultures** (for example, sports, love, or rules)?

Days Eight and Nine
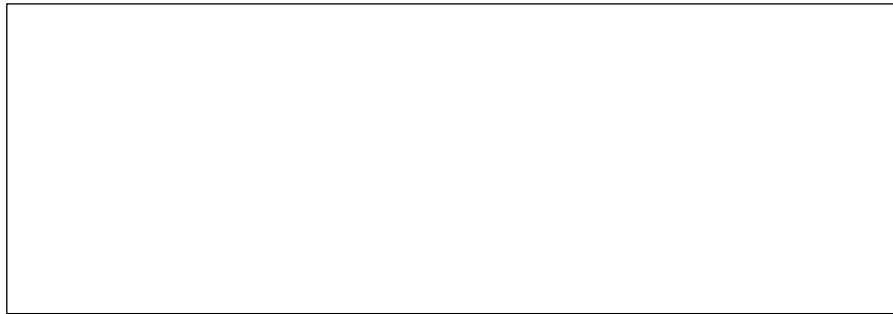
Name: **Date:**

The Arrival: An Immigrant's Experience in Pictures

1. Draw a picture below of something you thought was very strange when you first came to the United States or started going to school here.

```



```

1. *The Arrival* is a wordless book, but there are themes and feelings common to immigrants that are expressed in the pictures. As you look at Chapter 3, look for pictures that relate the feelings in the "Word" column:

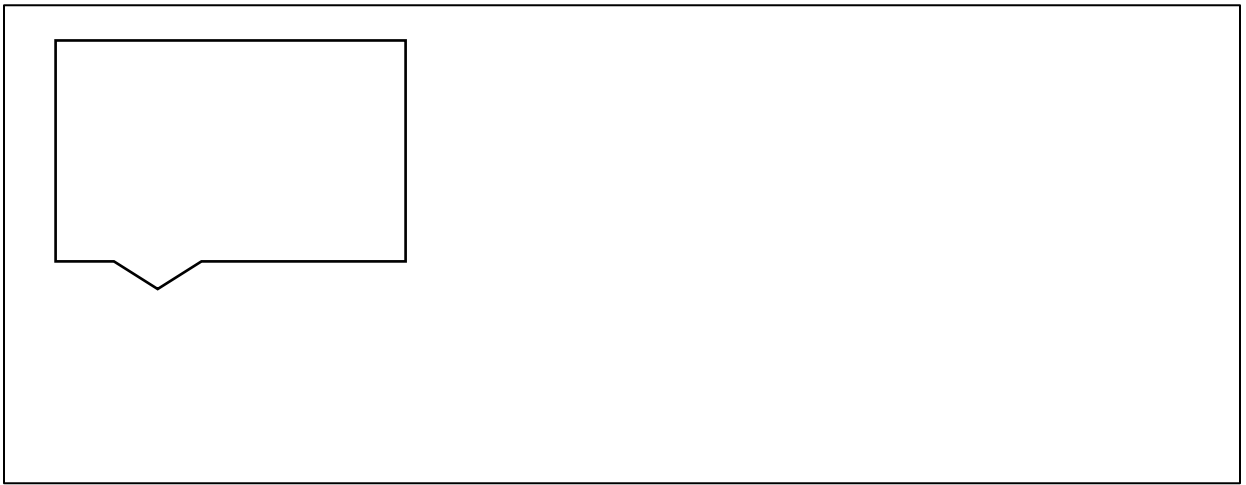| Word	Where I see it:	Dictionary Definition	Picture (what this word means to you)
lonely			
nervous			
hopeful			
confused			

Sentences:
-
-
-
-
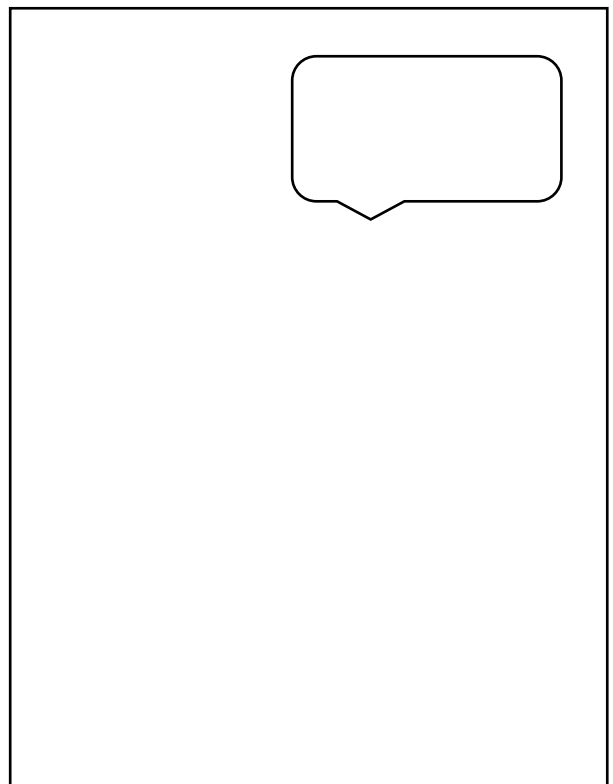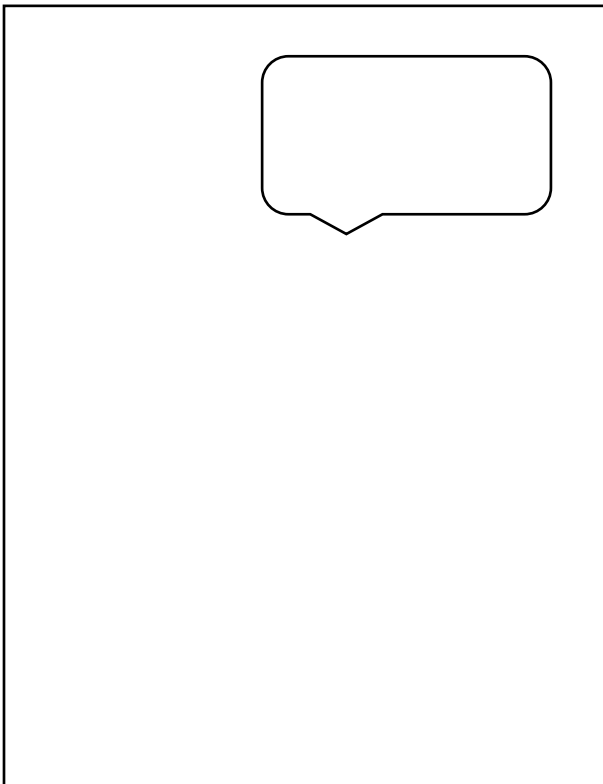
Days Ten, Eleven and Twelve

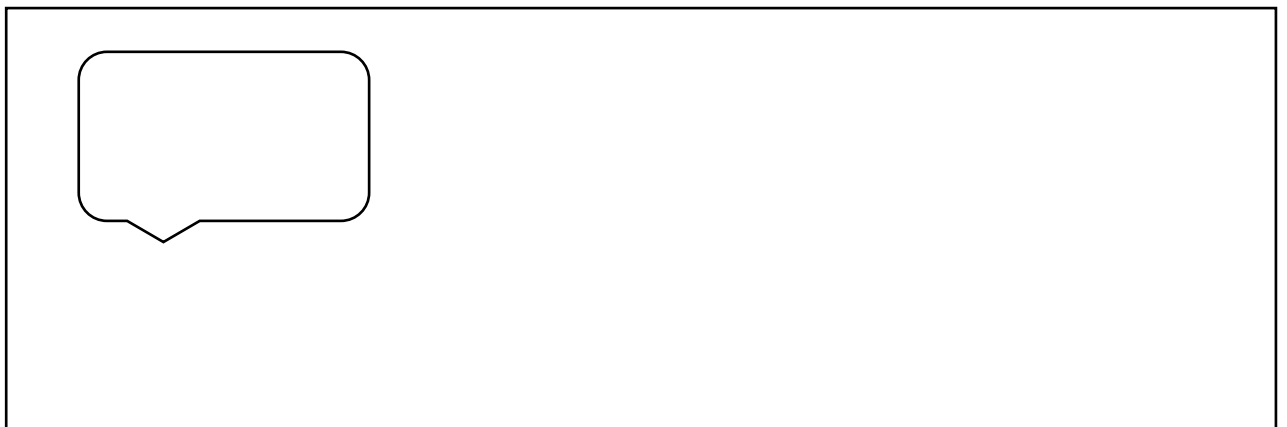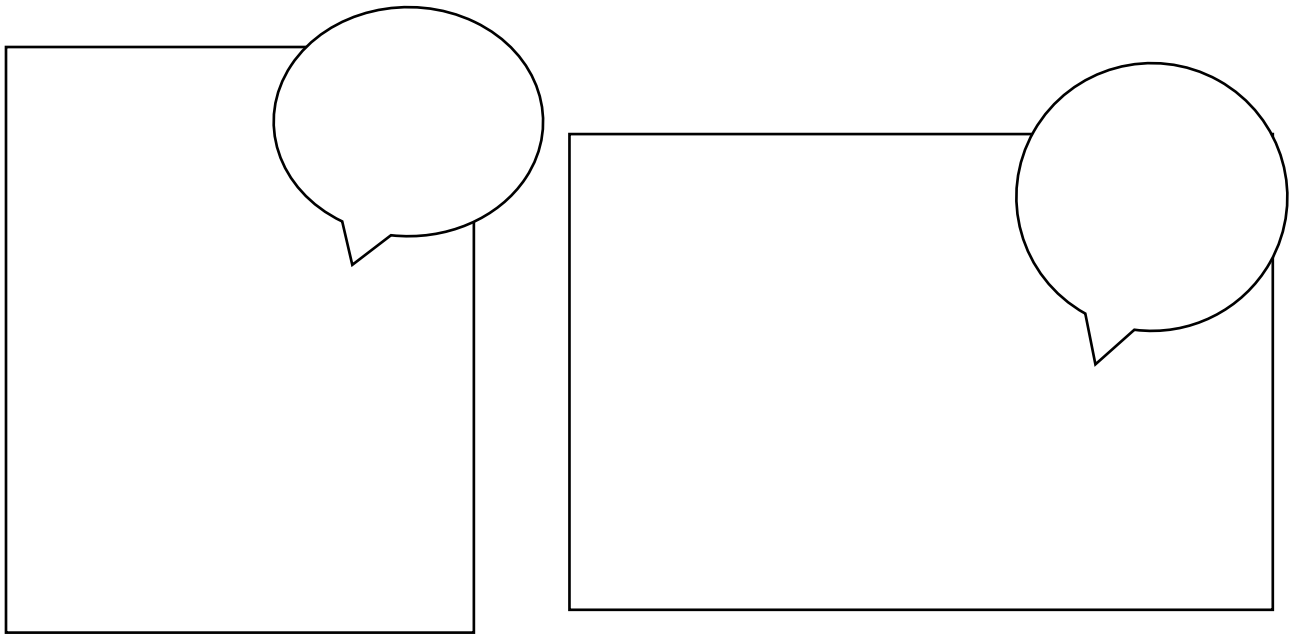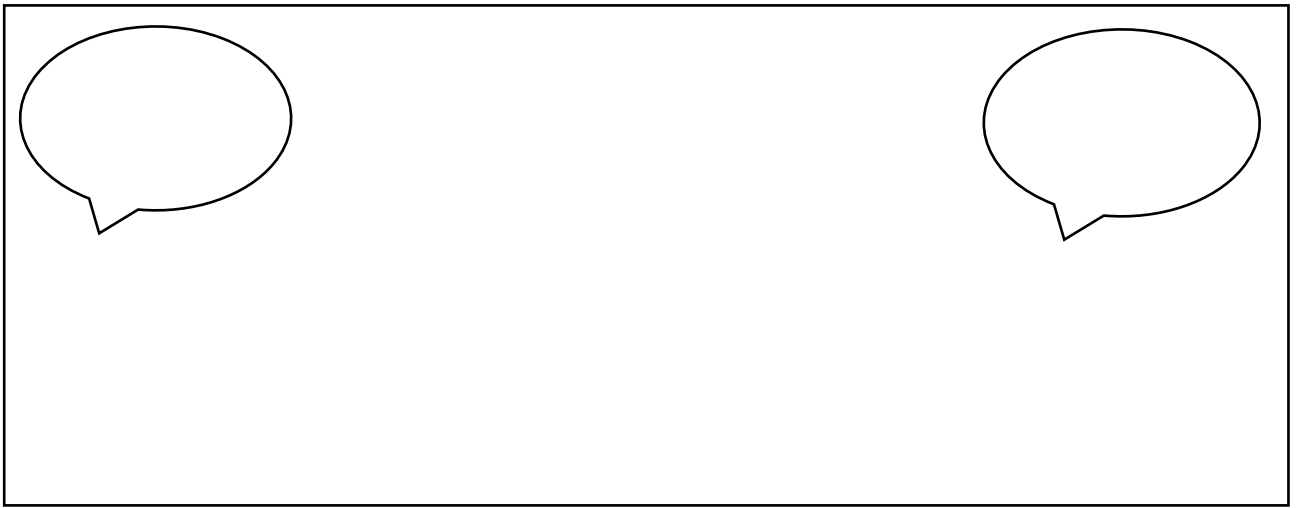*Graphic Novel Template/Creation*

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Directions: Begin to fill out the below boxes with your drawings, or images you have found that help you express how you have experienced culture. You can write words, phrases and sentences that match your pictures.

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