Family Project Resources

Project Based Learning- What is my family story?

The following resources can be used to help guide the discovery of your family story.

Online Resources

- Interview tips video: https://youtu.be/HYS88NOVW10
- 50 Questions for Family Interviews: https://www.thoughtco.com/fifty-questions-for-family-history-interviews-1420705
- Dad tell me a story: https://dadtellmeastory.com/
- The Moth storytelling Podcast: https://themoth.org/tags/pg
- Films by Kids: My Beautiful Nicaragua
- Storytelling videos:
  - Kids interview a 101 Year Old: https://youtu.be/69HgC2KghBc
  - StoryCorps: 12 year old with Asperger's syndrome interviews his mother:
    - https://youtu.be/e07sKVJMO2s
  - StoryCorps: Adopted son interviews his mother:
    - https://youtu.be/v_jKNsBwmt0
  - StoryCorps: Son tells the story about his immigrant father and his job as a cab driver in New York City:
    - https://youtu.be/2BSN4Z650_k
  - StoryCorps: two friends tell the story of working together on the same garbage route in New York City until one retires:
    - https://youtu.be/gvdialHYUws
  - StoryCorps: Son interviews his father who was a tribal leader for the Caddo Nation in Oklahoma:
    - https://youtu.be/FWIXPY8RMI4
- BrainPop Genetics Video: https://youtu.be/YDagfXWej0Y
- Tenement Museum: https://youtu.be/fm6qkb50wdY
  - Online Interactive Exhibit:
    - https://103orchard.tenement.org/stories/103-orchard/
  - Family Stories:
    - https://www.tenement.org/blog/lesson_plans_grade/middle-school-6-8th-grade/
- Freedmen's Bureau Project: https://youtu.be/4iekiVmEDco
  - Website: http://www.discoverfreedmen.org/#discover
- Overview of Native American History
Family Project Resources

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Online Reading Resource Sites

- Education.com: Educational site that includes reading, math, and writing activities (PK-5)
  - https://www.education.com/
- History Classroom: Guides and classroom materials for History Channel's programming (4-12)
  - https://www.history.com/classroom
- ReadWorks: Select from a variety of topics for reading passages with questions (K-12)
  - https://www.readworks.org/
- ReadWriteThink: Practice and resources in reading and language arts instruction (K-8)
  - http://www.readwritethink.org/
- Scholastic: Day by day reading activities for kids (K-8)
  - https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html

Printed Leveled Readings

- 7th and 8th grade:
  - ReadWorks: America At Play
  - ReadWorks: El Dia de los Muertos
  - "My Name" by Sandra Cisneros
  - "The Medicine Bag" by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve

- 5th and 6th grade:
  - “Grandpa Smoke Jumper” Story Level X
  - Scholastic: MLK “Why We Can’t Wait”
  - ReadWorks: The Family Business
  - Scholastic: “Where I am From” Poem
  - Scholastic: “Coming to America
  - Primary vs. Secondary Sources
  - “Deep Roots”- Narrative
  - ReadWorks: Immigrant Stories
  - Scholastic: “I Was Adopted”
Family Project Resources

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Articles For Parents and Caregivers

- Education World: Welcoming Family Diversity in the Classroom:

- Edutopia: How Teachers Can Support PBL at Home:
  - [https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-teachers-can-support-pbl-home](https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-teachers-can-support-pbl-home)

- Edutopia: Strategies for Differentiated Instruction in Project Based Learning:
  - [https://www.edutopia.org/blog/differentiated-instruction-strategies-pbl-andrew-miller](https://www.edutopia.org/blog/differentiated-instruction-strategies-pbl-andrew-miller)
Printed Leveled Readings

7th and 8th grade
America at Play
7 Articles

Check articles you have read:

☐ Early Break Dancing
   259 words

☐ The Parade Marches On
   307 words

☐ How Baseball Began
   406 words

☐ Capturing the Memories
   273 words

☐ Traveling by Car
   385 words

☐ County and State Fairs
   345 words

☐ The Wonderful Waltz
   307 words
Early Break Dancing

These days the dancing we see on MTV is usually hip-hop, soul, and funk. You may think that those oh-so-cool hip-hop moves are brand new, but can you believe that some of them have been around since the late 1800s? A lot of dancing borrows many moves from gymnastics. In one film, a performer called Hadji Cheriff, of the Cheriff troupe of Arabs, performs a gymnastic routine with a series of one-armed cartwheels. . . .

Have you ever seen someone on the street performing for money? Maybe a little song and dance routine? Street dancing has been around for years. In one film, shot in New York City in 1898, a boy performs a wild acrobatic routine. See if you don't recognize some of his moves. Pay special attention to the part where he stands on his head and twists around like a top. It looks pretty similar to the head spin move that is so popular in break dancing, doesn't it?

Vaudeville dancing borrowed a lot from gymnastics and acrobatics, but by the 1920s, theatrical dancing also included a little tap and more of what we consider "dance steps." [A] film of the "Three Jumping Tommies" opens with three acrobats in British military uniforms performing backflips, cartwheels, and somersaults. In between all the stunts, they do a little shuffle dance and a few twirls. They also perform some stunts with stacked tables. . . .
The Parade Marches On

Parades are often a central part of a community celebration, providing an exciting, moving spectacle that people can watch from the sidelines. A famous parade in Britain is called *Trooping the Colour* when royalty is driven around in a carriage to inspect the troops. In the U.S., there are parades for all sorts of holidays, including Thanksgiving, Columbus Day, St. Patrick’s Day, and Memorial Day. [There also are] parades celebrating cultural events such as Chinese New Year and Mardi Gras. One city in the U.S. is known for its Mardi Gras (French for "Fat Tuesday") Festival. . . .

New Orleans’ Mardi Gras tradition goes back to celebrations by masked student revelers around 1827. Many parades, including Mardi Gras, feature "floats," which are moving cars or large displays decorated with fresh flowers or crepe paper by local groups and schools. Musical groups march and play their instruments, and military troops also often participate. In the Charro Day Parade ("Charro" is a Mexican cowboy in a special costume), a fiesta parade in Brownsville, Texas, children wear traditional Mexican costumes, march, and sing special songs. . . .

Some parades, which used to be mainly religious celebrations, are now put on for everyone. In New York City, the Easter Parade takes place up and down Fifth Avenue. Traditionally, this is when all the women would first wear their Easter bonnets.

Another very popular parade in New York is the Thanksgiving Day Parade, which includes floats of everything from a gigantic turkey, to Snoopy to Bart Simpson. New York City is just one of many cities to hold big holiday parades. Small-town parades can also be fun because everyone can participate. . . .

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*a scene from Thomas Edison’s film, “Parade of Chinese,” 1898*

*Children in Mexican costumes walk in the Charro Day Parade in Brownsville, Texas, 1942.*

*A Mid-Winter Fair parade from the South Texas border*
How Baseball Began

The text and images are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

No one is exactly sure how baseball began, but it seems to have its roots in the English game called "rounders" or "four-old-cat." [A] picture was published in a children's magazine with the title "Base-ball" in 1760 and shows players standing at bases, one holding a ball. Rounders had many of the same features as baseball has today. The one major difference was that in rounders the fielder put the batter out by hitting him with the ball. . . .

When a group in New York City got together in 1845 to regulate the rules of baseball, they decided that to get a base runner out, an opposing player need only tag him with the ball instead of hitting him with it. From then on, baseball was played using a hard ball, and soon the game began to be played on a much larger scale. Baseball became an organized sport in the 1840s and 1850s. People even played it during the Civil War. In [one] print you can see Union soldiers playing a baseball game in a Confederate prisoner-of-war camp in North Carolina. . . .

Many early baseball teams were formed in New York City and Brooklyn. By 1860, baseball had replaced the British game of cricket as America's most popular game. At this time, baseball was an amateur sport, which meant that players were not paid to play. The Brooklyn Atlantics were the leading team in early baseball, winning championships in 1861, 1864, and 1865. They sent [a] card to teams they were about to play to let their opponents know they were going up against the champions. . . .

Union prisoners at Salisbury, North Carolina, play baseball in 1863.

an early baseball player from A Pretty Little Pocket-Book, published in 1760

The Brooklyn Atlantics, the Champions of America, 1865
The first all-professional baseball team was the Cincinnati Red Stockings. It was considered a bold move to decide to openly pay players to play baseball, and it can be credited to Club President Aaron B. Champion, who came up with the idea. In 1869, the Reds' player-manager Harry Wright, known as the "Father of Professional Baseball," and his team toured the country and won 60 games without a single loss. Although the National Association didn't want to support the professional baseball movement, they were overruled. Major League baseball in America had begun.
Capturing the Memories

The text and images are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

Capturing experiences and moments on film has become an essential part of going on vacation. The first camera that used film in a roll was George Eastman's 1888 Kodak portable box camera. But this camera was too big and expensive for the average American family to carry around. So in 1900, Kodak introduced the Brownie camera, a smaller, more portable version.

At just $1, most families could afford the Kodak Brownie camera. It was not only cheap but also easy to use. The company's slogan was, "You press the button, we do the rest." Customers would buy a camera already loaded with film. After taking their pictures, they sent both the camera and the film back to the Eastman factory, where the film was developed. The factory reloaded the camera, and returned it along with the printed photos. Now families could record their travels to show the folks back home where they'd been.

Imagine going on a vacation without a camera. When you came back, how would you tell your friends about your trip? Would you tell a story or paint a picture? If you didn't have pictures to help you remember a trip, what do you think would remind you of where you went?

Nowadays many people take not only a regular camera but also a video camera on vacation. The camera and its ability to record a moment in time affected forever how we take vacations and what we remember about them.

A tourist uses a candid camera in Taos, New Mexico, 1940.

Snapping pictures of the cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C., 1941.

A photographer ready to snap a photo, 1935.
Traveling by Car

The text and images are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

It used to be that if you wanted to travel, you had to plan for a long stagecoach or train ride. But the automobile changed all that. Although at first considered a luxury, the car quickly became an American necessity. Between 1908 and 1926, Ford Motor Company sold more than 15 million Model T automobiles.

Since more Americans owned cars, more were able to spend time "on the road" exploring the country. This ability to travel with greater ease changed the way American families went on vacation. . . .

Almost from the beginning, people liked to use their cars to go on vacation. Gas was cheap and traveling by car was an affordable way to see the country. With so many people taking to the road, the U.S. had to create a national highway system to support all that traffic. Gas stations began to dot the scenery. An increased demand for rubber tires caused the rubber industry to flourish. Roadside diners and drive-ins catered to auto tourists.

People also needed information on interesting places to visit and how to reach them, so road atlases and travel guides were developed. Popular Mechanics Auto Tourist Magazine was first published in 1924. It offered suggestions on everything from camping equipment, to car repairs, to portable radios. . . .

In the early days of car travel, people often went "autocamping." Mainly they camped outdoors in parks. But, even in the days before trailers and Winnebagos, some people turned their cars into mobile homes. Eventually, motels, or "motor hotels," sprang up along the highways that criss-crossed the country.

Having a car meant families could go places far from where they lived. If you lived in a warm area, you could pack up the car and go to the mountains to ski; if you lived in a cold place, you could drive to the beach for fun in the sun. Cars made it possible to do what had not been easy for most people before: explore America affordably on their own schedule.

1924 cover of auto tourists handbook

ready to hit the slopes--car with skis in Vermont

Cars in the desert--automobiles with Black Mesa, New Mexico, in the background in 1924

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County and State Fairs

The text and images are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

American state and county fairs have their roots in ancient times. The earliest fairs, such as the great Aztec market that Spanish conquistadors found on the present-day site of Mexico City, were created to solve problems of distribution. Historically, fairs were located on major trade routes and gave people the chance to show off their skills and crafts, and sell or trade their goods. In the days when people did not travel much, fairs were also an opportunity to see different areas and socialize with others. What goes on at state fairs today?

Today, state and county fairs tend to have an agricultural flavor, where city folk can get a taste of country life, and children who grow up in the country can show off their farming and craft skills. Boys and girls in rural areas often take part in 4-H Clubs, where they can try raising their own farm animals, vegetables, and flowers. Each year people enter into competitions with their animals and crafts in hopes of winning a blue ribbon for "best of show." What else is there at a fair?

Ferris wheels, carousels, and friendly competitions such as the wheelbarrow race, pie-eating contest, and greased pig race are some things you might find at a fair. . . .

Going to the state fair was a big event. Some people even came and camped out so they could stay for several days. Here's how one woman from Portland, Oregon, described the experience. "The State Fair . . . was the big event of the year. Everybody who was anybody as well as those who were not, would come from all the country round about, within a radius of a hundred miles or more, depending on what and how much they had to exhibit in stock and products."

Have you ever been to a state or county fair?
The Wonderful Waltz

The text and images are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

Some dances gain more popularity than others because they can be performed to different kinds of music and the steps change accordingly. One such dance is the waltz.

There is a basic form for the waltz . . . The man places one arm around the woman's waist, and she places her opposite hand on his shoulder. Then, they stretch their other arms out from their bodies and clasp hands. If someone tries to teach you a formal kind of dancing, chances are your teacher will start with the waltz . . .

There are lots of different kinds of waltzes, all performed to different types of waltz music. The music might be fast or slow, but what they all have in common is a regular one-two-three, one-two-three rhythm.

The traditional form is the old-school waltz in which dancers turn all the time with a hopping, springy step. This waltz has a slow, smooth, gliding step. . . . There's also the Mexican waltz, which moves much faster . . .

a diagram of waltz steps from a 1922 dance instruction manual
Formal dancing has even become a profession, with people entering competitions. Have you ever seen a formal dance competition?

Today, ballroom dancing is almost considered a competitive sport; professionals perform different dances, each with strict rules. Everything from where the dancers place their hands to how they move is judged. In the glide waltz, dancers are judged by how smoothly they move. In the old days, if someone said, "I can dance with a glass of water on my head," you knew that person was a fine dancer. In the past, some people learned how to dance by reading manuals, while others studied with a teacher called the "dancing master." . . .
In the 16th century Spaniards brought the Catholic celebration of Dia de los Muertos to Latin America where it mixed with indigenous rituals honoring the dead. Today, people across Latin America honor their dead and celebrate the cycle of life in early November under a variety of names: "Día de los Muertos" (Day of the Dead), "Día de los Todos Santos" (All Saints Day), "Día de los Difuntos" (Day of the Deceased), and "Día de los Angelitos" (Day of the Little Angels in honor of children who have died).

In general, families begin the morning of November 1 by constructing altars to honor their deceased loved ones. They place photographs and favorite foods of the dead, candles to light the way, incense, and other gifts on the altars. The celebration then shifts to the cemetery where all gather around the graves of relatives. Families carefully clean and sweep the gravesites, and decorate them with colorful adornments, such as streamers, flowers, crosses, candles, and food—all of which serve as offerings to attract and please ancestors. By early afternoon, the cemetery fills with people joyfully celebrating life and death by playing music, dancing, and feasting alongside the spirits of their ancestors.
The celebration of the dead in Mexico takes an especially humorous twist: people confront death by making jokes and laughing at it, painting skulls in bright joyful colors, and personifying death with skeletal figures called *calacas*. The printmaker José Guadalupe Posada's satirical representations of skulls and skeletons in the late 1800s made skeletal imagery the hallmark of the Mexican celebration that it is today. His prints, as well as Frida Kahlo's artwork, are central to the festivities in Mexico and are often displayed as offerings. November 1 is especially dedicated to the spirits of deceased children, *los angelitos*, whereas deceased adults are honored on November 2.

Locals begin the celebration by building altars to honor their deceased relatives in their homes, at the church, or in the cemetery. Altars are unique to each person they honor; they are laid with offerings including photographs and favorite foods of the deceased, flowers, candles, salt, water, sweet breads, and incense. Paths of bright orange marigolds (*Tagetes lucida*) guide the dead home with their powerful fragrance. Known as *cempachuchitl*, or 20-petals, in the Nahuatl language, marigolds were used to honor the dead in Aztec and other pre-Hispanic celebrations of death. The rich smell of *copal* (incense) also attracts the dead, candles light the way, and salt and water purify the souls of returning spirits.
In smaller towns and large cities, people process to the cemetery for picnics at the gravesites of their beloved, converting the cemetery into a grand fiesta with music and dancing. Families decorate their relatives’ graves with brightly colored papel picado (tissue paper cut-outs) and other offerings such as atole (a corn-based beverage with spices), tamales, chocolate, and fruit. The festivities continue into the night, with many keeping candlelight vigil by the graves until morning. Throughout the day and night, people celebrate with and talk about their deceased loved ones as if they were alive, and thus erase the divide between death and life.

Other important traditions in Mexico include pan de muerto, an oval-shaped sweet yeast bread decorated with crossed bones or a skull and dusted with sugar, and calaveritas (sugar skulls). Handcrafted calacas depict skeletons in a variety of activities of the living, representing the hobbies and work of deceased loved ones.

In Mexico City, a custom of writing and publicly displaying short poems called calaveras that mock the police, government, and priests has continued since the 19th century.
The tradition of flying kites, or barriletes, on November 1 is a unique aspect of the Guatemalan celebration. This custom reaches its height in the town of Santiago, Sacatepequez, where residents spend months constructing enormous kites, up to several stories high, to fly from the cemetery hillside. Kites serve as a symbolic connection to the dead and help guide returning spirits to their families. Once the celebrations have ended, the kites are burned so that the dead may return peacefully until the next year.
As in Mexico, Catholics in Guatemala prepare special foods and offerings to honor their loved ones on *El Día de los Todos Santos*, and then proceed to the cemetery to share the day with the deceased. The Maya adorn gravesites with pine needles, yellow marigolds called *fior de muertc* (*Tagetes patula*), candles, liquor, and *copal pom* (incense). By early afternoon, the cemetery overflows with families celebrating their loved ones with marimba music, dancing, food, and drink.

In the town of San Jose Petén in northern Guatemala, an important tradition is the procession of three sacred skulls, *las santas calaveras*. Said to be skulls of Mayan kings or priests, they are sought out by individuals who ask them for health, a blessing in marriage, or productive crops. Anyone who makes a request accepts the responsibility to receive the skulls at his or her house for the following three years. At nightfall on November 1, one of the skulls is taken from house to house in a candlelight procession. Upon entry to a house it is placed atop an altar laden with offerings of food, most commonly hen, tamalitos, liquor, and *ixpasa* (a drink of maize, cinnamon, anise, and allspice made especially for the spirits of children). The skulls are then displayed in the church for nine days, during which a town elder keeps vigil.
Another special Guatemalan tradition for the Día de los Todos Santos is *fiambre*, a cold dish served only at this time of year. The preparation of this dish in association with the dead dates back to the late 16th century, and the dish itself traces a historical trajectory from the Moorish occupation of Spain (in the 8th to the 15th centuries) to the Spanish settlement of the Americas. The principal ingredients of fiambre include vegetables native to the Americas such as *pacaya* (a date palm tree blossom), foods introduced by the Spanish such as smoked sausages, cured meats and fish, cheeses, and delicacies from Arabia including olives, capers, and chickpeas. These ingredients are soaked in vinegar for several hours, arranged on a platter, and then sprinkled with the reserved soaking vinegar, called *caldillo*. There are several variations of fiambre but all include pickled vegetables and cured meats, making it an ideal dish to await the dead. Derived from a colloquial Spanish word for cold (*frío*), the name fiambre alludes both to the cold meats in the dish as well as to a cadaver.
Altar of the Dead

The text and images are provided courtesy of Vanderbilt University: Center for Latin American Studies.

The altar is the sacred site where the living souls honor the dead. Each of the materials used to build the altar has a special significance. The portrait of the departed shows the spirit where to go, and a small cross of ashes helps spirits in purgatory find their way out. Candles, especially purple ones, represent grief. Four candles formed into a cross represent the four cardinal points, so that the soul may orient itself and find its path. The smoke of copal incense cleanses the space of evil spirits, allowing the soul to enter its home free of danger. The large cross of ashes allows the soul to atone for its unresolved sins once it arrives at the altar. The soul uses the basin, soap, and towel on the altar to wash its hands after the long journey. Favorite foods are arranged on the altar to entice the soul to visit the living. Liquor, preferably tequila, reminds the soul of the wonderful experiences of life, and a jar of water quenches the spirit's thirst and moistens its lips for the long journey. Skulls made of sugar, placed on top of the altar, serve as an allusion to the constant presence of death. Three smaller skulls at the base of the altar are dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and a larger one is dedicated to the Eternal Father. Lastly, the space is decorated with flowers to make it more beautiful and appealing to the spirit.
History of Dia de los Muertos

The text and image are provided courtesy of Vanderbilt University: Center for Latin American Studies.

Native peoples throughout the Americas had been celebrating their ancestors at specific times of the year for centuries. Rituals honoring the dead focused on a reciprocal exchange in which the living offered food, music, flowers, liquor, and other goods to the dead to please them and ensure their blessings in earthly endeavors, such as a successful harvest or marriage.

Death was not viewed as an end but rather as a part of the life cycle by these natives of America. The indigenous concepts of life and death meshed neatly with the Dia de los Muertos traditions brought by the Spanish.

These celebrations date to the 9th century when Pope Gregory IV set November 1 aside to pray for saints, declaring it as All Saints' Day in the liturgical calendar. Approximately four hundred years later, Abbott Odillo of Cluny designated November 2 as All Souls' Day, a day to pray for departed souls, especially those in purgatory. The religious observation of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day spread quickly throughout Europe and was brought to Latin America in the 16th century by Spanish priests, conquistadors, and settlers. Today these dates are observed in the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Episcopal liturgical calendars. In Latin America, they are celebrated as happy days with elaborate and joyous festivals unique to each region.

In central Mexico, the Aztecs honored the dead through celebrations and ritual offerings dedicated to the goddess Mictecacihuatl (Lady of the Dead) during early August. The Spaniards moved these rituals to early November to coincide with the Catholic observation of All Saints' Day.

In ancient Mesoamerica (the region that stretches from Central Mexico to Honduras), Mixtec, Zapotec, and Maya peoples saw caves as channels to the underworld, the place where the dead reside. Caves in Mesoamerica still serve as important sites to communicate with dead ancestors through ritual offerings of food, incense, and turkey blood.

In South America, the Inka and pre-Inka peoples mummified their dead through a drying process and stored them in caves (machay) or vaults (chullpas). The month of November (Aya Marca Raymi) was dedicated to ancestor worship, and at this time mummies were taken from their tombs, dressed in fine clothing, and given offerings of llama meat, coca, chicha (maize beer), and candles of llama fat in exchange for their blessings for marriages, fertility, and successful harvests. The Spanish banned these rituals and burned ancestral mummies, and encouraged masses for the dead instead.
Latin Americans continue to see death as part of the life cycle. The deceased participate in family life, exerting their will through blessings and return visits during the Día de los Muertos celebrations. Although each region of Latin America has unique ways of honoring the dead, they are all directed towards welcoming and pleasing deceased relatives to ensure their blessings.
Dia de los Muertos in Bolivia

The text and images are provided courtesy of Vanderbilt University: Center for Latin American Studies. This text has been adapted for use by ReadWorks.

Traditional Andean offerings such as coca leaves, llama meat, and the fermented corn drink called chicha are placed on altars honoring the dead in Bolivia. Early November marks the beginning of the rainy season when recently planted seeds are germinating. To attract the rain, farmers play music on flutes called pinkullus, filling the cemetery with melancholic music that beckons returning spirits.

As in other areas of Latin America, Bolivians construct household altars to honor their deceased loved ones with photographs and personal belongings of the deceased, as well as candles, flowers, sweets, sugarcane, and meat dishes served with spicy satja sauce. More elaborate altars reflect the different planes that are so important in the Andes: llama meat, fish, and baskets of flowers are placed beneath the table to represent Uma Pacha, the underworld; the base of the altar is adorned with lowland products such as coca leaves, bananas, and chicha; chuño (dried potatoes), beer, and ocas from the highlands cover the table; and above this a cross made of sugar cane is hung to represent the heavens. On November 2, the altar is moved to the cemetery where the celebration continues. Bolivians place special importance on receiving and pleasing their ancestors during the first three years after death as the spirit of the deceased is still tightly connected to the living.

In both Bolivia and Peru, small sweet yeast breads called t'anta wawas flavored with cinnamon and sprinkled with sugar are made at this time of year. In the most traditional form they are shaped like babies (wawas), and may be decorated with a plastic babydoll mask; newer variations include pets, houses, and flowers. T'anta wawas are placed as offerings to the dead on house altars and at the head of the grave of loved ones. In Andean Ecuador, similar foods are prepared on November 1, including sweet breads shaped like children called guaguas de pan and a purple beverage called colada morada made of blue corn, blackberries, and other fruits.
A tradition unique to Bolivia is the veneration of human skulls called ñatitas, or "little souls." Owners of ñatitas keep them in their homes and communicate with them through dreams, asking the ñatita for favors such as prosperity, safety, and health. In early November in the city of La Paz, believers take their ñatitas to the cemetery for a celebratory mass in which they are crowned and covered with flower petals, given cigarettes, and splashed with alcohol. Owners and other celebrants eat, drink, and chew coca alongside the ñatitas.
From *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

My Name

In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing.

It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horse woman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse—which is supposed to be bad luck if you're born female—but I think this is a Chinese lie because the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong.

My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild, horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry. Until my great-grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chandelier. That's the way he did it.

And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't want to inherit her place by the window.

At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a softer something, like silver, not quite as thick as sister's name Magdalena which is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least can come home and become Nenny. But I am always Esperanza. I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze the X will do.

**Text connection idea:** Write a short story or poem about your name and how you feel about it. What do you think about your name? How was it chosen? Does it have a special meaning? Think about what your name looks or sounds like to others. Does your name represent you?
The Medicine Bag

Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve

My kid sister Cheryl and I always bragged about our Sioux grandpa, Joe Iron Shell. Our friends, who had always lived in the city and only knew about Indians from movies and TV, were impressed by our stories. Maybe we exaggerated and made Grandpa and the reservation sound glamorous, but when we’d return home to Iowa after our yearly summer visit to Grandpa, we always had some exciting tale to tell.

We always had some authentic Sioux article to show our listeners. One year Cheryl had new moccasins that Grandpa had made. On another visit he gave me a small, round, flat rawhide drum which was decorated with a painting of a warrior riding a horse. He taught me a real Sioux chant to sing while I beat the drum with a leather-covered stick that had a feather on the end. Man, that really made an impression.

We never showed our friends Grandpa’s picture. Not that we were ashamed of him, but because we knew that the glamorous tales we told didn’t go with the real thing. Our friends would have laughed at the picture, because Grandpa wasn’t tall and stately like TV Indians. His hair wasn’t in braids but hung in stringy gray strands on his neck, and he was old. He was our great-grandfather, and he didn’t live in a tepee, but all by himself in a part log, part tar-paper shack on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. So when Grandpa came to visit us, I was so ashamed and embarrassed I could’ve died.

There are a lot of yippy poodles and other fancy little dogs in our neighborhood, but they usually barked singly at the mailman from the safety of their own yards. Now it sounded as if a whole pack of mutts were barking together in one place.

I got up and walked to the curb to see what the commotion was. About a block away I saw a crowd of little kids yelling, with the dogs yipping and growling around someone who was walking down the middle of the street.

I watched the group as it slowly came closer and saw that in the center of the strange procession was a man wearing a tall black hat. He’d pause now and then to peer at something in his hand and then at the houses on either side of the street. I felt cold and hot at the same time as I recognized the man. “Oh, no!” I whispered. “It’s Grandpa!”

I stood on the curb, unable to move even though I wanted to run and hide. Then I got mad when I saw how the yippy dogs were growling and nipping at the old man’s baggy pant legs and how wearily he poked them away with his cane. “Stupid mutts,” I said as I ran to rescue Grandpa.

When I kicked and hollered at the dogs to get away, they put their tails between their legs and scattered. The kids ran to the curb, where they watched me and the old man.
“Grandpa,” I said, and felt pretty dumb when my voice cracked. I reached for his beat-up old tire suitcase, which was tied shut with a rope. But he set it down right in the street and shook my hand.

“Hau, Takoza, Grandchild,” he greeted me formally in Sioux.

All I could do was stand there with the whole neighborhood watching and shake the hand of the leather-brown old man. I saw how his gray hair straggled from under his big black hat, which had a drooping feather in its crown. His rumpled black suit hung like a sack over his stooped frame. As he shook my hand, his coat fell open to expose a bright-red satin shirt with a beaded bolo tie under the collar. His get-up wasn’t out of place on the reservation, but it sure was here, and I wanted to sink right through the pavement.

“Hi,” I muttered with my head down. I tried to pull my hand away when I felt his bony hand trembling, and looked up to see fatigue in his face. I felt like crying. I couldn’t think of anything to say, so I picked up Grandpa’s suitcase, took his arm, and guided him up the driveway to our house.

Mom was standing on the steps. I don’t know how long she’d been watching, but her hand was over her mouth and she looked as if she couldn’t believe what she saw. Then she ran to us.

“Grandpa,” she gasped. “How in the world did you get here?”

She checked her move to embrace Grandpa, and I remembered that such a display of affection is unseemly to the Sioux and would embarrass him.

“Hau, Marie,” he said as he shook Mom’s hand. She smiled and took his other arm.

As we supported him up the steps, the door banged open and Cheryl came bursting out of the house. She was all smiles and was so obviously glad to see Grandpa that I was ashamed of how I felt.

“Grandpa!” she yelled happily. “You came to see us!”

Grandpa smiled and Mom and I let go of him as he stretched out his arms to my ten-year-old sister, who was still young enough to be hugged.

“Wicincala, little girl,” he greeted her, and then collapsed.

He had fainted. Mom and I carried him into her sewing room, where we had a spare bed.

After we had Grandpa on the bed, Mom stood there helplessly patting his shoulder.

“Shouldn’t we call the doctor, Mom?” I suggested, since she didn’t seem to know what to do.

“Yes,” she agreed, with a sigh. “You make Grandpa comfortable, Martin.”
I reluctantly moved to the bed. I knew Grandpa wouldn’t want to have Mom undress him, but I didn’t want to, either. He was so skinny and frail that his coat slipped off easily. When I loosened his tie and opened his shirt collar, I felt a small leather pouch that hung from a thong around his neck. I left it alone and moved to remove his boots. The scuffed old cowboy boots were tight and he moaned as I put pressure on his legs to jerk them off. I put the boots on the floor and saw why they fit so tight. Each one was stuffed with money. I looked at the bills that lined the boots and started to ask about them, but Grandpa’s eyes were closed again.

Mom came back with a basin of water. “The doctor thinks Grandpa is suffering from heat exhaustion,” she explained as she bathed Grandpa’s face. Mom gave a big sigh, “Oh hin, Martin. How do you suppose he got here?”

We found out after the doctor’s visit. Grandpa was angrily sitting up in bed while Mom tried to feed him some soup.

“Tonight you let Mare feed you, Grandpa,” spoke my dad, who had gotten home from work just as the doctor was leaving.

“You’re not really sick,” he said as he gently pushed Grandpa back against the pillows. “The doctor said you just got too tired and hot after your long trip.”

Grandpa relaxed, and between sips of soup he told us of his journey. Soon after our visit to him Grandpa decided that he would like to see where his only living descendants lived and what our home was like. Besides, he admitted sheepishly, he was lonesome after we left.

I knew everybody felt as guilty as I did—especially Mom. Mom was all Grandpa had left. So even after she married my dad, who’s a white man and teaches in the college in our city, and after Cheryl and I were born, Mom made sure that every summer we spent a week with Grandpa.

I never thought that Grandpa would be lonely after our visits, and none of us noticed how old and weak he had become. But Grandpa knew and so he came to us. He had ridden on buses for two and a half days. When he arrived in the city, tired and stiff from sitting for so long, he set out, walking, to find us.

He had stopped to rest on the steps of some building downtown and a policeman found him. The cop, according to Grandpa, was a good man who took him to the bus stop and waited until the bus came and told the driver to let Grandpa out at Bell View Drive. After Grandpa got off the bus, he started walking again. But he couldn’t see the house numbers on the other side when he walked on the sidewalk, so he walked in the middle of the street. That’s when all the little kids and dogs followed him.

I knew everybody felt as bad as I did. Yet I was proud of this eighty-six-year-old man, who had never been away from the reservation, having the courage to travel so far alone.

“You found the money in my boots?” he asked Mom.
“Martin did,” she answered, and roused herself to scold. “Grandpa, you shouldn’t have carried so much money. What if someone had stolen it from you?”

Grandpa laughed. “I would’ve known if anyone tried to take the boots off my feet. The money is what I’ve saved for a long time—a hundred dollars—for my funeral. But you take it now to buy groceries so that I won’t be a burden to you while I am here.”

“That won’t be necessary, Grandpa,” Dad said. “We are honored to have you with us and you will never be a burden. I am only sorry that we never thought to bring you home with us this summer and spare you the discomfort of a long trip.”

Grandpa was pleased. “Thank you,” he answered. “But do not feel bad that you didn’t bring me with you, for I would not have come then. It was not time.” He said this in such a way that no one could argue with him. To Grandpa and the Sioux, he once told me, a thing would be done when it was the right time to do it and that’s the way it was.

“Also,” Grandpa went on, looking at me, “I have come because it is soon time for Martin to have the medicine bag.”

We all knew what that meant. Grandpa thought he was going to die and he had to follow the tradition of his family to pass the medicine bag, along with its history, to the oldest male child.

“Even though the boy,” he said, still looking at me, “bears a white man’s name, the medicine bag will be his.”

I didn’t know what to say. I had the same hot and cold feeling that I had when I first saw Grandpa in the street. The medicine bag was the dirty leather pouch I had found around his neck. “I could never wear such a thing,” I almost said aloud. I thought of having my friends see it in gym class, at the swimming pool, and could imagine the smart things they would say. But I just swallowed hard and took a step toward the bed. I knew I would have to take it.

But Grandpa was tired. “Not now, Martin,” he said, waving his hand in dismissal, “it is not time. Now I will sleep.”

So that’s how Grandpa came to be with us for two months. My friends kept asking to come see the old man, but I put them off. I told myself that I didn’t want them laughing at Grandpa. But even as I made excuses, I knew it wasn’t Grandpa that I was afraid they’d laugh at.

Nothing bothered Cheryl about bringing her friends to see Grandpa. Every day after school started, there’d be a crew of giggling little girls or round-eyed little boys crowded around the old man on the patio, where he’d gotten in the habit of sitting every afternoon.

Grandpa would smile in his gentle way and patiently answer their questions, or he’d tell them stories of brave warriors, ghosts, animals, and the kids listened in awed silence. Those little guys thought Grandpa was great.
Finally, one day after school, my friends came home with me because nothing I said stopped them. “We’re going to see the great Indian of Bell View Drive,” said Hank, who was supposed to be my best friend. “My brother has seen him three times, so he oughta be well enough to see us.”

When we got to my house, Grandpa was sitting on the patio. He had on his red shirt, but today he also wore a fringed leather vest that was decorated with beads. Instead of his usual cowboy boots he had solidly beaded moccasins on his feet that stuck out of his black trousers. Of course, he had his old black hat on—he was seldom without it. But it had been brushed and the feather in the beaded headband was proudly erect, its tip a brighter white. His hair lay in silver strands over the red shirt collar.
I stared just as my friends did and I heard one of them murmur, “Wow!”

Grandpa looked up and when his eyes met mine, they twinkled as if he were laughing inside. He nodded to me and my face got all hot. I could tell that he had known all along I was afraid he’d embarrass me in front of my friends.

“Hau, hoksilas, boys,” he greeted, and held out his hand.

My buddies passed in a single file and shook his hand as I introduced them. They were so polite I almost laughed. “How, there, Grandpa,” and even a “How do you do, sir.”

“You look fine, Grandpa,” I said as the guys sat on the lawn chairs or on the patio floor.

“Hanh, yes,” he agreed. “When I woke up this morning, it seemed the right time to dress in the good clothes. I knew that my grandson would be bringing his friends.”

“You guys want some lemonade or something?” I offered. No one answered. They were listening to Grandpa as he started telling how he’d killed the deer from which his vest was made.

Grandpa did most of the talking while my friends were there. I was so proud of him and amazed at how respectfully quiet my buddies were. Mom had to chase them home at suppertime. As they left, they shook Grandpa’s hand again and said to me:

“Martin, he’s really great!”

“Yeah, man! Don’t blame you for keeping him to yourself.”

“But can we come back?”

But after they left, Mom said, “No more visitors for a while, Martin. Grandpa won’t admit it, but his strength hasn’t returned. He likes having company, but it tires him.”

That evening Grandpa called me to his room before he went to sleep. “Tomorrow,” he said, “when you come home, it will be time to give you the medicine bag.”
I felt a hard squeeze from where my heart is supposed to be and was scared, but I answered, "OK, Grandpa."

All night I had weird dreams about thunder and lightning on a high hill. From a distance I heard the slow beat of a drum. When I woke up in the morning, I felt as if I hadn’t slept at all. At school it seemed as if the day would never end and when it finally did, I ran home.

Grandpa was in his room, sitting on the bed. The shades were down and the place was dim and cool. I sat on the floor in front of Grandpa, but he didn’t even look at me. After what seemed a long time, he spoke.

"I sent your mother and sister away. What you will hear today is only for a man’s ears. What you will receive is only for a man’s hands." He fell silent and I felt shivers down my back.

"My father in his early manhood," Grandpa began, "made a vision quest to find a spirit guide for his life. You cannot understand how it was in that time, when the great Teton Sioux were first made to stay on the reservation. There was a strong need for guidance from Wakantanka, the Great Spirit. But too many of the young men were filled with despair and hatred. They thought it was hopeless to search for a vision when the glorious life was gone and only the hated confines of a reservation lay ahead. But my father held to the old ways.

"He carefully prepared for his quest with a purifying sweat bath and then he went alone to a high butte top to fast and pray. After three days he received his sacred dream—in which he found, after long searching, the white man’s iron. He did not understand his vision of finding something belonging to the white people, for in that time they were the enemy. When he came down from the butte to cleanse himself at the stream below, he found the remains of a campfire and the broken shell of an iron kettle. This was a sign which reinforced his dream. He took a piece of the iron for his medicine bag, which he had made of elk skin years before, to prepare for his quest.

"He returned to his village, where he told his dream to the wise old men of the tribe. They gave him the name Iron Shell, but neither did they understand the meaning of the dream. This first Iron Shell kept the piece of iron with him at all times and believed it gave him protection from the evils of those unhappy days.

"Then a terrible thing happened to Iron Shell. He and several other young men were taken from their homes by the soldiers and sent far away to a white man’s boarding school. He was angry and lonesome for his parents and the young girl he had wed before he was taken away. At first Iron Shell resisted the teachers’ attempts to change him and he did not try to learn. One day it was his turn to work in the school’s blacksmith shop. As he walked into the place, he knew that his medicine had brought him there to learn and work with the white man’s iron.

"Iron Shell became a blacksmith and worked at the trade when he returned to the reservation. All of his life he treasured the medicine bag. When he was old and I was a man, he gave it to me, for no one made the vision quest anymore."
Grandpa quit talking and I stared in disbelief as he covered his face with his hands. His shoulders were shaking with quiet sobs and I looked away until he began to speak again.

“I kept the bag until my son, your mother’s father, was a man and had to leave us to fight in the war across the ocean. I gave him the bag, for I believed it would protect him in battle, but he did not take it with him. He was afraid that he would lose it. He died in a faraway place.”

Again Grandpa was still and I felt his grief around me.

“My son,” he went on after clearing his throat, “had only a daughter and it is not proper for her to know of these things.”

He unbuttoned his shirt, pulled out the leather pouch, and lifted it over his head. He held it in his hand, turning it over and over as if memorizing how it looked.

“In the bag,” he said as he opened it and removed two objects, “is the broken shell of the iron kettle, a pebble from the butte, and a piece of the sacred sage.” He held the pouch upside down and dust drifted down.

“After the bag is yours, you must put a piece of prairie sage within and never open it again until you pass it on to your son.” He replaced the pebble and the piece of iron and tied the bag.

I stood up, somehow knowing I should. Grandpa slowly rose from the bed and stood upright in front of me, holding the bag before my face. I closed my eyes and waited for him to slip it over my head. But he spoke.

“No, you need not wear it.” He placed the soft leather bag in my right hand and closed my other hand over it. “It would not be right to wear it in this time and place, where no one will understand. Put it safely away until you are again on the reservation.

Wear it then, when you replace the sacred sage.”

Grandpa turned and sat again on the bed. Wearily he leaned his head against the pillow. “Go,” he said, “I will sleep now.”

“Thank you, Grandpa,” I said softly, and left with the bag in my hands.

That night Mom and Dad took Grandpa to the hospital. Two weeks later I stood alone on the lonely prairie of the reservation and put the sacred sage in my medicine bag.
Printed Leveled Readings

5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} grade
Chapter One

"Are we there yet?" my sister asked for the seventh time in less than thirty minutes.

"Not for another twenty minutes or so," Mum answered with more patience than I had left.

I was bored, grumpy and not exactly looking forward to a weekend at the grandparents' in Cave Junction, Oregon. What kind of a name for a town is that anyway? I thought as I pursed my lips and stared blankly out the car window, thinking about the million other things I'd rather be doing at this particular moment.
"Whoa, what on earth is that?" I leaned forwards in my seat, startled by the huge tower looming before us. My sister, Karen, craned her neck to see what I was pointing at, crossing our boundary and invading my space. I did not care as I was too preoccupied with the massive structure that had suddenly appeared.

"I believe that's one of the old smoke-jumper towers, Andy," Mum answered.

"What's a smoke jumper?" I asked as I leaned out the window to look up at the thing towering above me like some ancient wooden giant. A couple of the timbers were rotting, and it looked as if it had been abandoned for years.

"Smoke jumpers are a group of highly trained people who jump out of planes to fight wildfires," Mum explained. "There used to be a smoke-jumping base here in Cave Junction."

I twisted in my seat to look back at the tower, which was quickly diminishing behind us as we drove away.

"You should ask Grandpa to tell you about it; he used to be a smoke jumper," Mum added when I settled back down.

She must be pulling my leg, I thought. I couldn't even picture Dad as a smoke jumper, much less Grandpa; the idea was just too ridiculous. But what if Mum was telling the truth? I wondered if Grandpa really was a smoke jumper.

"Are we there yet?" I asked, anxious to get some answers.
Chapter Two

As soon as Dad stopped the car, I jumped out and headed straight for the house. "Hey, hold on a minute, Andy, come back and help with the bags," Dad said, stopping me in my tracks.

I groaned in frustration. I knew I was supposed to help Dad with the bags, but I desperately wanted to find out what Grandpa knew about the smoke jumpers. As I stood there debating what to do, Grandma rushed out the door.

"You're finally here!" she exclaimed joyfully from the front porch. Grandpa walked by her and limped down the stairs, tightly gripping the rail for balance.

There's no way he could have jumped out of planes and fought fires, I thought to myself. My excitement gone, I turned around and went back to help Dad with the bags.

It was hotter inside the house than it was outside. The windows were all open, desperately encouraging the breezes to come in, but so far none had accepted the invitation. I paced backwards and forwards restlessly. Mum and Grandma were busy chatting in the kitchen as they prepared dinner. Dad was in the living room discussing his latest project with Grandpa, and Karen was sitting on the porch swing reading a story to her three favourite dolls.

I was bored out of my mind, wandering aimlessly through the house, stopping every now and then to inspect objects from the past that adorned my grandparents' home. In one room I found an old push-pedal sewing machine that Grandma apparently still used, since there was a pile of clothes in a basket next to it. In another room I discovered an old record player with a stack of faded cardboard record jackets.

"Haven't they heard of CDs?" I muttered, absently flipping through the stack of unfamiliar musicians. I quickly got bored with them and opened the door to the library.
There were a multitude of photographs in the room. Some were black and white, and others were brown and faded, and they resided on shelves, tables and walls. I skimmed over the photographs, not really paying much attention to their content, since they were mostly of people I did not know. One photograph, however, made me stop and pay attention. It was a group shot of about twenty men in front of a plane and a sign that read “Gobi Smoke Jumper Base.”

“Oh my goodness, Mum wasn’t kidding.” Excited, I grabbed the photograph and ran out of the room.

Chapter Three

“Grandpa, were you a smoke jumper?” I burst into the living room and handed him the photograph. He looked down at the picture and slowly began to trace the faces with his finger, and a smile played about his mouth as he looked back up at me.

“I certainly was, Andy,” he said as he pointed to one of the faces in the group. “That’s me right there.”
I leaned closer to examine the face. The young man smiling back at me looked a lot like my dad. I looked down at Grandpa, but I didn’t see much of a resemblance.

“Of course, that was quite a few years ago,” Grandpa added with a chuckle.

I took the photo from him and flopped down on the floor. I could not make the connection between the young man in the photo and the old man sitting in the chair before me.

“We saw a smoke-jumper tower on the drive over,” Karen announced as she made herself comfortable in Dad’s lap.

“We used to practise jumping off those towers before we went up in the planes,” Grandpa explained.

That was all it took; I could no longer contain my curiosity. “You jumped off those things?” I burst out in amazement. “They’re so HUGE! What was it like, Grandpa? You know, jumping out of planes, fighting fires?” The barrage of questions literally flew out of my mouth.

Grandpa smiled and settled back into his chair. He had a captive audience and a very good story to tell.

Chapter Four

“I was just eighteen years old when I became a smoke jumper,” he began. “It was the summer of 1946, and the previous year my friends Charlie, Greg and I had signed up for smoke-jumper training. Everyone thought we were nuts for wanting to jump out of planes and fight fires.”

He shook his head and laughed at the memories that came back. “You had to be in top physical condition to be a smoke jumper,” Grandpa continued. “The test was gruelling. Hard to imagine now, but back then I could do twenty-five push-ups, forty-five sit-ups and trek over forty kilograms of gear five kilometres in under ninety minutes.”
He chuckled again. “Oh, it was a very tough
course. Charlie dropped out after the first week
and trained instead to be a spotter, turned out he
made the right decision, since he was the best
spotter in the business.”

“Spotter?” I was about to ask what a spotter
was when Grandpa started back in on the story.

“Charlie called it in at about 5am. He’d spotted
a fire from one of the towers and alerted Jack,
the fire chief, and by 5.30 we were all at
the base listening as Jack briefed us on the
situation.”

He paused for a second, and Dad took the
opportunity to explain. “The spotter looks for
fires and decides where the smoke jumpers need
to go and where they are going to land.”

“I probably should explain first that it was late
August and we were smack in the middle of peak
fire season,” Grandpa continued. “It hadn’t rained
in over a month, the temperatures were averaging
thirty-two degrees daily and we were making
jumps practically every week.”

“However,” he stated emphatically, “no one
expected the fire we faced that day. By 6am, Greg
and I were packed like sardines with the rest of
the smoke jumpers in the belly of the DC-3
aeroplane. Charlie relayed information from the
open doorway at the back to the pilots in the
cockpit, and they responded immediately,
banking left to head to the selected drop target.”

“‘FIRST STICK, UP!’ Charlie shouted, and our
crew of four men headed over to the open
doorway. I snapped in my static line, targeted
the jump spot and leapt out of the plane, \textbf{plummeting} to the ground at an alarming speed.” Grandpa’s voice rose with excitement.

“The wind whipped at my face and tugged at my mouth as I counted, ‘One, one thousand, two, one thousand, three.’ Then WHOOSH!” He flung his arms up over his head. “The parachute snapped open, \textbf{abruptly} halting my descent and sending my legs flying up over my head. I spun around and around, spiralling downwards through the smoke and heading right towards the flames. \textbf{Instinctively}, I shifted my weight left and right until I regained control and \textbf{manoeuvred} my chute towards the jump spot, where I hit the ground with a bone-crushing thud.”

Grandpa paused for a moment, looking a bit worn out from the excitement of the jump. I hoped he wasn’t going to stop now.

“One by one the others in my group landed around me, followed by our gear,” he continued in a softer voice. “We quickly strapped the forty kilograms of gear on our backs and \textbf{donned} our makeshift helmets. Five minutes ago we were safe in the belly of the plane that circled overhead, and now we were heading straight into the fire.”

\textbf{Chapter Five}

“The small fire that had started just over an hour before had grown quite rapidly in size and strength. Urged on by gusting winds and fuelled by square metres of crisp, dried grass, it had raced forwards, jumping ditches and small streams and evolving into the raging wall of flames before us. Our job was to contain the fire perimeter, \textbf{extinguishing} all spot fires and flare-ups, which are little fires that start from the big fire and add to it, before they swept out of control. We put out a total of sixteen spot fires in three hours, succeeding in containing the fire in one area, but we were unable to put it out.
"The fire got closer and closer to the row of trees at the base of the mountain. Fingers of flame licked at the bark, igniting the trees one by one like candles on a birthday cake."

I wiped the sweat from my brow, imagining the heat of the fire.

"You think it's hot in here, boy," Grandpa looked over at me. "But nothing can prepare you for the heat of a wildfire. You don't just see the fire; you hear it, taste it and feel it," he continued. "A deafening roar filled the air; it was as if a freight train were bearing down on us. The heat wrapped around us like a heavy blanket that immediately got soaked with the sweat streaming down our backs and faces. We were completely surrounded by smoke; our eyes burned and we scorched our throats every time we took a breath. We were running out of air, the fire was sucking up all the oxygen and the clouds of black smoke began spiralling upwards in search of the fresh air we so desperately needed ... not a good sign."

Grandpa leaned over and took the photograph from my hands. I was gripping it so hard I'd almost cracked the glass. It was a good thing he took it away from me, because the story got even more intense.

"'CROWN FIRE!' the line scout yelled, and I looked up in time to see flames bursting from the clouds of smoke just a metre above my head. Once the fire reaches the crowns of the trees, it leaps from tree to tree in midair and almost nothing can stop it. The foreman issued orders rapidly as we all headed for our escape routes. There was nothing we could do but hope that the crews ahead of us were successful in creating the backfire. It was the only way to stop a crown fire and our only hope of saving the town of Goldberg."
"Did you save the town, Grandpa?" Karen asked anxiously.

"Shhh." I scowled at her for interrupting the story at such a critical point.

Thankfully, Grandpa continued. "The two fires, the wildfire and the backfire that had been set, approached each other like longtime enemies. They roared noiselessly, battling over who had the right of way. Flames rose into the air like arms as they each tried to push their way forwards. Crackling and sparking, they continued the fight, gradually losing strength and slowly wearing each other down. They had both left behind a trail of destruction, and since there was nothing left to feed the fires, they both eventually burned out."

"Hurray, you saved the town, Grandpa!" Karen clapped her hands.

"Yes, we did," Grandpa smiled. "The jump was a success. We had saved the town of Goldberg."

"Success?" I didn’t share my sister’s reaction. "What about the thousands of square metres of land that were destroyed, Grandpa? Didn’t anyone care about the land?" I demanded, completely flabbergasted that no one else seemed concerned about this matter.

"Of course we cared, Andy. It would be close to impossible to find a smoke jumper who didn’t care first and foremost about the land," Grandpa responded seriously. "But these were acts of Mother Nature, and Mother Nature always finds a way of taking care of herself. In fact, they’re finding out that having a fire every once in a while is good for the land. Fires happen naturally, and when people keep preventing them and putting them out, more and more dead, dry material builds up. Then when a fire finally does come through, it’s a tragedy."

"Believe me," he added, "I’ve seen my fair share of wildfires and witnessed firsthand the resilience of nature. I promise, fresh vegetation and new life does rise up from the ashes."

I was a little embarrassed by my outburst, but more amazed at how strongly I felt about protecting nature and its wildlife.

"Looks like there may be a bit of smoke jumper in you, Andy," Grandpa said proudly.

"Dinner’s ready!" Grandma announced from the kitchen.

"Just in time," Grandpa said, rising stiffly from the chair and rubbing his belly.
Karen sprang from Dad’s lap and raced down the hall, her bare feet slapping on the wood floors. The kitchen door slammed against the wall as she burst in. “Karen, don’t run in the house,” I heard Mum scolding. Dad and Grandpa shook their heads and laughed at the energy my sister always displayed. I picked up the photo from the floor and followed them into the kitchen. I could now see the resemblance between the young man in the photo and my Grandpa. I scanned the other faces, wondering which ones were Charlie, Jack and Greg.

“Hey, Grandpa, who’s the girl in this picture?” I asked as I slid into my seat.

“That’s your grandma. Did I forget to mention that she flew the plane we jumped out of?” I stared open-mouthed at the tiny, grey-haired woman at the end of the table.

“Let’s save that story for after dinner, Andy,” Grandma suggested with a smile.

I smiled back. This weekend wasn’t turning out to be so boring after all.

Glossary

abruptly (adv.) all of a sudden (p. 15)
adorned (v.) covered; decorated (p. 8)
barrage (n.) many things coming all at once (p. 11)
briefed (v.) gave details to; informed (p. 13)
diminishing (v.) getting smaller (p. 5)
donned (v.) put on (p. 15)
emphatically (adv.) strongly; with great belief (p. 14)
extinguishing (v.) putting out (p. 16)
flabbergasted (adj.) utterly astonished (p. 19)
gruelling (adj.) very difficult (p. 12)
igniting (v.) setting fire to (p. 17)
instinctively (adv.) without thinking; automatically (p. 15)
manoeuvred (v.) moved around; guided the motion of (p. 15)
plummeting (v.) falling quickly (p. 15)
preoccupied (adj.) thinking about other things (p. 5)
pursed (v.) wrinkled up; squeezed (p. 4)
relayed (v.) passed along (p. 14)
resilience (n.) toughness; ability to recover (p. 20)
Analyzing a Primary Source

Why We Can’t Wait

Before he was assassinated on April 4, 1968, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was jailed dozens of times in his pursuit of racial equality in the United States.

One of those jailings occurred in April 1963 in Birmingham, Alabama. King described Birmingham in the 1960s as “the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States.” Rather than integrate its public parks and playgrounds, the city closed them. And opponents of civil rights for African Americans bombed black homes and businesses.

In the spring of 1963, King and other civil rights leaders converged on Birmingham to organize demonstrations against the inequality and violence. King’s actions landed him in Birmingham City Jail, where he wrote one of the most important documents of the civil rights movement. The 21-page, 7,000-word Letter From Birmingham Jail was written in response to a group of white religious leaders who asked African Americans to wait patiently for equal rights.

Read this excerpt from King’s letter, then answer the questions.

Letter From Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963

My Dear Fellow Clergymen:

While confined here in the Birmingham City Jail, I came across your recent statement calling my present activities “unwise and untimely.” . . . We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. . . . For years now I have heard the word “Wait!” It rings in the ear of every Negro* with piercing familiarity. This “Wait” has almost always meant “Never.” We must come to see . . . that “justice too long delayed is justice denied.”

We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse-and-buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter.

Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, “Wait.” But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your 20 million Negro brothers smothering in an airight cage of poverty . . . then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.

There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience. . . .

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood,
Martin Luther King Jr.

*African American (Once a standard term, Negro is now considered dated and often offensive.)

Questions

1. What does Martin Luther King Jr. think wait means for African Americans? Cite evidence from the text.
2. What metaphors does King use to describe segregation and living in poverty?
3. Compare and contrast King’s observations of progress in Asia and Africa with that in the United States. What comment is he making about the U.S.?
4. What examples of racial violence does King include in his letter?
5. What descriptive language does King use to show that African Americans were tired of waiting for racial equality?
The fallen leaves crunched under Kiara's feet as she walked up her driveway. She hopped from one crumbled leaf to another, just like she had always done when she was little, to see if she could crush them all. She liked the sound they made, like a quiet chorus. It was an impossible goal, like trying to count all the stars in the sky in one sitting. But she still tried, mesmerized by the sea of red, orange, and brown. It was one of Kiara's favorite things about autumn.

As she approached her garage, she began to hear the sound of a saw going back and forth. It was a familiar sound, one that always signaled the presence of her father. Sure enough, she spotted her dad cutting a piece of wood in half. "What are you working on today?" she asked him. He stopped sawing, smiled at Kiara, and then wiped his forehead with a gloved hand. "Oh, just another Adirondack chair," he replied. "Want to help?"

Kiara paused for a second but then felt her tired legs wobble beneath her. "Maybe later, Dad, it was a long day at school," she said. He nodded his head, then got back to work. Ever since she could pick up a hammer, Kiara's father had taught her his trade of carpentry. He wanted her to join the family business, to continue the tradition, as both Kiara's grandfather and great-grandfather had been carpenters as well. It was a small business—her father just had two other paid helpers who assisted him when he had more work than usual. At first, she resisted his influence, determined to find her own path, but as she grew older and older, she couldn't imagine a life without at least a touch of carpentry.

After reading for a while and eating a snack, Kiara returned to the garage with two cups of apple cider. She set one mug down in front of her father, on the board that he was cutting through. "Hey, you know I don't drink and saw!" he said, teasing his daughter. He picked it up and sat down on a bench that he had built in the corner. "You know what type of wood that is?" he asked her. Kiara looked at the boards that he was cutting—they were a light tan, with..."
straight grains running through them. She shook her head. "Cypress," he replied. "If you use an older tree, which this is, the wood can be very durable against rot, meaning that it's very good for outside furniture," he explained. Kiara shifted in her seat to get more comfortable; she knew that when her father started talking about his work, he could go on for a while.

"This species of tree typically grows in the Southeast, near Louisiana, but I was lucky enough that a buddy of mine recently brought a truck full of trees up here with him. Plus, they aren't endangered, so we aren't cutting down anything that shouldn't be cut down," he said, running his hands over the cypress boards. "And see how nice the grain is? That's why I'll just put a clear finish over the top instead of paint," he explained. Kiara knew that he would continue to talk for as long as she let him.

"How many are you going to build?" she asked.

"Just six—a friend of a friend commissioned me to make them for his bed and breakfast; he wants some nice chairs to put on the porch so that his guests can enjoy the view of the backyard," her father explained. They both sat in silence, drinking their cider and staring at the wood. After a few minutes, her father got back to work on the large chairs.

Kiara couldn't help but join him. As she slipped on working gloves, she felt right at home. She pictured herself in ten or twenty years doing the same thing, and thought that maybe it wouldn't be so bad after all.
1. What is Kiara's dad doing as Kiara approaches the garage?

2. What is the sequence of events in this story?

3. Read this sentence from the story.
Kiara knew that when her father started talking about his work, he could go on for a while.

What evidence in the story supports this statement?
4. Based on the information in this story, what is a carpenter's job?


5. What is the theme of this story?


6. Read these sentences from the story.

"Ever since she could pick up a hammer, Kiara's father had taught her his trade of carpentry. He wanted her to join the family business, to continue the tradition, as both Kiara's grandfather and great-grandfather had been carpenters as well. It was a small business-her father just had two other paid helpers who assisted him when he had more work than usual."

What does the word "trade" mean here?


7. What word or phrase best completes the sentence?

At first, Kiara does not help her father work on the chairs. __________, she does.

8. Kiara's dad has wanted Kiara to join the carpentry family business. Why had Kiara resisted his influence at first?

9. What does Kiara picture herself doing in ten or twenty years?
10. Explain why Kiara is likely to join the family business using evidence from the story.
Where I'm From
by George Ella Lyon

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush,
the Dutch elm
whose long gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls and the pass-it-ons,
from perk up and pipe down.
I'm from He restoreth my soul with a cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost to the auger
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.
Under my bed was a dress box
spilling old pictures,
a sift of lost faces
to drift beneath my dreams.

I am from those moments--
snapped before I budded--
leaf-fall from the family tree
Coming to America

The share of the U.S. population that’s foreign-born is higher than it’s been in a century. Who are the new immigrants, and where are they coming from?

BY PATRICIA SMITH

Look around your town, your neighborhood, or even your classroom. How many people do you know who were born in another country or are the children of people born somewhere else? Chances are it’s more than a few. According to the federal government, 13.7 percent of the United States population is foreign-born. That share is now greater than it’s been since 1910, when immigrants seeking the American dream streamed into Ellis Island in New York Harbor.

It’s not just that the immigrant population of the U.S. is bigger—it’s changing too. For years, the biggest chunk of newcomers came from Latin America. But new census numbers show that Asians are now the biggest group of new immigrants. The data also shows that these more recent immigrants are better educated than previous generations of immigrants. About 45 percent of them have college degrees, compared with 30 percent of native-born Americans.

“We think of immigrants as being low-skilled workers from Latin America, but for recent arrivals, that’s much less the case,” says William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution who analyzed the new census data. “People from Asia have overtaken people from Latin America.”

The new data comes as the nation’s changing demography has become a flash point in American politics. President Trump has sounded alarms about immigration. He’s also suggested the government needs to restrict both the number and types of people coming into the country and obtaining citizenship.

Changing Immigration Laws

The last historic peak in immigration to the U.S. came around the turn of the 20th century. During that period, large numbers of Europeans fled poverty and violence in their home countries. Some of the largest numbers came from Germany, Italy, and Poland (see charts, facing page). That wave peaked in 1910, when the foreign-born population stood at nearly 15 percent.

However, Congress imposed quotas...
in the 1920s that sharply restricted immigration. These quotas gave preference to Northern Europeans. As a result, the foreign-born population fell sharply in the middle of the 20th century. In fact, it eventually dipped to below 5 percent.

In 1965, a new immigration law did away with the quotas. This move radically changed the nation’s immigration dynamic. The idea was to treat people from all countries equally. The law sought to give American citizens the ability to bring family members in their home countries to the U.S.

The 1965 law opened up the U.S. to a new wave of immigration. People immigrated from Latin America and countries like India, China, and the Philippines. And over time, the policy of allowing immigrants to bring their relatives to the U.S. began to change the country’s demographics.

Consider the story of the Patel family.

Jagdish Patel came to America from India in 1968, when he was 23. He had a good education but little else. He got a job at a nuclear test site and built a home in Nevada. By the mid-1980s, he had brought his wife, his mother, five sisters, and a brother over from India.

Years later, Patel’s siblings sponsored their own family members to come. Their clan in the U.S. now has more than 90 people. And it stretches from Nevada to Florida, New Jersey to Texas.

“I am so glad that I came to America,” says Patel, now 72. “I brought everyone here, and we have provided valuable service to this country.”

Patel’s American-born children reaped the benefits of his hard work. His son is a venture capitalist in San Francisco. His daughter is an interior designer in Salt Lake City with 140,000 followers on Instagram.

More Acceptance?

Asian families like the Patels helped launch a demographic shift that has accelerated in recent years. For many years, Mexico was the single largest contributor of immigrants. But since 2010, the number of immigrants arriving from Mexico has declined. On the other hand, those from China and India have surged, the recent data shows.

Another interesting finding is where the new immigrants are settling. Some of the largest gains were in states with the smallest immigrant populations. This trend suggests that immigrants are spreading out across the country. In fact, the state with the biggest increase is North Dakota. In recent years, the state has taken in many refugees. They’ve come from countries like Iraq, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Now, North Dakota’s 2017 foreign-born population of 31,000 is almost double what it was in 2010.

The fact that immigrants are moving to places they haven’t traditionally gone could be behind some of the anxiety we’re seeing nationally about immigration, says David Bier, an immigration expert at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C. But it’s also a reason to be hopeful.

“There’s great evidence that when people are initially exposed to diversity, there’s resistance and people react negatively,” says Bier. “But familiarity does not breed contempt. It’s the other way around: As Americans become more familiar with immigrants, they accept them.”

Comparing Primary vs. secondary Sources:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**: Is a document or object made by a person who was present during the time period or historical event being studied.

**SECONDARY SOURCE**: Information gathered by someone who was not present at the historical event that is being studied.

**Directions**: List the source of information in the correct category.

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Comparing Primary vs. secondary Sources:

Answer sheet

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**Primary sources:**
- Autobiography
- Diary
- Photograph
- Speech
- Artifact
- Letters
- Interview

**Secondary Sources:**
- Encyclopedia
- Biography
- Newspaper article
- Text book
- Painting
- Movie
Deep Roots
by ReadWorks

Variety is the spice of life, they say.

I'm not actually sure who "they" are, but they're right. I go to a mundane school in a mundane suburb; I grew up with a lot of sameness. You don't even notice it—the fact that everything is pretty much the same—until you meet someone or something different, and then you want to know more. Or at least, I did.

My parents are both from America. Their parents are both from America, too. We don't have any interesting traditions or unusual customs; we don't even really go to church that often. My lunches are cold pizza or pasta salad. I wear jeans and t-shirts to school, except when it's cold, when I wear jeans and sweaters.

My best friend, though? She's different. I met Adrienne when we were in sixth grade. Until then, I'd never heard of Sukkot, or Friday sundown dinners, or bat mitzvahs. I'd heard of Hannukah, of course, but Adrienne was the first person I ever really knew who was Jewish.

She and her family were new in town that year, and when she showed up to class one day, I immediately liked her: she was wearing brown boots and a flower-printed skirt, and she participated in the class discussion of the book Watership Down without acting the tiniest bit nervous or shy. I asked her if she wanted to sit next to me at lunch, and we were friends basically from that moment forward.

The first time I asked her if she wanted to come over for dinner at my house was a Friday, a few weeks after we met, and she turned me down.

"I have dinner with my family that night," she explained. "It's a tradition—we're Jewish, so we have a special dinner on Friday nights to celebrate the Sabbath."

"What's a Sabbath?" I remember asking.

"It's a special day of rest for us," Adrienne explained. "It's a time to pay respect and reflect. It's supposed to be a holy day."

And then, she asked me to join her at her house for their Shabbat dinner. So I went, and I got to light candles and listen to prayers, and I tried not to blush as I asked questions about why Adrienne's family didn't eat pork and what they called their place of worship (I guessed wrong).
when I said church). When I went home that night, I stayed up thinking about traditions, and I wished my family had some that weren't just putting up a Christmas tree once a year.

As Adrienne and I became better friends, I learned a lot more about what it's like to be Jewish. I even got to go to her sister's bat mitzvah in the spring, which is a special ceremony for twelve-year-old girls. That night, after the ceremony, I went home and asked my mom outright:

"Mom, what are we?"

"What?" she asked, kind of surprised. "What do you mean?"

"I mean, do we have a background, besides just American? Do we have any customs or ceremonies or anything? Anything that makes us...I don't know...stand out? Do we have a culture?"

It was a mouthful.

"Well, Sarah..." Mom began. "Is this all coming from learning about Adrienne's family?"

"Yeah, kind of. We just seem so...modern. And kind of bland."

"Hey, we're not bland!" Mom had been sneaking ice cream from the freezer when I walked in, and she flipped a chocolate chip at me.

"We don't have the same kinds of traditions as Adrienne, though," I said, picking the chocolate off of my shirt.

"No, but we have other things. They might not seem too obvious to you, because you grew up with them—but that's probably how Adrienne feels about her family's traditions, too," Mom said. "Think about it. Both of my parents—your grandparents—come from Polish families. We might not speak Polish, but your great-grandmother did. She moved here when she was nineteen."

Mom sat down, and kept talking.

"My grandmother was an incredible cook, for starters. And if you're looking for culture in our family, I'll point out to you that the horseradish spread and sauerkraut I make from time to time come from things I grew up with, in a Polish household."

"I hate horseradish," I said.
"Okay, fine—but you don't hate chrusciki or kolaczki, do you? Those cookies are both Polish, and we have those every year for Easter and Christmas."

"Yeah, but that's all food, Mom."

"Well, we're not very active in the church, but your grandparents and great-grandparents had a lot of traditions around Christian holidays like Easter and Christmas," Mom said. "When Grandma and Grandpa got married, for example, they had to share a slice of bread with salt on it, and a glass of wine. Those items were symbols meant to wish them a life free from famine or thirst, although sometimes things got...well, salty!"

I started to laugh.

"Also, you grumble when you get too many jelly beans and not enough 'stuff' in your Easter basket, but Easter baskets used to be all food, no toys," Mom continued. "Nowadays it's just more common to put candy and little gifts in there. But when I was a kid, my mother tucked a butter lamb in with my basket every year."

"Like the one we have on our Easter table!" I said. "I love those! I didn't know those were Polish."

"Yes! And you know what else you've inherited from your family?" Mom put her hand on my head and yanked my ponytail. "Your name."

"My name?

"Yes—your namesake is your great-grandmother. Her name was Salomeja, and the American version of that is Sarah."

"Why didn't you just name me Salomeja?" I asked.

"We wanted to give you a modern twist," Mom said, smiling.

"Sarah" isn't all that interesting a name, I thought, as I went upstairs that night. But it somehow made a difference that I knew that I was named for an ancestor. Mom had pointed out all of the little, interesting things about our family, the things that kept us tied to a culture. My family might not have a special dinner every week, but I went to bed that night feeling a lot more connected to my roots.
Name: _________________________ Date: ___________

1. What does Sarah think her family doesn't have at the beginning of the story?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2. Sarah learns about Jewish traditions and customs from her best friend, Adrienne. What does Sarah start to wonder about as a result of this?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

3. Read the following sentence from the text.

"Mom had pointed out all of the little, interesting things about our family, the things that kept us tied to a culture."

What can be concluded about Sarah's conversation with her mom based on this information?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
4. What is one reason why Sarah initially feels that her family doesn't have a culture?

5. What is the main idea of this story?

6. Read the sentences and answer the question.

"I have dinner with my family that night,' she explained. 'It's a tradition—we're Jewish, so we have a special dinner on Friday nights to celebrate the Sabbath.'

"What's a Sabbath?' I remember asking.

"It's a special day of rest for us,' Adrienne explained. 'It's a time to pay respect and reflect. It's supposed to be a holy day.'"

What does the word "tradition" mean as used in the text?
7. What word or phrase best completes the sentence?

Sarah asks her mom whether her family has a background and a culture. _____, Sarah's mom tells Sarah about her family's past and their different traditions.

8. Who is Sarah named after?

9. Identify two Polish customs that Sarah did not know her family had.
10. Why does Sarah feel a lot more connected to her roots at the end of the story? Use information from the text to support your answer.
Lost on Ellis Island

by W.M. Akers

To get to Ellis Island, you have to take a boat. From 1892 to 1954, many people came here from across the ocean. Millions of immigrants from Europe and beyond came to America through this tiny little island, where they were processed, checked for disease, and sometimes given a new, more American-sounding name. Stepping onto Ellis Island was the end of a long journey, and the beginning of a new life.

But for Emily Dalton, it was just another day on a family vacation. Emily, her parents, and little brother, Max, had been to New York City before, but they had never visited the museum on Ellis Island. They took a boat there, too—coming not from Europe, but in a little ferry from the southern tip of Manhattan. Emily had wanted to see the Statue of Liberty, but the family outvoted her.

"Think of it this way, Em," said her father. "You can look at the Statue of Liberty on the boat ride over!"

Emily stared at the big green statue as their ferry docked at Ellis Island. More than anything else, she wanted to climb to the top of Lady Liberty and look at New York harbor from high up there. Instead, it was time to visit another museum.

"See you later," she said to the statue as they disembarked. "Maybe next summer."

Emily and her family had been in New York for four days. In that time, they'd done nothing but walk, walk, walk, and visit more museums than she could count. They saw art museums, science museums and history museums. There was even one boring museum all about pieces of paper. Between all the museums and crushing July heat, Emily was nearly asleep on her feet as they walked onto Ellis Island.

The main building on Ellis Island has four big turrets, and looks a little bit like a castle. Inside is a huge main room, the Registry Room, where immigrants once waited in line for permission to enter the country. To the sides are lots of smaller rooms, which hold different exhibits about the island's history.
"Oh wow," Emily said. "Exhibits."

"Emily, if you're going to grump your whole way through this museum," said her mother, before pausing for a few moments. "Well...just don't!"

"Oh my gosh, Dad!" squealed Max. "They have an exhibit all about maps!"

Max loved maps. Emily didn't. The thought of spending two hours watching Max coo over 100-year-old maps made Emily fear she would actually fall asleep where she stood.

"You guys go on ahead," she said. "I'm going to poke around in the gift shop."

"Okay," said her dad. "We'll meet you back here at four to take the last ferry back."

"Sounds great."

As Emily's family walked excitedly toward the map room, Emily felt her chest loosen slightly. She loved her parents and brother, but there was such a thing as too much family vacation. Now that she was by herself, Ellis Island didn't feel so bad. She was walking toward the gift shop, thinking about purchasing a new mug, when a machine caught her eye. The sign said "Family Records," and it made something stir inside Emily's brain.

She remembered two Thanksgivings ago, when her grandfather told the story about how he immigrated to the United States as a child. He was only seven years old, but he remembered standing in line in a long room in a building that reminded him of a castle—he said Zamek—back in Poland.

"I wonder if this is the same room!" said Emily, as she began navigating the computer screen on the records machine. Without her family there, she was allowed to feel excited. She typed in her grandfather's name, last name first: Dalton, Stanley.

"No records in the archive match your search," said the machine.

"Darn!" said Emily. She was sure her grandfather had described Ellis Island. "Wait a minute..."

She remembered what her dad had told her about people's names being changed when they got to the island. The American government forced people to take new names, as a way of making them fit in better in their new country. Stanley Dalton wasn't a very Polish-sounding name. That Thanksgiving, her grandfather had told them his given name. Emily bit her knuckle as she tried to remember.

"Stan...Stanislaus...Stanislaus Dombrowski!" A name like that, Emily thought, you don't forget. She typed it in, and there he was! A picture of an old piece of paper came up covered in squiggly handwriting from January 12, 1930. On line 12, Emily found her grandfather: Stanislaus Dombrowski, whose name was changed to Stanley Dalton. He was from Warsaw, it said, and had never been to the United States before. He was seven years old, and in good health. There was information about his parents, too, and his younger sister. Emily read everything she could about the Dombrowski family, and then started searching for other people. She searched for her friends' families, for famous people, and any random name that
came into her head. And many of them had come through this hall.

She was so engrossed that she forgot the time, and was shocked to hear the announcement: "It is four o'clock. The last boat leaves in five minutes."

Emily looked up, and saw that the hall was nearly empty. Her family was nowhere to be seen. She ran down the hall, peering into the exhibit rooms, bathrooms and the coat check.


When she realized she was the last person in the hall, she panicked. She ran out of the main entrance and up the ramp to the ferry, getting there just fifteen seconds before it left the island. She found her parents sitting in the front of the boat.

"Hey, Emily," said her mom.

"You left me behind!"

"Oh, baby, I'm so sorry. We thought you were on the upper deck with your brother."

"We were supposed to meet in the great hall at four."

"I think we said we would meet in the boat, dear."

Emily knew her mother was wrong, but she was too tired to argue. Her vacation stress had returned. She slumped into her seat, watching the castle of Ellis Island grow smaller behind her. As Stanislaus Dombrowski had learned nearly 100 years earlier, she realized then that as nice as it is to get to Ellis Island, it's even better to catch the boat to Manhattan.
During the 1800s and 1900s, immigrants from all over the world began moving to New York City in large numbers. They were coming to seek a better life for their families. Often, immigrants of a certain ethnicity lived in the same neighborhood. In New York, many Italians lived in neighborhoods like Little Italy, in Manhattan. Many of the families lived in cramped apartment buildings, called "tenements." Because the tenements were so small, people spent a lot of time outside. Some ethnic groups formed organizations called social clubs. These social clubs were housed in small clubhouses where people, particularly men, could hang out and talk.

The social clubs became the centers of many neighborhoods. They were places where men could gather after work and where families could gather on special occasions. During holidays, many of the social clubs threw parties. If a family in the neighborhood needed help, the social club might get together to help them. Membership in these clubs was a privilege. A member was required to pay dues to the club. When a neighborhood boy was allowed to join his local social club, it was like a rite of passage for him. It meant that he was one step closer to becoming a man.
Perhaps the group of people with more social clubs than anyone was the Italians. Italians had social clubs not just in Little Italy, but in many other neighborhoods, like Bensonhurst and Carroll Gardens, in Brooklyn. The Italians saw these clubs as an important way of maintaining their native heritage. Sometimes, members of some of the clubs would be from the same region of Italy. While the members of the clubs were all Americans, they still celebrated certain Italian holidays. Many of the clubs would play Italian music and cook Italian food. Local politicians would often drop by the clubs at election time, to try and get votes.

However, as New York has changed, many of these Italian clubs have disappeared. Italians have moved out of Manhattan and Brooklyn to other areas, such as the borough of Staten Island and the state of New Jersey. As other groups have moved into these ethnic neighborhoods, the membership of many of the clubs has declined. As members have gotten older or died, fewer younger Italians have taken their place. This has led to many of the social clubs closing. While New York used to have dozens of Italian social clubs, only a handful are now left.

Today, however, some of these social clubs are still going strong. For example, the Van Westerhout Cittadini Molesi, in Brooklyn's Carroll Gardens neighborhood, still has several hundred members. The club was founded by men who had emigrated from a small town in Italy, Mola di Bari. Now, most of the members are from other places, but they are still of Italian descent. While many of them still live in Carroll Gardens, some live in other neighborhoods but still drop by the club to see their old friends and neighbors.

The clubs that remain continue to be important parts of the neighborhoods. Every July 4, one of the clubs in Carroll Gardens holds a party to which everyone in the neighborhood, Italians and non-Italians alike, is invited. The social club fills a pool in the parking lot and serves pasta and cannoli, an Italian dessert. This is a nice way for people in the neighborhood to get to know each other more over Italian food.

The neighborhoods around the remaining Italian social clubs are more diverse now. You can find people not just from Italy, but also from dozens of countries, each with different ideas and rituals. These clubs have evolved to help unite people from many different cultures, but they continue to preserve a specific ethnic tradition.
Name: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Use the article "Lost on Ellis Island" to answer questions 1 to 2.

1. What was Stanislaus Dombrowski's name changed to on Ellis Island?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. Why did the American government force people like Stanislaus Dombrowski to change their names?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Use the article "The Twilight of the Italian Social Club" to answer questions 3 to 4.

3. Some ethnic groups formed organizations in New York City during the 1800s and 1900s. What were these organizations called?

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
4. Read these sentences from the article: "Perhaps the group of people with more social clubs than anyone was the Italians. Italians had social clubs not just in Little Italy, but in many other neighborhoods, like Bensonhurst and Carroll Gardens, in Brooklyn. The Italians saw these clubs as an important way of maintaining their native heritage."

How might social clubs have helped Italians maintain their native heritage? Support your answer with at least two details from the article.

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Use the articles "The Twilight of the Italian Social Club" and "Lost on Ellis Island" to answer question 5.

5. Imagine a man who moved from Italy to New York City in the 1900s and had his name changed on Ellis Island. Would having his name changed make him more likely to join a social club afterward? Support your answer with evidence from one or both texts.

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__________________________________________
"I WAS ADOPTED"

Is Marcus, 15, curious about his biological parents? Sure. But that doesn’t mean he would trade the family he has now for anything else.

BY MARCUS ANTON GORDON, AS TOLD TO JESSICA PRESS

My older brother and I love to watch funny movies, like Step Brothers and Dumb and Dumber.

My dad and I cheer on the same sports teams—especially the Green Bay Packers.

And my mom and I cook together. She and I can talk for hours.

We are family, in every way that matters. We have common interests, and we help each other through tough times.

The only difference? I was adopted.

A Better Life

For my whole life, I have known the story of my adoption. I was born at a hospital in Texas, and my parents brought me home to Wisconsin. That’s where I’ve lived ever since.

Some people think that if you’re adopted, you must be mad at your biological parents. After all, they “gave you up.” But I don’t see it that way. My biological parents made a big sacrifice. They wanted me to have a better life than they could give me.

Before I was born, my mom met with my biological mother and heard her story. Both of my biological parents had had really hard lives. They didn’t have the support or money to raise me. They wanted me to have a stable, loving family. And that’s what I have now.

I think adoption is really special. My parents do too. It’s never been a secret.
Marcus’s mom was also adopted. “She understands what it’s like,” he says. “We share a special bond.”
Different Families

To be honest, it would be hard to hide the fact that I’m adopted. I don’t look like my parents. They’re both white. My biological mom was white too. But my biological father was black. That makes me biracial.

Sometimes this confuses people. They see me with one of my parents and assume I’m with a stepparent. I just say, “Nope—this is my dad,” or “This is my mom.” I know they don’t mean any harm, so it doesn’t bother me.

Plus, I’m lucky to live in a diverse community.

My friends are all different races. And these days, families are formed in many different ways. Some kids are raised by single parents or grandparents. Others have two moms or two dads.

I’m proud to say that my family was created by adoption.

Tracing Roots

I’ve never really thought about what my life would be like if I weren’t adopted. Still, there are times when I think about my biological parents. I wonder what they’re like and if I’m like them. Are they athletic? Are their appetites as big as mine?

We’ve never heard from my biological parents. But something exciting did happen recently. I found out that I have an older half-sister! She lives in Seattle, Washington. She and I have the same biological father.

Once we found her online, my mom reached out to her mom. They were glad to hear from us. We started texting right away. Now, my mom and I are flying out to see them in a few weeks.

I feel nervous but excited. I finally get to meet someone who shares my biological roots. I already know my half-sister likes sports and listens to rap—just like I do. I can’t wait to find out what else we might have in common.

“Real” Parents

Sure, I’m curious about where I came from. But I always think of my mom, dad, and brother as my family.

Sometimes, people ask me about my “real parents.” I tell them that my real parents are the ones who have raised me.

They’re the ones I live with. They’re the ones I love. To me, that’s what makes a group of people a family.