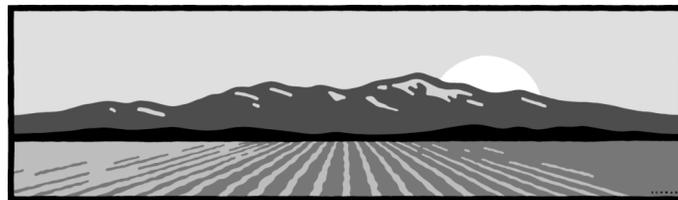


CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT  
TEACHER-TO-TEACHER CURRICULUM RESOURCES

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*CALIFORNIA STORIES UNCOVERED  
IN THE CLASSROOM*

WRITING OUR HERITAGE, OUR COMMUNITIES, OUR PROMISE



C A L I F O R N I A  
S T O R I E S

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*The California Council for the Humanities*

A JOINT PROJECT OF THE CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES  
AND THE CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT AND PART OF COUNCIL'S  
STATEWIDE *CALIFORNIA STORIES UNCOVERED* CAMPAIGN

IF YOU'RE NOT FROM GOLD MOUNTAIN...

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GAIL DESLER, TEACHER CONSULTANT  
AREA 3 WRITING PROJECT, UC DAVIS

JEAN ROGERS-O'REILLY, TEACHER CONSULTANT  
SOUTH COAST WRITING PROJECT, UC SANTA BARBARA

The history of California is shaped by its increasingly diverse population, with each generation or group facing individual challenges and adding to a legacy of accomplishments and contributions. In this project, students will interview a California resident to uncover and write about the impact of *where* we live on *who* we are.

Genre: oral histories and reflective essays

Recommended Grades: 4 -8

### Overview

We created this unit to address and celebrate the voices of California families. Our state's diverse geography, economy, and cultural heritage are a rich source from which our students draw when defining the word "home." In light of the California academic content standards and district-adopted textbooks, both of which frame the lessons of California's fourth through eighth grade teachers and require students to read and write increasingly difficult expository texts, we have turned to oral histories as a bridge for our students between narrative and expository writing, and more importantly, as a bridge between generations. Oral histories provide students with an opportunity to create local stories with intergenerational connections. In completing and presenting the activities in the *If You're Not from Gold Mountain* unit, students become genuine ethnographers and historians of California identities.

The final assignment in this unit, a reflective essay, could be a rather abstract and daunting task for many students. To provide them with the scaffolding to write a well-constructed reflective essay, we have developed three pre-writing tasks. Beginning with a quick write on their personal associations with the word "home," followed by an intergenerational interview to consider the definition of "home" from another's perspective, and ending with a poem in two voices to help clarify similarities and differences between the two perspectives, each pre-writing activity builds on the previous activity. As students move through the activities, they will have multiple opportunities to discuss and revisit the unit's focus question: *How does the time and place in which we live, or have lived, shape who we are?*

### Objectives

For our students to be truly literate, they must be given opportunities to explore, analyze, and create primary sources. By working with first-hand accounts, they learn that historical events, like a novel, are subject to multiple interpretations, but unlike a storyline, have multiple beginnings, middles, and ends. They learn to become critical consumers of information as they question, for instance, the point of view of a newspaper article, the validity of an eyewitness account, or the historical context behind a photograph. Our objectives listed for *If You're Not from Gold Mountain*, therefore, represent a cross-disciplinary blending of literacies.

**Students will:**

- analyze and question images and texts from a specific time period
- distinguish between objective and subjective observations
- experiment with descriptive language
- conduct an intergenerational interview
- demonstrate through poetry and essay how personal perspectives are influenced by where people and events are placed in a matrix of time and place.

<b>Applications to California English-Language Arts Academic Content Standards</b>
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Note: Sample resources listed are keyed to sixth grade content standards, but can be replaced with grade-appropriate samples and aligned to content standards for grades 4-12.

**Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)**

- 2.3 Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text
- Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.
- 2.4 Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text
- Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

**Expository Critique**

- 2.5 Distinguish facts, supported inferences, and opinions in text.

**Literary Response and Analysis**

- 3.1 Structural Features of Literature
- Identify and analyze the characteristics of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction and explain the appropriateness of the literary forms chosen by an author for a specific purpose.

**Writing Strategies**

- 1.1 Organization and Focus
- Create multiple-paragraph narrative compositions:
    - establish and develop a situation or plot
    - describe the setting
    - present an ending.
- 1.2 Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions:
- Establish a topic, important ideas, or events in sequence or chronological order.
  - Provide details and transitional expressions that link one paragraph to another in a clear line of thought.
  - Offer a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details
- 1.4 Research and Technology\*
- Create simple documents by using electronic media and employing organizational features (e.g., passwords, entry and pull-down menus, word searches, the thesaurus, spell checks).

- 1.5 Research and Technology\*
  - Use a thesaurus to identify alternative word choices and meanings.
- 1.6 Evaluation and Revision
  - Edit and revise manuscripts to improve the meaning and focus of writing by adding, deleting, consolidating, clarifying, and rearranging words and sentences.

### **Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

- 2.2 Write responses to literature
  - Demonstrate an understanding of a literary work.
  - Support judgments through references to the text and to prior knowledge.
  - Develop interpretations that exhibit careful reading and understanding.

### **Written and Oral English Language Conventions**

- Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

### **Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

Deliver narrative presentations:

- Establish a situation, plot, point of view, and setting with descriptive words and phrases.
- Show, rather than tell, the listener what happens.

\*Note: If students do not have access to a computer, either at home or at school, handwritten copies of all assignments listed in this unit will be accepted.

## **Applications to California History/Social Science Academic Content Standards**

### **□ Sixth/Eighth Grades Introduction**

- Chronological and Spatial Thinking
  - Students explain how major events are related to one another in time.
  - Students use a variety of maps and documents to identify physical and cultural features of neighborhoods, cities, states, and countries and to explain the historical migration of people, expansion and disintegration of empires, and the growth of economic systems.
- Historical Interpretation
  - Students explain the central issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a matrix of time and place.
  - Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the long- and short-term causal relations.
  - Students explain the sources of historical continuity and how the combination of ideas and events explains the emergence of new patterns.
  - Students recognize the role of chance, oversight, and error in history.

- Students recognize that interpretations of history are subject to change as new information is uncovered.
- Students interpret basic indicators of economic performance and conduct cost-benefit analyses of economic and political issues.
  
- **Research, Evidence, and Point of View**
  - Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research.
  - Students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories.
  - Students distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories.
  - Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.
  - Students detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspectives).

### **□ World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations**

Students in grade six expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major Western and non-Western ancient civilizations. Geography is of special significance in the development of the human story. Continued emphasis is placed on the everyday lives, problems, and accomplishments of people, their role in developing social, economic, and political structures, as well as in establishing and spreading ideas that helped transform the world forever. Students develop higher levels of critical thinking by considering why civilizations developed where and when they did, why they became dominant, and why they declined. Students analyze the interactions among the various cultures, emphasizing their enduring contributions and the link, despite time, between the contemporary and ancient worlds.

### **Teaching Sequence**

#### **□ Unit Focus Question**

- How does the time and place in which we live, or have lived, shape who we are?

#### **□ Culminating - Writing Assignment:**

- Students will write an intergenerational, reflective essay on meaning of the word “home.”

#### **□ Stage-One - Pre-writing about an illustration: Images from the past—“The Chinese in Santa Barbara”:**

Because we use this unit as an introduction for a sixth grade unit on the legacy of the Chinese—From the Silk Road to Angel Island—we have selected an image of the Chinese from the vanished Chinatown of Santa Barbara for the opening activity. To access both the image and the worksheet, click on the links below.

The purpose of this whole-class visual literacy exercise is to begin a dialogue about the Chinese in California while providing students with a tool for telling the difference between a literal interpretation of an image and an inference. The exercise also helps students determine what information is needed in order to understand who took the photo, why it was taken, and what this photo tells about a particular time and place in California history.

- Link to photograph:

[http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00003098\\_16a](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00003098_16a)

If you do not have access to a classroom computer with a projector, make an overhead transparency of the photograph or print copies as handouts.

- Link to student handout, Thinking About Primary Sources:

[http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/doc\\_analysis/graphic\\_organizer.pdf](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/doc_analysis/graphic_organizer.pdf)

Before showing students the photograph, make sure they understand the difference between the three columns in the handout. We have found that students often jump right into making inferences and need some guidance as to what it means to record what they literally see. We use the analogy of level one questions (literal) and level two questions (inference), tying the exercise back to text-only reading comprehension skills. Since this activity becomes a whole-class activity as soon as the students have completed the team activity described below, you will want to make an overhead transparency of the Thinking about Primary Sources handout.

#### THINKING ABOUT PRIMARY SOURCES...

What do you observe?	What do you think you know?	What do you want to find out?

- Put students in teams of two or three and allow them five minutes to investigate the photograph and record their thinking on the handout.
- Begin a class discussion on the possible historical context of this age-worn image. Start by asking students to share some of the observations they have placed in the first column of their handout. Move on to discuss what they've placed in the second column, reinforcing the difference between an objective and subjective observation. If they have difficulty posing questions for the third column, you may suggest any of the following:
  - Who took this photo?
  - Why was it taken?
  - Where was it taken?
  - When was it taken?
  - Who owned the photo?
- To guide the class discussion towards the topic of "home," ask the following questions:
  - Could the two men shown in the photo be in their home?
  - What items shown tell you that this might be their home?
  - What items tell you this is most likely not their home?
  - If they are away from home, do you see items they might have brought with them from home?

- **Quick Write**

Put the following question on the board: Why do people bring certain objects with them to non-home or second-home sites? Include an example if needed.

When students are finished with their Quick Write, ask for volunteers to share their writing. Students should save these pieces, so they can refer to them and build on them as they move on to the next writing activity. We recommend they keep all written pieces from this unit in a writing folder.

- **Student Definitions:**

- Ask students to write down their personal definitions of the word "home." You might want to model for them by thinking out loud about how you would define "home" and then writing your definition on the board.
- Give students time to think through and write down their personal definitions of "home." It will be important that they save their definitions, so they can revisit them as they move through the unit.
- Initiate a class discussion on multiple definitions for "home" and record their thoughts. We recommend recording their definitions on chart paper so that you can easily refer back to their original definitions of "home" throughout the unit. Allow students time to revisit and revise their initial definitions.

❑ **Stage Two - Reading: finding sensory imagery in *If You're Not From the Prairie...***

You need a copy of the deceptively simple but beautiful book *If You're Not From the Prairie...* by David Bouchard.

- Before reading the story, ask the class, "What is a 'prairie'?" Conduct a class discussion on the many ways to describe a prairie.
- Show the students a map of the United States and point out the Midwest section.

- As you read through the vivid descriptions and stunning illustrations found in *If You're Not From the Prairie...*, direct the students to be listening for the author's use of the five senses (see, hear, touch, taste and smell).

❑ **Writing a poem, using sensory words:**

- Provide students with the template shown below to help them create their personal copy changes of David Bouchard's poem.

**Student Assignment**

Prewriting Task 1: If you're not from...

Using the same style as David Brouchard, how would you describe where you are from? What couldn't someone know who is not from your region/city/town? Use the template below to structure your poem.

- *If you're not from ...*
- *Then you can't know ...*

- Brainstorm with the class what is unique about our own region of California (e.g., the beach, the mesa, the mountains or hills, the chaparral) and chart students' contributions on an overhead transparency or chart paper. Post it for students' use as they write their own copy change of the poem.

Note: The "change" in their poems is that the students will be describing their own region of California. Instruct the students not to use the words "California" or "Santa Barbara," for instance, but to use colorful descriptions of the natural environment.

- Put the students in small groups (4-5 students). Ask them to share their poems, so that each student gets some feedback from their peers before moving on to the second draft of their poems.
- The teacher collects rough drafts and gives feedback. In addition to feedback about content, additional feedback is given on one or two corrections in conventions that have been covered in previous instruction.
- At the end of this lesson, each student will read her/his poem to the whole class.

**Student Samples**

Modeled after *If You're Not From the Prairie* by David Bouchard

**If you are not from...**

If you are not from the dreamy Mesa  
You don't know the feeling of the wind whispering to the moon  
You can't know the feeling of the wind whispering to the moon

Because in order to know the chatty wind you have to know the feeling of him whistling in your mind and tricking you and filling you with dreams at night. It's coming from the seas and drifting you to sleep and showing you the dreamy feeling within the Mesa

If you're not from the dreamy Mesa  
You don't know the sound of the wind whispering to the moon  
You can't know the sound as he whispers to the moon and you  
--Michelle

### Student Samples Continued

Modeled after *If You're Not From the Prairie* by David Bouchard

#### **If you're not from the Sunshine State**

If you're not from the Sunshine State  
You don't know the Sun.  
You can't know the Sun.

When tourists pass through our little sun-filled paradise, they come out thinking that the experience was quite nice. It tells us its secrets and tales, especially the ones with the great humpback whales.

If you're not from the Sunshine State  
You don't know the Sun.

--Anthony

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### Teaching Sequence Continued

#### **□ Stage Three - Historical Thinking: Home vs. Homes – Can people have more than one place they call “home”?**

- Put a copy of the poem below on an overhead and then begin a discussion on why people move: push vs. pull factors and forced removals. While Han princess Liu Xijun perhaps never came to view the rugged Tien Shan mountains as “home,” our students probably have examples of characters or people who consider more than one geographic location as “home.” If you or your students do not have personal examples to draw from, you could share the connection Allan Say’s grandfather had to two countries, as described in *Grandfather’s Journey*.
- Tell students that the following poem was written by the Chinese princess Liu Xijun about 110 B.C.E. She was given in marriage to a "barbarian" chief of Wusun, an area northeast of Tien Shan Mountains, a wild area yet strategically important to the security of Han Dynasty trade routes.

My people have married me  
In a far corner of Earth:  
Sent me away to a strange land,  
To the king of the Wu-sun.

The round tent is my palace,  
Its walls are made of felt,  
Dried meat is my only food,  
Koumiss is my drink.

Endlessly I dream of my country,  
And my heart is all bruised.  
Oh to be the yellow swan  
That returns to its homeland! \*

*\*Copied from 1941 out-of-print anthology Translations of the Chinese by Arthur Wiley (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1941.)*

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❑ **Stepping into a story**

- You will need a copy of Allen Say's *Grandfather's Journey* for this next activity: a class read-aloud. Before beginning the story, pose the question: "Can people have more than one home? Have students write the question on a piece of paper. As you read the story, they may begin writing down their personal responses to the question. When you have finished reading the story, allow them time to finish writing down their thoughts. Ask for volunteers to share their writing. You might want to keep a tally on the board to reflect their position on the question. When you have finished discussing the question, remind students to keep this piece in their writing folders.

❑ **From reflection to writing:**

**Student Assignment**

Prewriting Task 2: Defining "Home"

In one to three paragraphs, write about a character from your language arts or history text who might call more than one place "home." Include a quote. Write in 3<sup>rd</sup> person.

❑ **Stage Four - Intergenerational Interview: conducting oral histories**

Begin with a role-playing lesson on effective interviewing techniques so that the students understand the difference between closed questions (can be answered with "yes" or "no") or open-ended questions (require informative, detailed responses ) and that the purpose of their interview is to clarify the interviewee's memories about a place they call "home."

Note: If students have access to a tape recorder or camcorder, we recommend that they tape the interview so they can focus on what their interviewee is saying without being distracted by spelling and other skills required for fast yet comprehensive note-taking. Note-taking during an interview is NOT a good idea.

**Student Assignment**

Prewriting Task 3: Uncovering an Oral History

Find a family or community member who grew up in a home other than yours. This person must be at least 30 years older than you. How does his/her description of "home" differ from yours? The following questions will help guide you through the interview process, but you are not limited to these questions alone.

**Questions**

1. What are some of your best memories about the place you once called or still call "home"?
2. Can you tell me about a historical event that was happening when you lived there?
3. What might be a visitor's first impression of your home?
4. What might a visitor not see or understand about your home.
5. Were there any special advantages – or challenges – to living in this home?
6. What are three adjectives you might use to describe your home?

**Reflections**

What did you learn about your interviewee's feelings towards his/her "home." Are any of his/her feelings about "home" different than or the same as your definition and feelings about the place you call "home"? Organize your ideas in a Venn diagram.

\*Note: If your students have not had experience working with Venn diagrams, you might want to model one for them (e.g., pros and cons of wearing school uniforms). For an explanation on how and why to include Venn diagrams as part of your pre-writing toolkit, visit the following websites:

- <http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/tvenn.htm>
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/venn/>
- [http://teachers.teach-nology.com/web\\_tools/graphic\\_org/venn\\_diagrams/](http://teachers.teach-nology.com/web_tools/graphic_org/venn_diagrams/)  
(Once you get past the annoying pop-ups, the Venn diagram generator is a useful tool.)

### ❑ Stage Five - An Intergenerational Poem in Two Voices

Poems in two voices are written to be read aloud by two voices, sometimes alternating, sometimes simultaneous. Paul Fleishman's *Joyful Noise* is an excellent resource for poems written in two voices in celebration of the short but amazing lives of insects. For a more student-based sample, you might want to introduce your students to Stephanie Klose's "[A Graduation Poem for Two](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/99/fear/poem2.html)" (http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/99/fear/poem2.html). Written for and with her middle school students, this poem is a wonderful example of poetry for two voices. The two-column format allows writers to juxtapose two contrasting ideas, concepts, or perspectives. Alternating lines indicate opposing viewpoints and are read by an individual voice. Adjacent lines represent agreement or compromise and are therefore read in unison.

To provide practice with the two-voice format, copy "A Graduation Poem for Two" or a sample from *Joyful Noise* onto an overhead, assign students their "voice," and read through the poem as a choral reading.

Note: The poem in two voices provides additional scaffolding for the essay assignment. It also works well as a presentation piece to follow the essay.

### ❑ Writing from multiple perspectives: poems in two voices

#### Student Assignment

Prewriting Task 4: Defining "Home"

Write a poem in two voices using information, ideas, and thoughts from Task 3.

Before starting your poem, read through the Rubric for a Poem in Two Voices.\*

Be sure to refer to the rubric often as you go through the writing process to help guide you to developing a full-credit poem.

#### Rubric for Poem in Two Voices

##### 4 Exemplary

- All criteria for Proficient have been met
- Uses "poem in two voices" format creatively
- Voices of both characters are clear, distinctive, and fresh
- Uses imagery and figurative language

##### 3 Proficient

- Expresses thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of the "two voices"
- Includes references to the physical location and historic time period of the "two voices"
- Uses "poem in two voices" format correctly
- Voices of both characters are clear and distinctive
- Has been proofread for spelling

## **2 Progressing**

- Meets five of the criteria for Proficient
- “Two voices” may be somewhat inconsistent
- May need to include more of the “two voices” thoughts, feelings, and attitudes
- May need to include more references to the physical location and historic time period of the “two voices”
- May contain some errors in spelling
- Needs more work

## **1 Not Yet Meeting the Standard**

- Meets less than five of the criteria for Proficient
- Lacks content and/or focus
- Spelling errors interfere with reader’s understanding of poem
- Needs to be redone

## **❑ Stage Six - Writing the Reflective Essay**

Before students begin drafting their final assignment, provide each with a copy of the attached rubric. Make an additional copy on an overhead so that, as a class, you can discuss what a full-credit essay should look like. Remind students to return to the rubric throughout the writing process.

### **Rubric for Reflective Essay**

#### **4 Exemplary**

- All criteria for Proficient have been met
- Essay shows an exceptional understanding of the impact of place and time
- Essay has a thought-provoking title
- Essay has a compelling opening that makes the reader want to read on
- Essay has satisfying end that convinces the reader that the writer cares deeply about the topic
- Uses strong verbs and nouns

#### **3 Proficient**

- Essay clearly explains shared feelings or attitudes of the interviewer and interviewee
- Essay clearly explains differences in feelings and attitudes of the interviewer and interviewee
- Essay clearly explains the impact of place and time on both the interviewer and interviewee
- Essay is logically organized with a beginning, middle, and end
- Transitions are used to carry the reader from one thought to the next
- Key quotes are incorporated into the flow of a paragraph and correctly cited
- Has been proofread for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation

#### **2 Progressing**

- Meets five of the criteria for Proficient
- May need more detail and examples
- Errors in spelling, grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation may distract from overall effectiveness of essay
- Needs more work

#### **1 Not Yet Meeting the Standard**

- Meets less than five of the criteria for Proficient
- Lacks content and/or focus
- Errors in spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation may make it difficult to read essay
- Needs to be redone

Note: Before turning students loose to begin their essays, we suggesting giving them a few minutes to look through all the pieces they have written so far and asking them to annotate any of their thoughts or ideas that have changed or been expanded since starting the unit. Once they have reviewed their work, consider having them team up to share with a partner, or several partners, their initial ideas for their essays. For many students, being able to talk about their writing helps clarify their thinking and jump start the writing process.

## Student Assignment

### Final Writing Assignment

A Multi-paragraph Essay – In an essay format, explain how where you live or have lived has shaped who you are. Compare your experience of living in California during the 21<sup>st</sup> century with your family/community member's experience of growing up in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in whatever physical location he or she calls home.

Before starting your essay, read through the Rubric for the Reflective Essay. Be sure to refer to the rubric often as you go through the writing process to help guide you to developing a full-credit essay.

\*Note: You will probably want to revise the attached rubric to meet district guidelines and the needs of your students.

### Response and Feedback

All writers need feedback, especially emerging writers. Once students begin drafting their final essays, we try to provide them with “check points” along the way. Depending on the individual class, we may have them do an informal “think, pair, share” with a writing partner or small group of writing partners. As the writer shares his/her draft, the partners complete a Reviewer's Feedback Sheet:

#### Reviewer's Feedback Sheet\*

I listened to \_\_\_\_\_'s draft  
(name of writer)

for \_\_\_\_\_.  
(name of writing assignment)

This piece is about: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The sentence (or specific part) that I like best is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The sentence (or specific part) that I think could use more work is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I suggest: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature of reviewer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

\* Note: Adapted from a peer review form by Nancy Broz, published in *Motivating Writing in Middle School*, Standards Consensus Series, National Council of Teachers of English, 1996.

After their peer review sessions, allow students time to revisit and revise their first drafts. Beginning with their second drafts, we schedule in class time to meet individually with students to answer specific questions or problems they are encountering. Based on these individual conferences, we then led mini-workshops on topics ranging from attention-grabbing opening sentences, to possible replacements for the word “said” or other over-used or weak verbs, to transitioning from one paragraph to the next, to how to correctly insert quotation marks. However many revised drafts we require for the final essay, students must organize and submit all written pieces from the unit that led them to completing the final essay. We also require that students include a *Note to the Reader*, a paragraph or two to explain the stages they went through to arrive at their final draft.

### ❑ **Stage Seven - Publishing**

Celebration: Live Readings of Poems in Two Voices – We have found that poems in two voices make excellent pieces for public readings! Inviting families and community members for an evening of poetry is an excellent way to provide an authentic audience for your students and to create a sense of community. For students whose intergenerational partner is unable to attend the celebration, we suggest that they use a tape recorder or camcorder to pre-record a reading of their poems so that both voices are included. Another option that can work equally well is for the student to pick a classmate to read their partner’s voice.

As more schools across the state are wired to the Internet, extending the *If You’re Not from Gold Mountain* unit to an interregional project, one that connects your classroom to a classroom in another part of the state, can easily be arranged. Students can connect and share their regional differences through an assignment such as *If you’re not from the prairie* (Activity 3) or examine regional similarities and differences by co-writing a poem in two voices (Prewriting Task 3). Depending on the bandwidth at your school site, district office, or county office of education, students can communicate via email or even through an interactive videoconference. For more information on how to develop virtual communities for your students, contact Gail Desler at the Area 3 Writing Project or Jean Rogers-O’Reilly at the South Coast Writing Project.

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### ❑ **Stage Six A – Differentiated Instruction**

For students—perhaps English Learners—who need alternate ways to address the multiple-paragraphs academic content standard, teachers can draw on the writing and work they have done with *Grandfather’s Journey* as an additional pre-writing piece or a practice piece before assigning the final reflective essay writing assignment.

The template below would be the first assignment, the first rung of the scaffolding. Their second assignment would be to tell the story of their interviewee, using or expanding on the same format.

## Student Assignment

### *Grandfather's Journey* Essay Template

You are going to write an essay about the book *Grandfather's Journey*. You will need to write a paragraph that completely answers each question. Give examples and lots of detail! Remember to start each paragraph by indenting and begin each sentence with a capital letter.

#### Paragraph 1: Immigration

How did the Grandfather come to America? Tell us from where did he start? What was his reason for leaving his home?

#### Paragraph 2 Big Idea: Important Places

Tell us: Name at least four places in California, which the Grandfather visited. Describe each one separately. You can use descriptions from the book.

#### Paragraph 3 Big Idea: Home

The Grandfather really had two homes. Describe them and tell why he would have considered both "home." What is it about both places that made him regard them as home?

#### Paragraph 4: Family

How does the author describe the different generations in this family? How are family and "home" (Japan and America) *related*? Which country does the Grandfather like best? How does the war change things for each member of the family?

#### Paragraph 5: Favorite Illustrations or Lines

Tell us: Describe three favorite illustrations or lines from the book. Write about them one at a time. Tell us what was significant or important about these pictures or words.

### Recommended Instructional Resources

- ❑ Bouchard, David. *If You're Not From the Prairie...*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1995
- ❑ Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. New York: First Vintage Contemporaries, 1984.
- ❑ Fleischman, Paul. *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices*. New York: Harper and Row, 1988.
- ❑ Jimenez, Francisco. *The Circuit*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1999.
- ❑ Say, Allen. *Grandfather's Journey*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1993.
- ❑ Excerpts from district-adopted language arts and social studies textbooks; primary sources (first-hand accounts and artifacts such as letters, diaries, news articles, interviews, photographs) from the Library of Congress, California Digital Library and other online collections.

### About the Teacher Consultants

Gail Desler has taught at both the middle school level (sixth/seventh grade humanities) and the elementary level (fifth grade). She currently provides technology integration support to teachers and staff in the Elk Grove School District, a rapidly growing district in the South Sacramento area. She has worked with the Area 3 Writing Project at UC Davis as a teacher consultant since 1995. For the past three years, she has been its technology liaison to the National Writing Project.

Jean Rogers-O'Reilly teaches sixth grade in the Santa Barbara Unified School District. As a Teacher Consultant with the South Coast Writing Project, she is a frequent presenter in her region, at the state level for the California Writing Project and the California Association of Teachers of English, and at the national level for the National Writing Project. For the past four years, she has been actively involved with the Center for Teaching for Social Justice at UC Santa Barbara.

## THINKING ABOUT PRIMARY SOURCES...

What do you observe?	What do you think you know?	What do want to find out?

## Reviewer's Feedback Sheet\*

I listened to \_\_\_\_\_'s draft  
(name of writer)

for \_\_\_\_\_.  
(name of writing assignment)

This piece is about: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The sentence (or specific part) that I like best is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The sentence (or specific part) that I think could use more work is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I suggest: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature of reviewer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

\* Note: Adapted from a peer review form by Nancy Broz, published in *Motivating Writing in Middle School*, Standards Consensus Series, National Council of Teachers of English, 1996.