**Lesson Plans for The Distance Between Us**

**Created by and for teachers**

**Lesson #1: Interview**

**Option A: Interview Guidelines (created by Monica Rosas, CSUDH):**

The purpose of this assignment is to expand your understanding of the immigration experience and serial migration (separation between children and parents in order to facilitate immigration). You are to interview a foreign-born adult (male or female) whowas separated from their family due to immigration. Ideally I would like you to interview a person who was left behind when their parent(s) came to the U.S. If you cannot identify such a person you can interview someone who still has children in their country of origin. You may not interview your own parent for this assignment; however other family members are appropriate. Inform your interviewee that names will not be used. If you are having trouble identifying someone, please let me know.

Please address the following questions in your paper. They are written to interview an adult who was left behind as a child but you can adjust the questions so that they address your interviewee’s situation. Your paper is to be written as a narrative; do not just simply answer the questions. Feel free to ask any additional questions as you see fit.

1. **Biographical Information**: Gender, current age. What was their life like prior to the parent’s immigration (were parent’s married? divorced?) Number of siblings? What was their birth order? Was their life happy? Sad? Financially secure? What was their relationship like with their parents before their parents left? In other words, have them paint a picture of their life situation prior to separation.
2. **Separation Experiences**: How old were they when parents left? Were all siblings left behind? Were they given a reason as to why the parents were leaving? Who cared for them? What were they told by their caretaker during their parent’s absence? Do they remember saying goodbye? How long were they separated from parents? Did parents stay in contact (phone calls, letters) and/or come to visit them during the time they were left behind? How did they feel during the separation?
3. **Reunification Experiences**: What was it like having to say goodbye to their caretaker, other family members, friends? How did they feel about coming to the U.S. (were they excited? Scared? Did they not want to leave)? How did it affect their relationship with their parents once they were reunited (was there trouble relating to them as parents/authority figures)? Were they able to build a bond of attachment with their parents?
4. **Today**: Does the interviewee think the separation was worth it? Do they think it affects their relationships today (do they have a hard time getting close with people; do they fear abandonment)? Have their feelings changed over time? Do they experience conflicting feelings about it (i.e. appreciate the sacrifice but harbor feelings of resentment)? Would they do the same thing if they were put in a similar situation?

**Option B: Interview Guidelines (created by Karleen Curlee, Rio Hondo College)**

Interview someone who has immigrated to the United States. Use the following questions to guide your interview. Type your notes up into a two- to three-page summary. No handwritten papers will be accepted. Use 12-point font and double space between lines. (You may change your interviewee’s name to protect his/her privacy.)

Due date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Personal background*

1. What was your life like before you came to the United States?
2. From which country did you come? How many years did you live there?
3. What did you do for a living in your native country?

*The process of coming to the United States*

1. Why did you decide to come to the U.S.? How long did you think about coming here?
2. How did you choose California or the Southwestern U.S. as your destination?
3. How did you prepare to come here – emotionally, physically, and financially?
4. How difficult was it to get here once you started your journey? Did you have any obstacles along the way?

*Afterwards*

1. How did your life change after you arrived?
2. Are you happy you came here? Why or why not?
3. What is the biggest challenge about being “new” in the U.S.?

**Lesson #2: Dream Assignment**

(Created by Cotrina/Robinson--**SummerTIME 2007, USC)**

**Assignment 1:**

**The Sweet and the Bitter: Dreaming about ‘El otro lado’**

"Dreams are . . . the fulfilment of wishes." -Sigmund Freud

**Key Terms**

dream , immigration, trauma, loss, "American dream," close reading, personal narrative, coherent, connotation, cultural association, transnational, critique, personal and/or anecdotal evidence, textual evidence

**Materials**

Grande, Reyna. The Distance Between Us.

**Overview**

 The image of the dream is central to the history of U.S. race and class relations. For example, the "American dream," which is said to compel those in other countries where work is scarce to migrate to the "land of opportunity," is the frequently cited source of the current "immigration crisis." Many have also used it to describe the motivations of those who came to the U.S. during the great European immigration boom of the early twentieth century, when the rate of immigration rose more than 100% between 1890 and 1900. Closer to home, the American dream is associated with Southern California “boosterism,” the hyping of opportunities for home-ownership by real estate developers and others with a vested interest in the development of the region. Lastly, the image of the American dream is commonly used to describe the middle-class aspirations of members of the working class. However, it would constitute a gross oversimplification to call this manifestation of the American dream uniquely American, because economic classes transcend the boundaries of both time and place. Consequently, the class striving captured by the idea of the American dream actually has a countless number of incarnations that spans the globe.

The Scottish novelist Irvine Welsh, for example, criticizes the prevalence of such "dreaming" in Edinburgh in his novel Trainspotting through his protagonists’ angry rant: "Choose us. Choose life. Choose mortgage payments; choose washing machines; choose cars; choose sitting on a couch watching mind-numbing and spirit-crushing game shows, stuffing fuckin junk food into your mouth" (Welsh 187). Irving’s novel therefore complicates the so-called American dream as prototypically American and turns it into a global phenomenon, utterly personal in nature and societal in its scope. Existing both as a figment of the imagination (an ideal), and as a real, verifiable position in economic and social space. Accordingly, any author who employs the image of the dream has access to varied cultural associations.

 The American dream is prominent in Reyna Grande's The Distance Between Us, a book which is concerned in large part with the impact of the desire to live the American dream on individuals and their families. But the image of the dream in Grande's book is hardly simple or straightforward. As you think about the prompt below, consider the following: What role does the American dream play in the story that Grande tells in her memoir? What circumstances cause characters to yearn for the "something better" that El Otro Lado represents? What or who stands in the way of their achieving their version of the American dream at home? Does Grande celebrate the impact of the American dream on her family? Or does she, instead, lament it? Is her representation of the American dream in fact ambiguous rather than uniformly positive or negative?

 In addition to asking you to analyze the role of the American dream in the memoir, this assignment asks you to discuss the role of the American dream in your own life. What has been the impact of the “American dream” in your life and in the history of your family? What is your opinion of the particular kind of striving and yearning that this phrase represents? Why do you have this opinion? Do you agree or disagree with Grande's representation of the American dream?

**Prompt**

 Using as your evidence a combination of personal narrative and close reading of the memoir, critique the impact of the American dream on the individual and/or the family in a thesis driven 4-5 pp. essay.

**Important Things to Consider in regard to the Prompt**

Use a balanced combination of personal (anecdotal) evidence and textual evidence to support your opinion of the impact of the American Dream on the individual and/or the family. In other words, use an amount of textual evidence drawn from the novel **at least** **equal** to the amount of evidence drawn from your life experience. Your close reading of the book should pay special attention to the way both the idea and the reality of the “American dream” affect the protagonists: on the one hand it is simply an idea, a vision of the future that some of the characters have in mind; on the other hand it is arguably something that some of the characters actually realize in their lives. Based on your observations of the effects both the idea and the reality have on the protagonists, decide whether the “American dream” as a myth is useful and/or harmful. It is at this point that you may choose to bring in an example from your own experience to support your argument.

**Reminders about Style**

Quote the text as you refer to it in order to support your claims about it. Put the page numbers of the quotations in parentheses following each sentence featuring a quote. Use MLA formatting style for your heading, page numbers, and works cited list (which in this first essay will only be Grande’s book unless you decide to quote other sources).

**Lesson #3: Immigration Research—(Created by Karleen Curlee, Rio Hondo College)**

🖉 Use the following website to locate the information for the countries listed below. The website refers to people obtaining legal permanent resident status during 2006.

<http://www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/statistics/data/DSLPR06c.shtm>

1. **Mexico**
	* From which age group, did the largest number of people becoming legal permanent residents come? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Were most people married or single? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* What were the two top categories under “No occupation”?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* What was the main reason for being admitted? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Name the *two* top states where people applied for legal permanent resident status. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
1. **El Salvador**
	* From which age group, did the largest number of people becoming legal permanent residents come? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Were most people married or single? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Which category was marked the most for occupation?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* What was the main reason for being admitted? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Name the *two* top states where people applied for legal permanent resident status. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
1. **Russia**
	* From which age group, did the largest number of people becoming legal permanent residents come? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Were most people married or single? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* What was the largest category under “No occupation”?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* What was the main reason for being admitted? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Name the *two* top states where people applied for legal permanent resident status. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
1. **Philippines**
	* From which age group, did the largest number of people becoming legal permanent residents come? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Were most people married or single? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* What was the top category under “No occupation”?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* What was the main reason for being admitted? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Name the one top state where people applied for legal permanent resident status. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
1. **Vietnam**
	* From which age group, did the largest number of people becoming legal permanent residents come? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Were most people married or single? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* What were the one top category under “No occupation”?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* What was the main reason for being admitted? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Name the one top state where people applied for legal permanent resident status. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
1. **China**
	* From which age group, did the largest number of people becoming legal permanent residents come? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* Were most people married or single? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	* What was the one top category under “No occupation”?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* What was the main reason for being admitted? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Name the *two* top states where people applied for legal permanent resident status. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Small Group Assignment: Immigration Research**

* Do you see any immigration trends from the information you gathered? Or, for some of the categories below, are there no definite trends?

1. Age?

2. Marital status?

3. Occupation?

1. Reason for admission into the U.S.?
2. States where people tend to move?
* Compare Mexico with El Salvador. How are the statistics similar and how are they different?
* How are Russia and China similar, considering the information given on the website for 2006?
* What would one probably notice about the statistics concerning Vietnam and the Philippines?

**Immigration Research: Writing Assignment**

Look at the immigration data for a country we have not discussed and analyze what you see. What can you learn about that country’s emigrants to the U.S.? Is that information similar or different from the countries we have discussed? Is there a story behind the numbers?

* Your conclusions must be typed, double-spaced, in a 12 font.
* One full page is expected although you may write up to two pages, if necessary.

Due date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson #4: Laughers poetry Activity—created by Dara Perales, Miracosta College**

1. Re-read the poem.
2. What, stylistically, is Hughes doing in the poem?
3. What is the overall tone of the poem?
4. What are some of the themes at work in the poem?
5. What is Hughes arguing through the poem?
6. From what perspective is the poem written?

Considering the Distance Between Us, develop the following:

1. List some of the important characters in the book.
2. Because you will re-write Laughers from the perspective of one of the characters in Across a Hundred Mountains, discuss whose perspective you think is the most important/interesting/developed/disturbing, etc…
3. Discuss the type of tone you would like your poem to have.
4. Using a similar style to Hughes’, create a poem from the perspective of your chosen character.
5. Be prepared to explain why you created it the way you have.

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**Lesson #5: Lesson Plans for The Distance Between Us**

**(Created by Virginia Escalante from San Diego City College)**

**MAPPING MY FAMILY’S JOURNEY**

Using the tools below as a guide, construct a map that illustrates your family’s immigration journey. It would be similar to Reyna Grande’s map. Email it to me by the date indicated on the course outline.

Example: <http://www.travellerspoint.com/member_map.cfm#/map/23559>

Main link: <http://www.travellerspoint.com/member_map.cfm>

**THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US**

**READING GUIDE**

**Chapters 1-4/Book One**

**A. Read the dedication and the quotation. On the following page, read the quotation from renowned American poet Carl Sandburg.**

**1. Why do you think the book is dedicated to that person?**

**(Keep the dedication in mind after you read the book and come back to this question after you finish it)**

1. **What do the quotations mean? What is Reyna Grande saying? What is her message to her readers?**
2. **What is a prologue?**
3. **Read the first three paragraphs of the prologue for Book One. What device or technique does Grande use to introduce her memoir? What is more powerful than La Llorona and why?**
4. **Read page 4 of the prologue. What do we learn about the impact of El Otro Lado and what emotions for Reyna Grande can you discern in that passage? How does it make *you* feel?**

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**B. Notice that the memoir is divided into two books: Mi Mamá Me Ama (My mother loves me) and “The Man Behind the Glass” (p. 162).**

**1. Why do you think Reyna Grande has given section one that title? How do her mother’s actions seem to contradict this?**

**2. Read page 5 and the top of page 6 which ends with “. . .if truth be told, I never really got my mother back.” Explain what Reyna Grande means by this.**

1. **Have you ever had relatives like the ones Reyna Grande had? How did they treat you?**
2. **After reading these four chapters, what is your reaction?**

**THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US**

**READING GUIDE**

**CH. 5-8/Book One**

1. **Significant incidents occurred the year Reyna turned five. What were they and what impact did they have on her?**
2. **How do immigrants who return to Mexico contribute to the golden mythology of El Otro Lado?**
3. **How does poverty affect Reyna and her siblings? What injustices do they suffer?**
4. **What is Reyna’s educational experience?**
5. **The Grande children receive a package from their parents. But, how does this gift contribute to their feelings of neglect?**
6. **Why does Reyna call her father “the Man Behind the Glass?” What does this imply about their relationship? How does Reyna communicate the distance between them?**
7. **How does immigration affect the Mexican state of Guerrero and what are the experiences of Reyna’s father who goes in search of his dream?**
8. **What themes do you encounter in these chapters?**

**The Distance Between Us**

**Reading Guide**

**Ch. 9-12/Book One**

**Ch. 9**

1. **What is the correlation between poverty and health for the Grande children?**
2. **What is the significance of the construction of the house for them?**
3. **What is the significance of “Mi Mamá Me Ama” for Reyna?**
4. **How does Reyna convey the importance of a mother in Ch. 9?**

**Ch. 10**

1. **Discuss the following passage: “Mami didn’t look like the mother I had tried so hard not to forget during those two and a half years” (70).**
2. **In this chapter, the children experience a variety of feelings at the reunion with their mother and when they meet Betty. Assuming the role of a psychologist, how would you explain their reactions?**
3. **What does Reyna discover about her parents and how does it make her feel.**
4. **Re-read the last passage on page 76. How does this relate to the title of the book? How does this make you feel?**

**Ch. 11**

1. **How does the Mexican economy affect the family?**
2. **What did La Quinta Castrejon signify for the hierarchy of the town and personally for Reyna’s mother?**

**Ch. 12**

1. **Look at the picture of Reyna’s mother on page 84. How does it contrast to the children’s environment and to Abuelita Chinta’s home on page 75?**
2. **Discuss the break-up of the Grande parents. Why was it “ironic?”**
3. **How does immigration affect family dynamics?**
4. **Read the last two paragraphs of page 90. How has this further complicated Reyna’s relationship with her mother and father?**
5. **What did Carlos discover about their mother and how did this create a source of further conflict for the children?**
6. **Read page 93. What is your analysis of the mother?**

**The Distance Between Us**

**Reading guide**

**Ch. 13-16/Book One**

1. **How does their mother’s second abandonment affect the children?**
2. **What is wrong with Carlos and how does the situation illustrate the strategies the poor utilize when formalized health care is lacking?**
3. **Why is Tío Crece problematic?**
4. **How and why is Abuelita Chinta a positive force in the children’s lives?**
5. **Why do the floods and their impact frighten Reyna?**
6. **How does the poverty affect the children psychologically? How do their dreams and the possibility of their fulfillment differ from those of other children?**
7. **Look at the photos of Abuelita Chinta. What do they reveal?**
8. **How would you analyze Reyna’s mother’s character and behavior in Ch. 16**

**MIDTERM PROMPT**

**There are numerous themes in Reyna Grande’s memoir, *The Distance Between Us*, including poverty, education, assimilation, domestic abuse, addiction, immigration, etc. In a 4-5-page argumentative essay, discuss a theme that interested you. Be sure to provide evidence for your claims. Be sure to cite according to the MLA and to include a works cited page.**

**MEMOIR PROMPT**

**STAGE ONE**

**The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines a memoir as “the personal experiences of an author.” Thus, a memoir is autobiographical (the biography of a person narrated by him or herself.)**

**For Stage One of your memoir, you are being asked to reflect on and write about your own childhood up until age 12. In other words, tell the story of your life up until that point—but that does not mean you have to include every single event. To get you started, think about the following questions: Are there incidents in that early part of your life that were very significant? Are there memories that still stand out for you? How were your experiences similar or different from Reyna Grande’s? Describe in detail using examples. Be sure to have an introduction and thesis statement. Look at how Reyna Grande began her story.**

**PROMPT MEMOIR STAGE 2**

**In the first stage of your memoir, you were asked to write about your life up until age 12.**

**Now in Stage 2, write about your life from that point through age 18.**

**Lesson #6: Lesson for The Distance Between Us (created by Suzanne Gripenstraw, Butte College)**

**Assignment:**

**You will prepare and present a 3-5 minute talk to show your understanding of *The Distance Between Us.***

**The focal piece of your presentation will be on one passage you choose from the book. You will read this passage, which should be between 3-10 lines, and discuss why you think it represents your thoughts about the book.**

**Due dates:**

**Thursday, April 16th Complete Book**

 **Read over your annotations**

**Tuesday, April 21st Presentations**

**Turn in your typed passage, introduction and “talking points”**

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**You have completed your second book! Instead of writing a summary or an essay you will present to the class. Your speech will be focused on your thoughts about the book and one specific passage. Begin by thinking about what Reyna Grande might be saying through this book. Think about what was meaningful to you as you read the book. What moved you? What mattered to you?**

**To help you in this process, review your annotations, discussion questions, quizzes and your quick write on immigration. Think back on discussions we’ve had in class. What stands out for you?**

**Writing is a process: Think, write, read, write, rewrite, think some more, read. Set your notes aside. Think, write, read, rewrite. Edit. Reread. Print. Practice aloud several times prior to class. Read for class. Turn in on time!**

**As you brainstorm what you want to say, you’ll want to decide on 3-10 sentences from the novel that will help you make your point. Don’t choose a really long passage, but choose just enough to do the work. “Put these sentences in quotation marks and include the page number in parenthesis at the end of the sentence” (22).**

**Please type your presentation materials. This elevates your writing and thinking, and it makes it a lot easier for me to read. ☺ 12 pt. font and double spaced!**

**Have fun with this presentation. Don’t let it beat you up! Start early. Be smart. Plan ahead for printer problems, spring fever, traffic, and writer’s block.**

**Lesson #7: Triumphs and Setbacks: Teaching Students to Recognize Factors That Help Achieve Goals**

**(Created by Grace Ebron, Puente Program)**

Purpose:

* To help students recognize their strengths and areas of development; support systems
* To teach goal-setting
* To help students cope with setbacks and to recognize behaviors that lead to achieving their goal
* To support composition goals through use of literature

**Reflection**

* Thinking back to your high school or college days, make a list of goals you wanted to achieve—whether you were successful or not. Examples: joining band, earning an A in math, gaining entrance to your dream college, winning a scholarship

**Quick Write**

* Choose one goal and spend 5 minutes writing. Did you achieve your goal? Why or why not? What factors helped you get there?
* Turn to someone next to you and share your quick write, then switch, paying particular attention to factors—internal and external—that helped you achieve your goals.

**Through a Literary Lens**

* Using excerpts from Reyna Grande’s *The Distance Between Us*, examine the successes as well as disappointments Grande experiences. How did she cope with disappointments and setbacks? How did she celebrate her successes? Who supported her throughout? What factors helped her achieve her goals?

**Group Work**

* After reading an excerpt, determine whether the moment was a triumph or low. Then, discuss what factors—internal and external—helped Grande achieve the goal (if triumph) or cope with the low.
* When completed, record your reading’s triumph or low on the chart. Share out to the rest of the group by summarizing your reading and sharing your discussions regarding internal and external factors.

**Sample Goal Setting: Reyna Grande**

* Goal: Reyna set the goal of attending college
* Actions or steps: 1) enrolled at community college despite lack of support from her father 2) broke up with her boyfriend; 3) stopped pursuing a job
* Internal Factors: determined to gain degree
* External Factors: some family support
* Habits/Factors that could serve as obstacles: financial need; desire to please father; family problems

**Goal Setting: Turning the Lens on Ourselves**

* My Goals this semester:
* Actions or steps I need to take in order to achieve this goal:
* Internal factors/qualities I will need to achieve my goal
* External factors/qualities I will need to achieve my goals
* I have several habits that could interfere with my goal

**Chart of Triumphs and Lows**

**Sample: Reyna Grande’s life**

**graduated from high school**

**enrolled at Pasadena City College**

**Triumphs**

**Lows**

 **Father prevented from enrolling at UC Irvine**

**Student Chart**

**Triumphs**

**Lows**

**Student Goal Worksheet**

1. My goal this semester:
2. Actions or steps I need to take in order to achieve this goal:
3. Internal factors/qualities I will need to achieve my goal
4. External factors/qualities I will need to achieve my goals
5. I have several habits that could interfere with my goal:

**OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR The Distance Between Us**

1. Trace your own immigrant experience. Find out how and when your own family came to the United States.

2. Watch the following films to gain a deeper understanding about the experiences of children left behind: *Under the Same Moon, Al Otro Lado, Los Que se Quedan/Those Who Remain*

RELATED SOURCES:

Other Books on the immigrant experience/immigration: The Devil’s Highway, Enrique’s Journey, Esperanza Rising, The Line Between Us, Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits, La Línea, Crossing the Wire, The River Flows North, Into the Beautiful North, Brother I’m Dying