

Lesson Plan: Internalizing Identification

This lesson, designed for high school English (although adaptable for middle school and elementary), incorporates images and themes from the Navigating LA exhibit currently at the Studio for Southern California History; it aims to encourage students to engage with images in understanding how different people connect to and reflect on their own communities. After reviewing the history of Bunker Hill—captured by Leo Politi, government documents and photographs, contemporary LA writers, and the LA Times—students will discuss the following question raised by Politi:

Can we really call it progress when it means the extinction of our leading landmarks of known historical, esthetic, and sentimental values?

Students will take a position on the issue of progress versus tradition with the renovation of Bunker Hill in mind; then, students will write a letter addressed to a newspaper that explains their positions and will refer to at least one of the documents presented. Students are to keep in mind the following: maintaining an appropriate voice and style, writing to an audience, formatting a letter, and creating and supporting a thesis with evidence.

Although this lesson plan was conceived with the LA region in mind, it can be adapted to focus on any local community in order to foster the class' engagement and interest with the lesson.

ELA Content Standards for Eleventh and Twelfth Grades

- Reading
 - **Structural Features of Informational Materials 2.1** Analyze both the features and the rhetorical devices of different types of public documents (e.g., policy statements, speeches, debates, platforms) and the way in which authors use those features and devices.
 - **Structural Features of Literature 3.2** Compare and contrast the presentation of a similar theme or topic across genres to explain how the selection of genre shapes the theme or topic.
- Writing Strategies
 - **1.3** Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them with precise and relevant examples.
 - **1.4** Enhance meaning by employing rhetorical devices, including the extended use of parallelism, repetition, and analogy; the incorporation of visual aids (e.g., graphs, tables, pictures); and the issuance of a call for action.
 - **1.5** Use language in natural, fresh, and vivid ways to establish a specific tone.
- Listening and Speaking Strategies
 - **1.3** Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which events are presented and information is communicated by visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, documentary filmmakers, illustrators, news photographers).
 - **1.6** Use logical, ethical, and emotional appeals that enhance a specific tone and purpose.

Materials Used

- Leo Politi's *Bunker Hill* (cover page will suffice and can be accessed here by clicking on the title <http://leopoliti.net/politibib1.html>) or print which can be viewed on the Studio for Southern California's website
- Gloria Alvarez's poem "Contrastes/Contrasts" (reprinted on page 4)
- 1960 photo of Bunker Hill homes (available through the Library of Congress' American Memory collection [here](#))
- 1960 engineering record of Bunker Hill's demolition (available through the Library of Congress' American Memory collection [here](#))
- The LA Times [article](#), "Last House in Bunker Hill Razed" 4/23/2003

Time allotted

3—4 class periods of 45 minutes each

What to do?**Tapping prior knowledge:**

Day 1: Read Gloria Alvarez’s poem “Contrastes/Contrasts” to the class. Ask students to read the poem for its use of appeals to emotion, credibility, and logic, as well as its views on progress, change, and tradition. Questions that would help students to analyze the poem include *how does the poet use Spanish to address the tension between progress and tradition? In what way does Spanish acknowledge the erased communities that may exist?*

Students should begin to complete the chart below:

Author and title	Genre	Use of emotional appeal	Use of appeal to logic or credibility	Message about progress and tradition
Gloria Alvarez, “Contrastes/Contrasts”				
Leo Politi, Bunker Hill				
Historic Buildings Survey				
“Last House in Bunker Hill Razed”				

Day 2: Have students view and compare images of 1960s Bunker Hill homes and the cover for Politi’s book *Bunker Hill*. Students will discuss the following questions in pairs. After 3 minutes, ask the students to discuss as a class. Ask students to read the first four pages of the engineering document that reviews the historical significance of Bunker Hill. Students will underline diction that relates to the topic of progress and tradition. If there are not enough individual copies available, ask students to list words on their own sheets of paper). Students will complete the chart from Day 1 in order to examine the use of appeals to emotion, logic, and credibility, as well as the piece’s message about progress and tradition.

Days 3 and 4: Students will take a position on the question, “*Is it progress when it means the extinction of our leading landmarks of known historical, esthetic, and sentimental values?*” with the renovation of Bunker Hill in mind and will write a letter to a newspaper, like the LA Times, that explains their position. Students will select one of the following positions: mayor, lead engineer, resident of Bunker Hill. Students will refer to at least one of the documents presented and will keep in mind the following: maintaining an appropriate voice and style, writing to an audience, formatting a letter, and creating and supporting a thesis with evidence.

Assessments

- Class participation
- Rubric for writing

	4	3	2	1
Argument (W1.2)	The writer skillfully relates his/her thesis and seamlessly uses a variety of evidence to support it.	The writer sufficiently and clearly relates his/her thesis and uses appropriate evidence to support it.	The writer attempts to share his/her thesis but it remains unclear and is minimally supported by evidence.	The writer lacks a clear thesis and may simply list or summarize the source material.
Style (W1.4)	The writer skillfully employs a call to action and a combination of the following rhetorical devices: parallelism, repetition, and analogy.	The writer adequately uses a call to action and uses one of the following rhetorical devices: parallelism, repetition, and analogy.	The writer makes an attempt at a call to action; however, the writing has difficulty using parallelism, repetition, or analogy.	The writer fails to include a call to action and does not use parallelism, repetition, or analogy.

Diction (W1.5)	The writer uses a wide variety of says/states synonyms and masterfully incorporates grade-level appropriate vocabulary into his/her writing.	The writer uses few says/states synonyms and incorporates grade-level appropriate vocabulary into his/her writing.	The writer minimally uses says/states synonyms and may use them incorrectly. The writer misuses and minimally uses grade-level vocabulary.	The writer repeatedly uses weak and vague diction and neglects to display his/her understanding of higher level vocabulary.
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Reflection

- How well did students understand the motives for renovating or restructuring a neighborhood?
- Were students engaged with each other in examining the history of a place?

Suggestions for scaffolding difficult material:

- When beginning the chart (Day 1), it may prove helpful and necessary to complete the first row with them; a sample has been completed below. A review of emotional appeal and appeals to logic and credibility can be done in note form or as a short handout, depending on the prior knowledge of the class.

Author and title	Genre	Use of emotional appeal	Use of appeal to logic or credibility	Message about progress and tradition
Gloria Alvarez, "Contrastes/ Contrasts"	Poetry	The speaker contrasts the future, represented by the "silver gray cylinders," with the past, signified by the "aging brown and brick red porous triangles." This contrast heightens a sense of separation and disparity.	The speaker aims to relay to the audience how people are voiceless and drowned out by progress. The shadows attempt to hide "children's cries," "the heavy whispers of its needled residents," and the "pained souls...robbed of their essence."	A saddened and disoriented attitude exists suspended at the end; the speaker appears dismayed by "the invading glass giants" and the neighborhoods that have been "swept aside" in the name of development.

- For students who may have difficulty using "language in natural, fresh, and vivid ways" (W1.5), create a list of says/states synonyms (i.e. elucidates, contradicts, challenges, highlights, enumerates, depicts) and review with students. In addition, make a list of overused and weak diction (i.e. a lot, says, good) and ask students to pair up or as a class brainstorm stronger options for these words (i.e. various, whitewashes, beneficial).

Gloria Enedina Alvarez, "Contrastes/Contrasts"

Interminables, interminable silver gray cylinders
 reflecting their cool glitter
 against aging brown and brick red porous rectangles
 now dwarfed and anchored on skid row.
 Its slick disinfected shadows slip over
 the wide matte-finish corners of the collapsed tent city,
 as if masking los olores de vida, the smell of life,
 perfumed with pungent mustiness of yesterday,
 of living for the moment or momentarily living
 with horns, screeches, bottles breaking in harmony
 with the scattered motion of trafficking time, sex zombies,
 living hallucinations manufactured in the dream factory
 of the money gods,
 children's cries winding up hotel staircases
 to numb the heavy whispers of its needled residents,
 pained souls begging food from the great city's garbage dump,
 robbed of their essence.
 The invading glass giants thought their hearts lie buried
 under Bunker Hill, while they swept aside part of Varrio Diamond
 to be replaced by its daily visitors in confusing tones
 of black, white and gray.
 They come casting their shadows but always taking them home at dayend.
 The Diamond Curse—Brilliantes Vidriales—freezes the hearts
 of its inhabitants, it's said.

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Leclerc, Gustavo, Raul Villa, and Michael J. Dear, eds. Urban Latino Cultures: La Vida Latina en L.A
 Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999. Print. 46—47. Print.