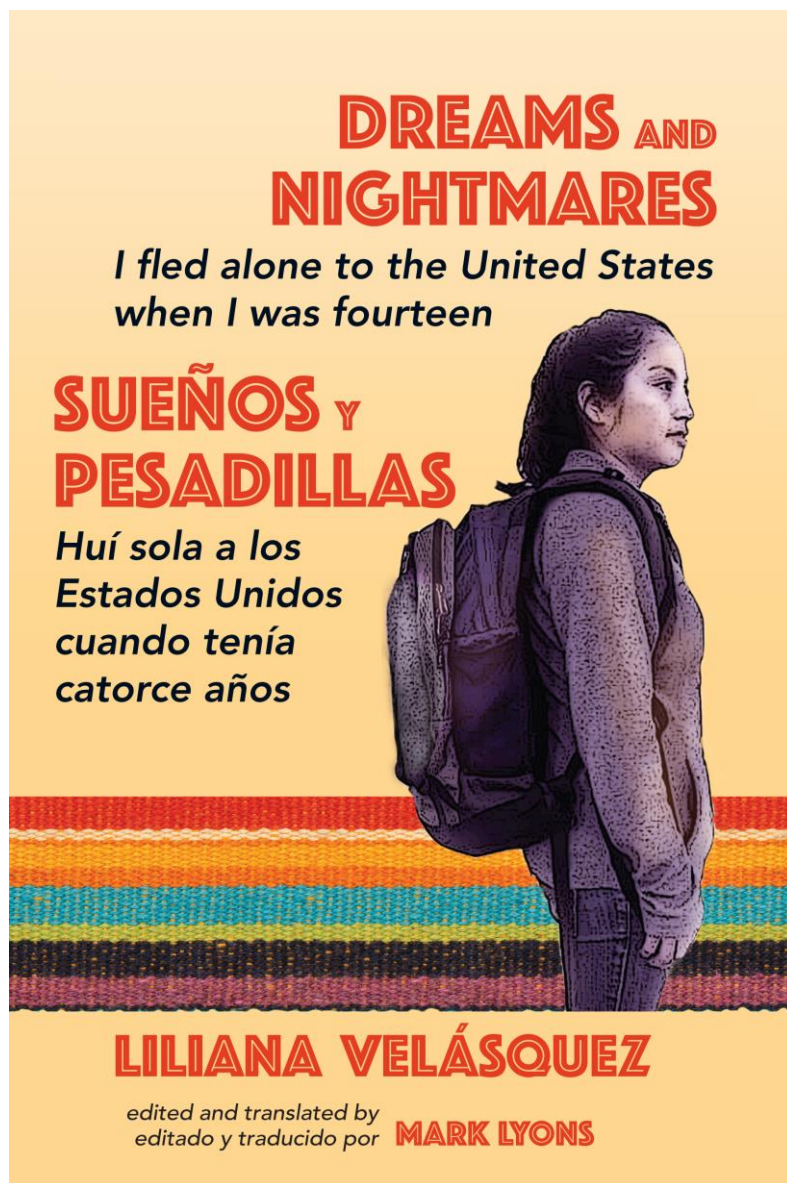


# TEACHER'S GUIDE



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Teaching the Journey tab

# Note to Teachers

***Immigrants. Illegals. Aliens. Undocumented. Smugglers. Drug Traffickers. Criminals. Bad Hombres. Dreamers. The American Dream. A path to citizenship. Immigration reform. Build the wall. Arm our borders. Send them back. Raids. Deportation. Refugees. Family separation. Terrorist threats. Job stealers. English only. Sanctuary cities. Detention. Amnesty. We are a nation of immigrants.***

*Immigration* currently dominates our public discussion and divides our country. Our students are bombarded with television, radio, newspaper and Facebook descriptions and debates about immigrants who live in our communities, and buzz words and sound bites reduce them to caricatures. Politicians and policy makers and immigrant rights groups all have something to say about who immigrants are and what we should do about “the immigration problem,” but all too often one voice is missing—the voice of immigrants.

The goal of this *Teacher’s Guide* is to enable your students to think openly and critically about immigrants who live in our community, and to draw their own conclusions about who they are and whether we should welcome them. Students will read *Dreams and Nightmares / Sueños y Pesadillas*, the memoir by Liliana Velásquez, a fellow teen-ager who fled Guatemala alone when she was fourteen and came to the United States to seek a better and safer life. In her story, Liliana tells us about her life in Guatemala, why she fled her home, her travels alone through Mexico, being captured by immigration at the US border, how she navigated her way through the immigration courts system, and how she is building a new life here. Her story is graphic, vulnerable, honest, filled with reflection, and, ultimately, hopeful. Most importantly, it is her story, in her voice. Liliana is real, she is not a just a generic “immigrant,” and she commands our attention.

However, it is important that Liliana’s story, her life, be understood in the larger context of the fractious immigration debate that is currently taking place in this country. As they read Liliana’s story, students will also explore the larger experience of immigrants: Who are immigrants and where do they come from? What currently is happening around the world that is creating immigrants and refugees? What is the story of immigrant children traveling by themselves to get to the United States? Why do they come? What are our family’s immigrant roots? Students will do oral histories of family members to learn when, how and why they or their ancestors came to the United States, and they will reflect on the commonality and uniqueness of those experiences. They may also do oral histories of immigrants in their school or community who have come to the United States. They will research the different pro- and anti-immigrant positions that define our national discussion and debate those arguments.

As your students learn about Liliana’s story and the larger context in which her story takes place, they will develop many important skills, including research and analysis, critical thinking, creative writing, artistic presentation and communication. Each unit includes research questions, class discussions and assignments which integrate what they have learned. Of course, teachers are encouraged to integrate elements of this Guide into their existing curriculum.

-- Mark Lyons, Editor, *Dreams and Nightmares / Sueños y Pesadillas*

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## UNIT I: WHAT IS AN IMMIGRANT?

**[Note to teacher:** in this introduction, we will briefly define what an immigrant is, reflect on the fact that we are a nation of immigrants, and share our immigrant roots. In later sections, we will explore immigration in detail: why they leave their home countries, why they come to the US, what their experience as an immigrant is.]

**Introduction to our unit on immigration. In our study of immigration, we're going to explore the following:**

- Where do immigrants to the US come from?
- Why do people come here?
- What barriers do they face?
- What are the attitudes of Americans towards immigrants?

To help us answer these questions we're going to focus on two sets of stories:

- The story of Liliana Velásquez, who fled Guatemala when she was fourteen and traveled alone through Mexico to get to the United States. She has written a memoir which we will read called *Dreams and Nightmares / Sueños y Pesadillas*.
- Our family's story of coming to the United States—where they came from, why they came, how they got here, what their journey was like, what their dreams were. You will do an interview of someone in your family—an oral history.

### **Discussion: Who can define what an immigrant is?**

(The standard definition of *immigrant* is "A person who moves to a new country, in order to settle there." It might be interesting to explore with the class another, more local concept of immigration: moving to a new city, or school, or neighborhood, or even a new house.)

- We always talk about how "We are a nation of immigrants." What does that mean?
- Who in this class has immigrated from another country? From where?
- Who has a parent who immigrated to the US from another country? From where? A grandparent? A great-grandparent? A great-great grandparent?
- Do you know who the first people are in your family who immigrated to the US were, and how long ago that was?
- Do you know where they came from?
- Who doesn't know who the first people in their family were to come to the US?
- Does your family tell "immigrant stories" about where they or their relatives came from?

**Assignment:** Go home, ask your parents about the immigrant history of their family. We don't need details now—we'll get the details later, when you do an oral history of your family. Right now, just bring the following information back to class:

- Who were the first people in your family to come to the US, and what generation did they come from? (There may be a complicated answer here, having both fathers/grandfathers/great-grand, etc. and mothers/grandmothers/great-grand, etc. There should be four people identified, if possible. Get whatever details you can.)
- Where did they come from?
- Where did they first come to in the United States?
- Approximately when did they come

**[Note:** The families of some students may not know anything about their immigrant history. African-American students, especially, may not have any information about their roots in Africa, or in slavery in the south. If so, the teacher could hold a discussion about how stories of our roots help to forge our identity, and the impact of not knowing those roots. See *Unit III: Oral History Project*, for more discussion.]

**Class Project and Discussion:** Teacher puts a world map on the wall: *A Nation of Immigrants*. Students use push-pins to identify the countries that their immigrant forbearers came from and where in the US they first settled (this may be a bit complicated, because some of the home countries may no longer exist, in which case estimate the geographical area.) Then use a string or markers to create a line between the country of origin and where first settled in the US. Consider using a different color of string or markers for slaves brought from Western Africa.

Discussion:

- Count the number of countries that our immigrant forbearers came from.
- Name the geographical areas that people came from (e.g. Eastern Europe, Russia, Southern Europe, Central Africa, Central America, etc.)
- Did your parents know who their original family immigrants were?

## UNIT II: *DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES / SUEÑOS Y PESADILLAS*

[**Note to teacher:** The following focuses on reading, discussion, research, and analysis stimulated by the reading of Liliana's Velásquez's memoir, *Dreams and Nightmares / Sueños y Pesadillas*. It is suggested that this unit be interspersed with UNITS III and IV.]

### CHAPTER I: GUATEMALA

#### Introduction: Why Did Liliana Come to the United States?

Imagine being 14, 15, 17 years old, and deciding to travel—all by yourself—over 2,000 miles to a new country to start a new life. You can barely read, you don't speak the language of your new country, you've never seen a map, you don't have a parent or other adult to go with you. You just have two destinations to mark your way—Mexico City and the United States Border. You have heard from others who have made the trip about the danger you will face—being robbed by *narco* gangs, falling off of boxcars and losing your legs, being raped, dying in the desert. Yet you carefully choose what things you will take with you on your journey, put them in a small backpack and head out early one morning. Why would you make this choice to make such a lonely and dangerous trip alone, having no idea if you will survive or what you will find at the end of your journey?

#### DISCUSSION: Why did Liliana leave Villaflor?

As students respond, Teacher makes two columns on blackboard, labeled **Push** and **Pull**, and explains that in the study of immigration, there are two components that contribute to a person's decision to migrate: things that are happening inside their country that push them out; and things in the receiving country that are attractive that pulls them to come there. As students name reasons why Liliana left, put them in either the *Push* or *Pull* column.

What *pushed* Liliana out of Guatemala?

- Violence at home, especially directed at her.
- Violence in her community--two men tried to rape her, she and her mother were beaten and robbed, her father was attacked with a machete.
- Attitudes towards girls and women (pulled out of school to take care of household, expected to get married at fourteen, are often abused.)
- Extreme poverty.
- No opportunity for an education, even more so for women.
- Her personal ambitions: to get an education, to not get married, to get a profession, to be a model for her younger sisters.
- [Other reasons, not mentioned in Liliana's story, but have been important push factors in Mexico and Central America: institutional violence (civil wars, military brutality; government oppression of minorities, especially indigenous people); gangs; narco-traffickers.]

What factors in the United States *pulled* her here?

- Hopes of finding work, supporting her family back home.
- Reunite with her brothers who lived in North Carolina.
- The United States is safer.
- She heard that women were treated better in the United States.
- (When she first came to the U.S., she was not interested in getting an education.)

**Analysis of Articles to determine how many children have recently fled alone to the United States, and understand why they have come.** In small groups students read and discuss the following articles, which are in *Appendix I*:

- *US Customs and Border Patrol Southwest Family Unit report on Unaccompanied Alien Children Apprehensions, Fiscal 2016* (this is updated November 1 of each year.)
- WOLA (Washington Office on Latin America) report: *US Apprehension of Unaccompanied Minors, Top Four Countries (Appendix I)*. The second section of this includes the results of a United Nation High Commission on Refugees (UNCHR) report that describes why these children come, based on interviews.

**Discussion:** In her story, Liliana never uses the word *Poverty*. When you read the first chapter of her book, *Guatemala*, what descriptions do you find that tell you that she and her family are very poor. Can you imagine living this way in the United States? Do you think people live this way in the U.S.?

#### **Research:**

**1.) How poor are the people of Guatemala?** Students will look for hard economic data related to the average annual income of people living in rural and urban Guatemala is. How does this compare to the average annual income for people living in the United States?" In the United States, the minimum wage is \$7.35 per hour. How many weeks would a person working at minimum wage and forty hours a week in the United States have to work to make an entire year's income living in a place like Villaflor?

**2.) What percentage of the total national income of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico is from *remittances*** (money sent home by people who have left the country and are earning money abroad.)

- Students work in small groups, brainstorm how they would search for this information on the web. Also, research information on the difference between income levels in the cities and rural areas of Guatemala.
- Small group discusses the results of this research and designates one member to report to entire class.

**Discussion:** Designated group leaders report findings to entire class, discuss.

**Quick Research:** Look up the United Nations High Commission on Human rights definition of *Refugee*. Look up the definition of *Diaspora*.

- According to the UNCHR, “A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.”
- Diaspora is a of group people migrating or fleeing from their homeland or region.

### **Discussion:**

- Name some diasporas that have occurred in history.
- Students name other places where such a diaspora is happening now. Discussion of current events: refugees fleeing poverty and violence and religious persecution in Africa, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia etc. Currently there are 60,000,000 such refugees, the most since WWII.
- Would you consider Liliana’s story part of a diaspora? Why or why not?
- Would you consider Liliana a refugee? Why or why not?

**Community Research: Contact a local refugee resettlement program in your area, and interview a staff person about refugees and unaccompanied minors.**

**[Note to teacher:** Before your students contact resettlement agencies, it is important for the teacher to have developed partnerships with key staff at the agency and explained to them the basic outline of the class on immigration and the assignment students have to interview staff. Once you have identified staff at the agency who have agreed to be interviewed, you should direct the students to contact them.]

In Philadelphia, there are two refugee resettlement programs: Nationalities Service Center and HIAS. Bethany Christian Services is responsible for finding foster homes for Undocumented Unaccompanied Minors, such as Liliana. Liliana mentions La Puerta Abierta as an oasis for undocumented minors in Philadelphia—consider interviewing Cathi Tillman, the director.

- Form a team of two or three students.
- Develop a list of questions you would like to ask resettlement staff.  
(Sample questions could include:)
  - Where do your refugees come from?
  - Why do they come? (Think of our discussion of Push/Pull)
  - What services does your resettlement program offer?
  - How to refugees assimilate into their new world?
  - What are the greatest barriers refugees face in their new world?
  - How do children who are resettled fare?
- Present your findings to the class: verbal presentation, with visuals; poster board, etc. A separate presentation could focus on different refugee groups, such a Congolese, Burmese, Somalis, etc.)



### **Writing: The Things I would Carry.**

Liliana describes the things that she decided to bring with her as she prepared to escape to the United States. She had to make difficult decisions, because she could only bring what she could wear and carry in her small backpack. What did she originally carry with her when she left Villaflor? What did she carry when she headed across the U.S. border into the desert?

Write about what you would bring on your long journey, if you were travelling alone.

- What would you bring to survive?
- What would you bring to remind you of the home that you're leaving behind?
- What would you bring to remind you of your dream that made you leave?
- What would be the hardest thing that you would have to leave behind.

**Discussion:** students share the things they would carry and why; and the things that would be difficult to leave behind.

### **Art project:**

- Make a collage of the things you would carry, and the important things you would have to leave behind.
- Or, each student could bring a backpack filled with the things she/he would take with her on a long trip alone through the desert.
- Students present their work, discuss.

## **CHAPTER II: MY JOURNEY**

**Discussion:** Remember, Liliana had never been more than a few miles from the village in an isolated mountain in Northern Guatemala where she had grown up. In her mind, she knew she would head to Mexico City, and from there to the Arizona border. When she walked across the border between Guatemala and Mexico, she had no idea how to read a map, or how she would get there, and knew nothing about traveling through Mexico, or where the federal police were looking for immigrants from the south, to capture them and deport them.

How did she begin to figure out what route she would take?

- Met up with fellow travelers, on the road, on buses, found out where they were going, which ways of traveling were dangerous, which were safest.
- Traveled in groups with people she met up with, especially the first half of her trip.
- Finally, at U.S. boarder, she hired a coyote to take her across the desert. She got his name and phone number from a stranger in the bus station in Mexico City.

What strategies did she learn to avoid being caught?

- Talk to other travelers and friendly Mexicans to learn about roadblocks, dangerous towns, safe routes.
- Don't walk or hitch hike along the highway.
- In towns never walk around in a group.
- Bribe the bus drivers to call ahead to see if there are roadblocks.
- Walk around the roadblocks.
- Travel at night.
- Travel in a bus with Mexicans.

On the third day of her trip, she and her three traveling companions were robbed by *narcos* (drug traffickers) and beaten in the mountains of Chiapas. She had no money to pay for food or travel (except for a few dollars that she had in her bible, that would soon run out.) Yet she decided to continue on her trip. Why do you think she continued on? Would you have continued on at this point, or returned home?

Imagine yourself, a fourteen-year-old girl, riding the boxcars, and being the only woman on the boxcar with over 200 other travelers:

- Why did Liliana decide to ride the boxcars? (It was free, the federal police didn't seem to hassle people riding the boxcars?)
- What were the dangers of riding the boxcars? (Falls and injuries; being robbed and attacked by gangs; women being raped.)

Who helped her along the way? Why do you think they helped her?

- The first person she met on the road, who explained how to avoid the roadblocks that were looking for immigrants from Central America.
- The man who helped her get across the river.
- The woman in Arriaga who let her sleep at her house and fed her, in exchange for working.
- The three men she traveled with to Mexico City. Especially, César, the drunk *coyote*, who gave her money when they separated in Mexico City.
- The young man who gave her bread and water on the bus.
- The people who threw food to her and her fellow passengers on the boxcars, as they passed through their village.
- Strangers in the bus station in Mexico City who told her how to avoid the roadblocks between there and the border.
- The fellow passenger on the bus to the border who lived in Tijuana, who offered to help her find work if she was caught and deported.
- The scary man with tattoos in Altar who bought her a cup of coffee the night she arrived.
- The *coyote* in Altar who provided a safe house, and took her shopping for food and clothes.

On the other hand, Liliana realized she couldn't trust everyone, especially men. Describe some situations on her journey where she decided she could trust the men she met, and would travel with them; and situations where she decided she couldn't trust them. How did she make this decision?

One time Liliana and thirty other fellow immigrants without papers on a bus were stopped by the Federal Police. Everyone was terrified and paralyzed, sure that they were going to be deported.

- What did Liliana do?
- What does this say about what kind of person she is and her determination to make it to the United States?
- Could you imagine yourself negotiating with the police on behalf of your fellow passengers, at age fourteen?

### **Assignment: *Handbook for Youth on the Road***

You are on a team which is writing a *Lonely Planet* guide for young people traveling by themselves. Your team is to write the introduction: *Tips for traveling alone*.

- Work in small groups. First determine what the themes you want to write about (such as “Meeting and traveling with others,” or “How to be safe,” or “What to do if you run out of money.” Then develop some tips for each of those themes (such as “Don’t hang out as a group in town—they’ll think you’re illegal,)
- Group reports back to entire class, which compiles all of the Tips, and organizes them according to themes.
- Create a final *Handbook*, which is part of your public presentation, below.

**FILMS:** At the end of these two chapters, consider showing one or both of these films (both are in English, Spanish, Mayan, with English subtitles when necessary):

- ***El Norte / The North*:** About a brother and sister who flee the civil war in Guatemala, travel through Mexico and make it to Los Angeles, only to find that the American Dream is a nightmare.
- ***Sin Nombre (Nameless)*:** A teen flees gang violence in Mexico and meets a girl traveling with her Honduran family on top of a boxcar on *La Bestia* and they head north to the U.S. Border.

Note: these two films have some very violent scenes, and are not be appropriate for younger middle-school students.

## **CHAPTER III: PHILADELPHIA**

**Discussion:** How did Liliana’s plans for when she came to the US change? And why?

- She planned to reunite with her brothers who lived in North Carolina, but was unable to.
- Original plans were to work, support her family back home. Had no plans to get educated, get a profession, get a green card.
- She was required to stay in school, in order to avoid deportation while the courts decided her case. How did she feel about being in school?
- Why did she change her mind, and decide that staying in school was important to her?

### **What's in a Song?**

When Liliana lived in her first foster home she often went down to the basement, where she could be alone and listen to the music she had on the cell phone she brought from Guatemala. Playing and listening to music was an important way that she consoled herself in this very difficult time.

#### **Assignment and Discussion:**

- Go home, and pick out a song that you listen to that is very important to you. If it is not on your cell phone, you can YouTube it. Bring the song (or YouTube link) to class.
- Class discussion:
  - Name the song and play it to the group.
  - Tell a story about the song: the first time you heard it, why it is important to you.
  - What is it about the lyrics or music that you like?

**Discussion:** In the Chapter entitled *My Boyfriend*, Liliana describes how she began to overcome the fear, anger and mistrust she had of men, after being abused by them in Guatemala. She says to her friend Rolando, "I don't want you to be playing with me, I want a serious relationship. These are my conditions:" Then she lists the rules that Rolando must play by if he wants to be her boyfriend.

- Review these rules. What do you think of them? Would you eliminate any? Would you add any more?
- Can you imagine having this discussion with your boyfriend or girlfriend? How might you begin the discussion?
- Could these rules apply to anyone you have a relationship with besides boyfriends or girlfriends? Friends? Parents? Other students?

**Discussion:** When Liliana got to Philadelphia, she didn't know anyone and was completely alone. She lived in a terrible situation with her first foster family, was overwhelmed and lonely when she went to school, and was always worried about going to court. She had no friends and spoke no English. Try to imagine yourself being in a foreign country under the same circumstances. Then, some people stepped up for her and began to help her. Who were these people, and how did they help? How did they change her life? How did she respond to their help?

- Casey, the social worker for Lutheran Settlement.
- Cathi, the director of La Puerta Abierta.
- Other youth in La Puerta Abierta, like Domingo, Marlis and Marcelo.
- Donnis, who brought her pizza, and began to gain her trust.
- Jean, the lawyer who fought for her in court.
- Mark, who helped her tell her story.
- Layla and Marcos, her new foster parents (name all the ways they were there for her.)
- The Spanish teacher who invited her to tell her story.
- The unnamed therapist who helped her move beyond her past.
- The counselor in school who helped her decide about vocational school,
- The teacher at the vocational school who showed interest in her.

- Her brothers in North Carolina, who were proud of her.

How do you think these people helped change the outcome of Liliana's story?

Why do you think they helped her?

Do you have a student in your school or neighborhood who has recently come from another country? Do you know his or her story? How could you reach out to her to help her feel more at home and to make her transition easier?

### **Discussion: What's in a Word?**

When Liliana was caught at the border by US Immigration, she was designated to be a UAC—*Unaccompanied Alien Child*. Words like *Alien* are powerful—they can be the seed of an entire story or conjure up powerful images and emotional reactions. What do the following words mean to you? How are they the same, how are they different? How do you react to them, and why?

- An illegal alien.
- Illegals.
- Wetback (*mojado*)—an original name for immigrants who crossed the US border, because most of them came by swimming across the Rio Grande.
- Undocumented immigrant.
- An immigrant without papers.
- Immigration.
- La Migra.
- Other words around immigration that you think are loaded, emotionally or politically.

What term should do you think we use for people who came to the United States like Liliana did?

## **IV: DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES / SUEÑOS Y PESADILLAS**

Students read **Chapter IV** (*Reflections*) and **Chapter V** (*Finally I Have Told My Story*.)

### **Discussion:**

- What do you think it meant to Liliana to be able to tell her story? How did telling her story change her?
- What dreams did she have that were fulfilled on her journey? Which were un-fulfilled?
- What new dreams did she acquire on her journey?
- What were the nightmares she experienced?
- What is her message to other young people and adults who are not immigrants, but were born in the US?

## UNIT III: ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

**[Note to teacher—**this is a big project, and may take several weeks to complete, combining research, communication skills, analysis, creative writing and/or sound editing, etc. It is suggested that the Oral History Project be introduced early in the study of immigration, and interspersed with UNIT II, reading of *Dreams and Nightmares, Sueños y Pesadillas*. Below is a brief outline of the project, with references to several teaching materials that are found in the Appendix.]

**Introduction:** We may be immigrants ourselves, or our parents or grandparents or great-grandparents were immigrants. Unless we are Native-American, all of our families carry our immigrant stories with us, even if those stories happened several generations ago. Their stories are filled with the same hopes and dreams and dangers and disappointments and successes and Liliana's. Over the next several weeks we will do an oral history of someone in our family who can share a story about how they or their family came to the United States.

**There are several stages to this project, which includes out of class assignments, in-class small group work and class discussion:**

1. Decide who you want to interview, who can tell you an immigrant story about your family.
  - Occasionally, your family will have no memories of the history of how they got to the United States. In this case think of whom in your neighborhood, or church etc. is an immigrant, and ask them if they would share their story with you.
  - African-Americans have a unique history of "immigration"—their ancestors were forcibly brought here as slaves over 200 years ago; and the stories of how they were brought here and where they ended up are often lost. If African-American students are not able to trace their roots, it is suggested that they ask their families about another type of diaspora, an internal migration within the United States. Two such "great migrations" of African Americans occurred after World War I and World II, when many families moved from the south to seek better economic and social opportunities in the north. Also, families may have stories of migrating within the US that were not part of these historical great migrations.
2. Sit down with your interviewee:
  - Explain your project, why their story is important, how you might work together.
  - Have a general discussion about their story (or their grandparents' etc.) story, ask them what they remember the most, if there is any part of their family story that they really want to share.
  - Be sure to have the storyteller sign a permission form (See *Appendix II: Sample Permission Form.*)

### 3. Small group work.

- Develop themes that you might explore about your family's story (such as what life was like back home; why they came; what their trip was like; life in the United States; what they learned, etc.)
- Teacher review handout, *Ask the Right Questions* with students. (In *Appendix II*.)
- Class review two scenarios/stories in handout, *What Was the Question?* Decide what questions were asked to illicit the answers, and determine if they were fact-finding, open-ended, or scene-creating.
- Develop questions you can ask to explore those specific themes. Create 3-5 questions to explore each theme.

4. Class reviews questions, discusses whether they are fact-finding, open (or closed)-ended, scene-creating, reflective. Talk about how the questions can be refined. (Remember: the more scenes the better!)

5. Prepare your final personal question set for your interview.

6. Do your interview (you can record your interview—remember, your cell phone has a tape recorder; or write down notes.)

7. Small group work: review your interview with other students in your group, ask for feedback. Feedback should focus on: (See rubric in *Appendix II: Evaluating Our Oral Histories*.)

- What part of the story is most powerful, should be the focus of the final story.
- If there is more information that students want to learn about a specific theme. What kinds of questions could be asked to illicit that information.
- If there is good use of scenes that pull the reader into the story.
- If the narrator reflects on his/her journey.

8. If necessary, go back and have a second short interview, based on the small group feedback.

9. Create the story from your interview:

- Don't try to tell the entire story—focus on some essential questions (why did they come? Were they part of a diaspora? Were they refugees?) and on one or two dramatic events (did they have to flee their country in the middle of the night? Describe the moment they left their family or reunited with their family, etc.)
- Be creative:
  - Write a brief oral history, focused on a part of the story you find especially meaningful...do not try to tell the entire story.
  - Make a Power Point, use sound and photos and drawings or objects.
  - Make a collage which might include photos, maps, objectives.
  - Edit your recording and mix with photos (in *Appendix*, see link for editing in Audacity, or edit in MovieMaker or some other program.)

- Make an installation of the things your storyteller carried.
- Create a short theatrical piece.  
Plan a reading of your story.

10: Students present their stories:

- Have a school event for families: “I am from a family of immigrants.” Students present stories, recordings, collages, readings, theatrical pieces. Followed by discussion with the audience.
- Have a display of work in a public place in the school, or town library, or city hall.

### **A SECOND ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

In addition to, or instead of gathering the immigration story of their family, students could do an oral history of someone in their school or community who immigrated to the United States. They would use the same process as described above, for doing an oral history of their family.

### **A NOTE ABOUT RECORDING ORAL HISTORIES**

Almost all students now have cell phones which come with a voice recording device such as Voice Memos. If their phone doesn’t have a recorder, they can download the app for free.

Students can edit their recordings in free apps such as Audacity or Moviemaker. Go to the Dreams and Nightmares Website ([dreamsandnightmares.org](http://dreamsandnightmares.org)) and click on the Teaching the Journey tab to download information on using Audacity and downloading recordings from your cell phone to your computer.



## UNIT IV: THE GREAT DEBATE

**INTRODUCTION:** As you know, in our country right now people hold very strong feelings and opinions about undocumented immigrants. On one side of the debate they are being called rapists, criminals and drug dealers who are stealing jobs from Americans and destroying our American identity. On the other side of the debate, immigrants are considered to be refugees from violence and poverty who come here to live the American Dream, support their families and contribute to our society. These are very complicated and emotional issues.

Now, we're going to debate the issue: ***"Resolved: Undocumented immigrants should be deported."***

Every debate has two sides: The **Affirmative Team**, which supports the resolution; and the **Negative Team**, which opposes the resolution.

**Research:** Each team will research the *pro* and *con* arguments for supporting the resolution.

- Group make lists of which research prompts they will explore in google. (Note: examples include *Pro -immigration / Con-immigration arguments or facts; Top 10 Pros and Cons; etc.*—this information is easy to find. They can also research pro- and con-immigration organizations, and read their arguments.)

### **Preparation:**

- Each team should make a plan to present their arguments succinctly in two minutes.
- Each team should anticipate the other team's arguments, and be prepared to rebut them in two minutes.
- Choose four team members to represent the team in the Great Debate. One member will verbally present the arguments; another member will rebut the arguments of the other team.
- The debaters from each team practice their arguments and rebuttals with the other members of the team.
- Get feedback from other team members about how to improve presentation. (Feedback should focus on how clear and precise and strong the arguments are; and what should be included and not included, given they have only two minutes to present them.)
- Practice, practice.

### **The Great Debate:**

**[Note:** Below is a traditional format for a debate. The teacher may want to use a less formal structure.] Four members from each team will participate in the debate, while the rest of the class observes

- First, the **Affirmative** team has two minutes to present their case to the audience. This position will be presented by one team member.

- Then the **Negative** team has two minutes to present their case. This position will be presented by one team member.
- After both sides have a chance to speak, both teams receive two minutes to prepare a *rebuttal* and *summary*.
- One member from the **Negative** team presents their rebuttal and summary for two minutes.
- One member of the **Affirmative** team presents their rebuttal and summary for two minutes.

The debate is now concluded.

Entire class discusses which team won the debate and why. The discussion should focus on who made the strongest, clearest, best-organized and most succinct arguments for their pro- or con-case.

Class votes to determine the winner of the debate.

## **Appendix I:**

### **Articles on Immigration of Undocumented Youth**

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection: *United States Border Patrol Southwest Family Unit Subject and Unaccompanied Alien Children Apprehensions Fiscal Year 2016*
- Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) Report: *Why Immigrants Come*

## **U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

# **United States Border Patrol Southwest Family Unit Subject and Unaccompanied Alien Children Apprehensions Fiscal Year 2016**



United States Border  
Patrol Southwest Fan ]

**[Entire Report at this website:**

### **STATEMENT BY SECRETARY JOHNSON ON SOUTHWEST BORDER SECURITY**

In Fiscal Year 2016, total apprehensions by the Border Patrol on our southwest border, between ports of entry, numbered 408,870. This represents an increase over FY15, but was lower than FY14 and FY13, and a fraction of the number of apprehensions routinely observed from the 1980s through 2008. Apprehensions are an indicator of total attempts to cross the border illegally. Meanwhile, the demographics of illegal migration on our southern border has changed significantly over the last 15 years – far fewer Mexicans and single adults are attempting to cross the border without authorization, but more families and unaccompanied children are fleeing poverty and violence in Central America. In 2014, Central Americans apprehended on the southern border outnumbered Mexicans for the first time. In 2016, it happened again.

	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY14</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>
Unaccompanied children	38,759	68,541	39,970	59,692
Family units	14,855	68,445	39,838	77,674
Individuals	360,783	342,385	251,525	271,504
<b>Totals</b>	<b>414,397</b>	<b>479,371</b>	<b>331,333</b>	<b>408,870</b>

Unaccompanied children and families have presented new challenges in our immigration system. I have traveled to the southwest border 17 times over the last 34 months as Secretary and have seen this personally. We are determined to treat migrants in a humane manner. At the same time, we must enforce our immigration laws consistent with our enforcement priorities. This has included, and will continue to include, providing individuals with an opportunity to assert claims for asylum and other forms of humanitarian relief.

At the same time, we are providing safe, alternative paths to our country for individuals in need of humanitarian protection. Earlier this year, the Government of Costa Rica announced its agreement to enter into a protection transfer arrangement with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to help address the Central American migration challenge. We're also establishing an in-country referral program in countries of origin including Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. This program enables vulnerable residents in the region

to be considered for refugee protection in the United States after being screened and interviewed by DHS officers. We have also announced an expansion of the categories of individuals eligible for participation in our Central American Minors program when accompanied by a qualified child. We promote and encourage use of these programs.

Border security alone cannot overcome the powerful push factors of poverty and violence that exist in Central America. Walls alone cannot prevent illegal migration. Ultimately, the solution is long-term investment in Central America to address the underlying push factors in the region. We continue to work closely with our federal partners and the governments in the region, and are pleased with the \$750 million Congress approved in FY 2016 for support and aid to Central America. We urge Congress to provide additional resources in FY 2017.

But, there is more to do for border security. I urge the next administration and the next Congress to continue to make smart investments in border security technology, equipment and other resources. This is what our experts on the border – those on the front lines every day, charged with the responsibility of protecting our borders – tell me each time I ask them.

At all times throughout President Obama's administration, we have endeavored to enforce the immigration laws in a fair and humane way, consistent with the immigration system we have. But, the reality is the system is broken, and badly in need of comprehensive immigration reform that only Congress can provide. For one thing, we must reckon with the millions of undocumented immigrants who live in the shadows in this country, who've been here for years, and who should be given the opportunity to come forward and get right with the law. It is my profound hope that the next Congress will finally address this and other issues, and enact comprehensive immigration reform.

Other points:

- The new immigration enforcement priorities President Obama and I announced in November 2014, which focus on serious convicted criminals and those apprehended at the border, are being implemented effectively by our immigration enforcement personnel. Our priorities are reflected in actual results. Today, over 99% of those in immigration detention fit within one of our enforcement priorities, and around 85% are within the top priority for removal. In 2009, just 35% of those deported by ICE were convicted criminals; today that percentage is about 60%. Enforcement actions that began early this year, focused on families and unaccompanied children now over 18 that were apprehended at the border, have continued.
- Last week, I paid my sixth visit to Mexico as Secretary of Homeland Security. On this visit I met with President Peña Nieto, my counterpart the Secretary of Government Miguel Osorio Chong, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Claudia Ruiz Massieu, Secretary of Finance Jose Antonio Meade, and Attorney General Arely Gomez Gonzalez. Our working relationship is strong, and we've committed to do even more for our mutual border security interests. Additionally, we've resolved to create a standing U.S.-Mexican working group, staffed largely with career officials, to ensure a permanent dialogue on security issues that will sustain itself past the Obama and Peña Nieto Administrations.

- In recent months we've seen an influx of Haitian nationals on our southern border, principally at certain land ports of entry. On September 22, I announced we would resume removals of Haitian nationals in accordance with our existing enforcement priorities. In light of Hurricane Matthew, which struck Haiti on October 4, removal flights to Haiti have been suspended temporarily. Working with the Government of Haiti, DHS intends to resume removal flights as soon as possible. DHS and the Department of State are working with the Government of Haiti and other key partners to ensure that removals occur in as humane and minimally disruptive a manner as possible. The policy change I announced on September 22 remains in effect. Haitians attempting to enter the United States without authorization will continue to be placed into immigration detention.
- With our interagency partners, DHS continues to aggressively target and dismantle the transnational criminal organizations that smuggle and exploit migrants. One recent example is "Operation ALL IN." This operation resulted in the apprehension of 100 individuals now facing federal prosecution at either the federal, state, or local level. Those arrested as part of Operation ALL IN include smugglers, as well as gang members and sex offenders.

#### **SOUTHWEST UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN (0-17 YEAR OLD) APPREHENSIONS, (FY 14-16)**

Comparisons below reflect Fiscal Year 2016 (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016) compared to the same time period for Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2014.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>% Change FY 14 to FY 15</b>	<b>% Change FY 15 to FY 16</b>
Big Bend Sector	256	839	951	228%	13%
Del Rio Sector	3,268	2,285	2,689	-30%	18%
El Centro Sector	662	668	1,379	1%	106%
El Paso Sector	1,029	1,662	3,885	62%	134%
Laredo Sector	3,800	2,459	2,953	-35%	20%
Rio Grande Sector	49,959	23,864	36,714	-52%	54%
San Diego Sector	954	1,084	1,553	14%	43%
Tucson Sector	8,262	6,019	6,302	-27%	5%
Yuma Sector	351	1,090	3,266	211%	200%
<b>Southwest Border Total</b>	<b>68,541</b>	<b>39,970</b>	<b>59,692</b>	<b>-42%</b>	<b>49%</b>

#### **Southwest Border Family Unit Apprehensions\***

Comparisons below reflect Fiscal Year 2016 (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016) compared to the same time period for Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2014.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>% Change FY 14 to FY 15</b>	<b>% Change FY 15 to FY 16</b>
Big Bend Sector	176	807	1,051	359%	30%
Del Rio Sector	4,950	2,141	3,549	-57%	66%
El Centro Sector	630	675	1,593	-7%	136%
El Paso Sector	562	1,220	5,664	117%	364%
Laredo Sector	3,591	1,372	1,640	-62%	20%
Rio Grande Sector	52,326	27,409	52,006	-48%	90%
San Diego Sector	1,723	1,550	2,863	-10%	85%
Tucson Sector	3,812	2,903	3,139	-23%	7%
Yuma Sector	675	1,734	6,169	157%	256%
<b>Southwest Border Total</b>	<b>68,445</b>	<b>39,838</b>	<b>77,674</b>	<b>-42%</b>	<b>95%</b>

#### **U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border and Rio Grande Valley Sector Other Than Mexicans**

Numbers below reflect Fiscal Year 2016 (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016)

<b>Sector</b>	<b>FY2016</b>
Rio Grande Valley	140,496
<b>Southwest Border</b>	<b>218,110</b>

#### **Unaccompanied Alien Children Encountered by Fiscal Year**

Numbers below reflect Fiscal Years 2009-2015, FY 2016 (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016)

<b>Country</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2010</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
El Salvador	1,221	1,910	1,394	3,314	5,990	16,404	9,389	17,512
Guatemala	1,115	1,517	1,565	3,835	8,068	17,057	13,589	18,913
Honduras	968	1,017	974	2,997	6,747	18,244	5,409	10,468
Mexico	16,114	13,724	11,768	13,974	17,240	15,634	11,012	11,926

#### **Family Unit Apprehensions Encountered by Fiscal Year\***

Numbers below reflect Fiscal Year 2015, FY 2016 (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016)

<b>Country</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>
El Salvador	10,872	27,114
Guatemala	12,820	23,067
Honduras	10,671	20,226
Mexico	4,276	3,481

**\*Note:** (Family Unit represents the number of individuals (either a child under 18 years old, parent or legal guardian) apprehended with a family member by the U.S. Border Patrol.)



## WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA (WOLA) REPORT:

### Why Immigrants Come

#### **Credible Fears, Not Supposedly “Lax” U.S. Immigration Policies, Are Contributing to Migration from Central America**

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In a [December 2015 statement](#) and again at a congressional hearing [earlier this month](#), Congressman Bob Goodlatte (R-Virginia), Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, blamed U.S. immigration policy for the high numbers of unaccompanied minors and families, primarily from Central America, who are crossing the southwest border. Citing a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) report obtained by the Committee, Rep. Goodlatte affirms:

“From July 7, 2015-September 30, 2015, Customs and Border Protection agents interviewed 345 family units apprehended at the border. Of those interviewed, nearly 70% said that they heard that if they came to the U.S. they would be released and/or receive some sort of immigration relief, such as asylum. Additionally, nearly 60% said it was the U.S. immigration policies that influenced their decision to come here.”

Rep. Goodlatte is not the only member of Congress citing these interview statistics to argue for stricter border enforcement, stepped-up deportations, and detention of parents and children awaiting asylum decisions. Members of Congress have used the data on several occasions to sustain a narrative of lenient immigration policies encouraging migration from Central America. Congressman Lamar Smith (R-Texas), who founded the Congressional Border Security Caucus in 2014 to call for increased border enforcement, made a [similar statement](#) earlier this month during a tour of the U.S.-Mexico border:

“They are asked ‘what drove you to come up this far north? What made you want to come into this country illegally?’ Seventy percent say ‘it’s the policies of the administration, it’s their immigration policies, we know we will be given asylum; we know we will be able to stay.’ That’s why they’re coming, not because of violence back home.”

In a February 4 House Judiciary Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee [hearing](#), Rep. Trey Gowdy (R-South Carolina), a member of the Subcommittee along with Representative Smith, also referenced the DHS report: “Based on a report, nearly 60 percent said it was the administration’s immigration policies that influence their decision to come to the United States.”

While these members of Congress may seek to use these numbers to argue for increased enforcement, other sources tell a different story about the reasons behind recent Central American migration to the United States. The 2015 report [Women on the Run](#) by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reveals that in fiscal year 2015, of the 16,077 women from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico who were screened for protection concerns by U.S. asylum officers, 13,116 of them—or 82 percent—had a “significant possibility of establishing eligibility for asylum or protection under the Convention against Torture.”

Based on interviews of 160 women who had been granted asylum or other forms of protected status in the United States, the UNHCR report found that these women and their children regularly experienced extreme violence, including murder, extortion, and rape, as well as threats from armed groups in their home countries. 64 percent of the interviewees cited targeted threats or attacks as one of their main reasons for leaving home.

Similarly, the 2014 UNHCR report [Children on the Run](#) found that 58 percent of unaccompanied or separated children interviewed in the United States “were forcibly displaced because they suffered or faced harms that indicated an actual or potential need for international protection.” Based on interviews with a representative sample of 404 children from the Northern Triangle and Mexico, the report concluded that, due to the high number of children who raised protection concerns—and who would potentially face dangerous situations if returned to their home countries—all unaccompanied children from the Northern Triangle and Mexico should be screened for protection needs.

The DHS report that Rep. Goodlatte cites is not available (his statement links to an Associated Press report about another issue entirely), so it is difficult to dissect the information. However, **if 70 percent of families apprehended by Border Patrol agents believed they may qualify for protection under U.S. law, it’s likely that they were, in fact, fleeing some sort of violence or persecution**, particularly given how many women and children are passing “credible fear” interviews. As Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson [acknowledged in a recent statement](#), “many who seek to flee Central America may be regarded as refugees.” Secretary Johnson affirmed that the U.S.

government would work with the UNHCR to expand the Department's Refugee Admissions Program accordingly.

The arrival of potential refugees at the southwest border should not be seen as a sign of weak immigration enforcement or a porous border. Rather, it underscores the fact that many Central Americans are genuinely fleeing violence and insecurity in their home countries, one of the most violent regions in the world, and they are exercising their legal right to seek asylum or other forms of protection in the United States.

–*Carolyn Scorpio, WOLA Program Assistant*

February 19th, 2016

## Appendix II: Creating Oral Histories with Immigrants

- Ask the Right Questions
- What Was the Question?
- Evaluating our Oral Histories: a rubric
- Sample permission form

**[Note:** if students decide to create an audio version of an oral history, a good, simple open-source (free) sound editing program is *Audacity*, which can be downloaded from the internet. There are many on-line tutorials for using audacity. For a written manual, go to the website for *Dreams and Nightmares / Sueños y Pesadillas* (and [www.dreamsandnightmares.org](http://www.dreamsandnightmares.org)) to find the tutorial, *Edit Your Stories in Audacity*. This will explain how to download Audacity and LAME free from the internet, and talk you through the sound editing process.] Audacity is available for Mac and PC computers.

## ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

There are two basic types of questions: (1) introductory, general information questions; and (2) questions that explore themes.

- *Basic information questions* help break the ice to put the interviewer and interviewee at ease. Doing a formal interview may be awkward at first. Start off with easy questions that feel safe to answer: For example, if you are interviewing an international student or an immigrant, you might ask: "How old are you?" "Where were you born?" "How long have you lived where you live now?" "Where did you come from?"
- *Thematic questions* explore topics in detail related to the interviewee's experience. For example, if you are interviewing an immigrant, themes that you might explore include: Life back home; deciding to come to the US; their trip here; what it was like when they first arrived in the US; language issues and other barriers to integration; dreams for the future, for their children; achievements they are proud of; disappointments; if they would do it again.

Interviewers tend to want to get the entire life-story from the interviewee. If you had many hours, this might be possible, but would create an editing nightmare. Your interview should last about a half an hour, so and your interviewee will want to decide in advance how to focus it. If you explore too many themes the interview will be superficial as you try to cover too much territory.

### TIPS:

#### Questions that get the narrator talking, that initiate a conversation:

- **Avoid** questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no". You will get boring one-word answers. Example: "Was it hard to leave your family back in Mexico?" "Yes, it was very hard." And avoid "leading questions" that tell the interviewee what you think the correct answer is. Example: "It must have really been hard to leave your family in Mexico, right?"

**Instead, ask *open-ended questions***--questions that invite the interviewee to describe their feelings or experiences fully.

Examples:

"Can you tell me what it was like to leave your family back in Mexico?"

"How did you feel when you left home, knowing you wouldn't see your family for a long time?"

- **Ask *scene-creating questions*** that put the interviewee into a scene, and ask her to fill in the details. You are asking the interviewee to paint a picture that includes sensory impressions (sights, smells, tastes) and feelings. Often these kinds of questions elicit rich and profound responses.

Examples:

"Can you describe your last night with your family in Mexico, knowing that you

were leaving the next morning and heading north alone?”

"Describe the moment you first put your foot on US soil: Where were you? What were you carrying? How did you feel at that moment?"

- **Mix *fact-finding questions*** with open-ended and scene-creating questions that explore the narrator's personal experience and emotions.  
Examples:

"In what year did you first come to the United States?"

"Who was with you?"

"How did you feel when you finally found a place to stay?"

**Active Listening: questions that probe, explore, tell the narrator that the interviewer really cares, is interested in the story he/she has to tell:**

- **Ask *follow up questions*.** One of the biggest mistakes that inexperienced interviewers make is to just ask their prepared questions, and not really listen to the answers; then they move on to the next question. **Pay close attention to the responses your interviewee gives—listening carefully—and be ready to ask follow-up questions.** These questions often elicit the most interesting and personal answers.

Examples:

Explore feelings: "How did that make you feel?"

Get more details: "And then what happened?"

Make the narrator the expert:

"That sounds really interesting, can you tell me more?"

"I don't know anything about how Indonesians came to Philadelphia—tell me about it."

"Why do you think that Mexicans come to the United States?"

"What do you think the greatest barriers Indonesians face when they come to this country?"

"Do you think the Indonesian community feels welcome in this country?"

Illicit dialogue: "What did you say then...?"

Explore motivation: "Why did you do that?"

- **Don't be afraid to temporarily abandon your prepared questions and improvise new ones.** Example: "You mentioned that when you left home you took your suitcase and your guitar. Tell me about your guitar—why was it so important to take with you? What kind of

music do you like to play? Do you still play music? Could we record some of the songs you like to play and talk about them at the end of this interview?” Suddenly you have gone in a whole new interesting direction that may reveal important personal information about the interviewee.

- **Don’t be afraid to ask difficult, probing questions.** These are the questions that get to who the person really is. It is good not to start with these questions; take your time and work into them as you and the interviewee feel comfortable and have explored less personal questions.

Examples:

“So, you lived separated from your family for ten years—can you tell me what that was like, and how you managed to stay connected to each other?”

“You talked about the dreams that brought you here—do you think you’ve achieved those dreams? How and how not? What have been the greatest barriers to achieving your dreams?”

“When you talk about this, you look really sad—can you tell me what you’re feeling?”

“What do you miss most about home?”

- **Listen to the silences:** If you ask a question, and there is no immediate reply—wait. Do not fill in the silence yourself. Often the silence means that the question is a good one, and is stimulating the interviewee to think more deeply about what he/she wants to say, or is eliciting strong emotional feelings. Let the interviewee take her time and break the silence—this is part of normal conversation. If the silence continues, try asking, “Can you tell me what you’re feeling right now?”
- **“Historical artifacts”** – such as photos, letters, recipes, clothing, immigration documents, favorite songs etc.—can be important parts of a family’s experience. You can ask the people you interview to show you some of these. Asking questions about them often stimulates great stories.
- **Wrap-up question.** Think of a wrap-up question related to the themes you have been exploring. Examples include: “Looking back on your life and your decision to come to the United States, do you think it was worth it, would you do it again? or (putting the same question into a scene) “If you had a friend in Mexico who called and said she was thinking of coming North, what would you tell her?”; or “How do you want to be remembered by your family?” Or, “What epitaph would you like to have on your gravestone?” Finally, ask the interviewee if there is anything else she would like to say. Be sure to thank the interviewee for sharing her story.

# WHAT WAS THE QUESTION? Story 1:

Q?

A: They came and rounded my family up and told us we couldn't bring anything with us.

Q?

A: I was twelve years old.

Q?

A: I was really scared. They said they would kill us if we didn't leave. I was afraid of being separated from my family. My uncle had already disappeared, and now my cousin was living with us.

Q?

A: We walked for six days and nights. It was the rainy season so we sloshed through the mud and got wet. I remember shivering all night, my father trying to keep me warm. They only gave us water and some bread for breakfast. I saw an old man collapse, and they just left him there on the side of the road. I got these terrible blisters on my feet, so my father had to carry me.

Q?

A: In the camps we lived in one-room thatched huts. We were seven in one hut. Some people lived in tents provided by the Red Cross. The huts were about three meters apart, with dirt paths running between them. When it rained, the paths turned to rivers.

Q?

A: I think there were about ten thousand people in our camp.

Q?

A: We were there four years.

Q?

A: My dad hatched a plan for us to escape and get to a U.N. refugee camp about thirty kilometers away. We saved up bread and stole some plastic bottles for water, and waited for the dry season to make our escape.

Q?

A: They probably would have killed my father and put us in their prison.

Q?

A: We walked two days and nights without stopping. The sun was unbearable, but we were afraid they would catch us, so we kept on walking.

Q?

A: People welcomed us and gave us the first dinner I had had in over a year. I had forgotten what it was like to not be hungry. I think I gained ten pounds in the first week. I saw my father and mother holding each other, crying. At last we were safe. I had forgotten what it was like to feel safe. I began to think about the future for the first time in many years—maybe we could be happy.



# WHAT WAS THE QUESTION? Story 2:

Q?

A: I had all of this rage, you know, all of these pent-up emotions that were going nowhere. I started getting into fights, skipping school. I didn't have anyone I could talk with. My parents? Forget it. Friends? I didn't have any real friends at school, no anyone I could trust. But I always loved rap. And I saw this flyer on a telephone pole that said "Got something to say? Come rap it out." So I went to this class over at Art Sanctuary, and started learning to rap.

Q?

A: I was the only girl in the class.

Q?

A: It was a little weird at first. Then I let the guys know that I wasn't going to sit around listening to them dis us girls, using the B word and whatnot. I had to educate them about what it was like for women to hear men talking about them like that.

Q?

A: How if you're dark-skinned and from another country, you're not welcome here. All the names others make up about you to let you know you're not worth anything. How guys got to learn to respect girls. How the schools are just mini-jails to keep us off the streets; what my dreams are. Stuff like that.

Q?

A: At first they were skeptical, like they thought rap was thug talk, like I was becoming a gangster. Then I rapped one of my new poems to them, about school being like a jail, how it should be a place to learn, how when we dropped out everyone blamed us, nobody blamed the system. How I really wanted to go learn, to be somebody.

Q?

A: It was beautiful, you know. I was all dressed up in my best rapping clothes, had my cap turned backwards at just the right angle, these cool hoop earrings. My mom and dad came, and cheered like crazy. All my friends where there, in a frenzy, shouting my name. I rapped three of my songs, and when I finished the place was rocking.

Q?

A: I'm sure I would have ended up in jail, or kicked out of the house, out on the streets. I wouldn't be back in school. I wouldn't be talking to my parents. Maybe rap saved my life. Yeah, you could say that.

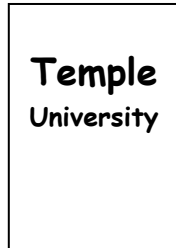
Q?

A: Sure. This one's about how the schools belong to us, even us immigrants. That we should all learn from each other. That's what America's about, right? The big melting pot where we all get to cook up our dreams. It goes like this:

## EVALUATING OUR ORAL HISTORIES

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
<b>Emotional Response</b>	Did the story make you care about the storyteller? Why?
	What parts of the story especially touched you?
<b>Quality of Story</b>	Does the story have an arc, begin some place, follow action/change/challenge, and end satisfactorily?
	Does the story focus on one-three topics in depth, rather than superficially covering several topics?
	Does the story create images and/or scenes that make it vivid?
	Is there evidence of active listening, where feelings were explored, important details and information gathered, that deepened the story? Or were there missed opportunities to learn more, make the story more powerful and interesting?
<b>Editing of Story/ Quality of Sound (If audio story)</b>	Was recording done in a quiet place, to minimize background noise? (If necessary, was background noise reduced?)
	Was volume adjusted so sound was not too high or too low? Was volume control applied to specific words/phrases so they were not too high/too low?
	Were unnecessary silences eliminated to maintain an appropriate pace?
	Were appropriate silences inserted to maintain appropriate pace of breathing and rests, account for emotion, clarify transitions.
	Were unnecessary sounds ( <i>uh, like</i> , etc.) eliminated? Were repeats (stutters) eliminated?
	Were cuts clean, to assure that only desired words were included in the edit?
<b>Use of Music and Sound Effects (If audio story)</b>	Was music appropriate for the story, in terms of mood, tempo?
	Did the volume of the music support the voice, rather than compete with the voice?
	Was the volume amplified at the beginning of the story, during transitions, at the end of the story?
	Was instrumental music used only? If music with singing was used, did it support the story, rather than compete with it?
	If sound effects (ambient sound, etc.) were used, were they mixed appropriately with the voice to support the story?

**[Note:** If any oral history is to be made public, outside of the classroom, it is essential that the storyteller give written permission to use a written, oral or video version of the story, including use of photos. Here is a sample permission form:]



## Permission to Use Story and Photos

I have recorded a story with students from Temple University.

I agree to the following (please check one or both of below if you agree):



I give permission for my story to be used in public by Temple University or the Philadelphia Storytelling Project. The story may be presented in a written, audio or video format, and shared at public testimonies, meetings or classrooms, on the radio, or shared on DVDs; and may be webcast or otherwise published on the internet.



I give permission for my photograph and other visuals to accompany the story which is shared with the larger public.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Storyteller's signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness' Signature