

Ouachita Baptist University

## Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

---

Honors Theses

Carl Goodson Honors Program

---

4-16-2021

### Providing Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors: Incorporating Diverse Short Fiction in the High School English Classroom

Emily Koonce

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors\\_theses](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#), and the [Secondary Education Commons](#)

---

*Providing Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors:  
Incorporating Diverse Short Fiction in the High School English Classroom*

by Emily Koonce

## Introduction

From the moment I learned to recognize letters and words, I have loved stories. Growing up, I often received comments from my teachers that I was a voracious reader, consuming any book I could get my hands on, from fantastical journeys like *Percy Jackson & the Olympians* by Rick Riordan to the quieter, family-centric stories of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. As a shy child, I sometimes struggled to connect with others in real life, but I found myself relating to many of the characters I read about, nearly all of them Caucasian, like me, and some female, also like me. It wasn't until I got to high school that I felt myself unable to relate to many of the characters I read about in English class. By my sophomore year, nearly every book I read, I read for class, and I found myself disconnected from literature. This is not to say that my teachers were terrible—in fact, I'm pursuing my degree in English and Secondary Education *because* of how much teachers like Mrs. Boone and Mrs. May encouraged my love of learning. My passion for English was in spite of the books we read, which were often written by white men and featured white male protagonists. While these books and plays certainly had and have merit—I personally have a soft spot for W.B. Yeats—it was difficult for me to garner meaning from a text in which I couldn't see myself. I didn't experience the world the same way these authors and characters did, and if I did see a female character to whom I could relate, she either died or was relegated to a minor role.

However, this mindset—that I, a Caucasian, middle-class woman, does not see herself in literature at all—is too shallow. If I rarely saw myself in the books and poems we read, how often did my classmates—who were not Caucasian, heterosexual, or without disabilities—see themselves on the page? The answer: rarely. While required reading lists may include authors of color like Chinua Achebe or Jhumpa Lahiri once or twice, the lists often abound with straight, white authors whom we read again and again: William Shakespeare, Ernest Hemingway, George

Orwell, John Steinbeck, and so on. Of course, because each school creates its own required reading lists, there is technically not a set standard reading list for most states. In 2012, Common Core authors published a suggested reading list for high school, but only 21.1% of the fiction works were by authors of color in a country that is growing more ethnically and culturally diverse every day (Strauss). Why does this small percentage matter?

### Justification for Study

Students benefit greatly from seeing representations of themselves and of their world, because it gives them an opportunity to connect content and learning to their lives. These “real-world” connections often result in deeper, more long-lasting understanding of learning (Eva). Additionally, the Language Arts classroom is one where we specifically focus on the development of characters, themes, and events, with a goal of understanding *why*. This creates a space in which students can examine emotions and develop their ability to understand themselves. For example, while academic skills are often the focus of learning in high schools, many high schoolers do not feel prepared emotionally for life after college; however, high schoolers don’t respond as well to traditional Social-Emotional Learning activities as younger students (Eva). Students are thus caught in a cycle where they often *need* to learn these soft skills, but they don’t frequently have the space to do so. The Language Arts classroom offers students this opportunity. In his 2011 article “In the Mind of Others,” Keith Oatley, states that “reading stories can actually improve your social skills by helping you better understand other[s]... the process of entering imagined worlds of fiction builds empathy and improves your ability to take another person's point of view” (qtd. in Simmons). In his 2016 Atlantic article “Literature's Emotional Lessons,” veteran teacher Andrew Simmons explains that the problem arises, though, when “characters are fictitious abstractions, and, without actors to bring them to

life and makeup and digital tricks to make the drama feel real, students... strictly do the analytical work teachers expect without the interference of a significant emotional response” (Simmons). For example, high school freshmen can track the development of Tom Robinson’s trial in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and analyze various aspects, such as character motivations and themes. However, if they aren’t given the space to process the injustice committed against Tom, students may come away from the novel without understanding how to sort through their emotions regarding incidents of horrific racial violence, especially considering recent cases of police brutality in the United States. If students explore essential questions such as “What responsibilities do individuals have in light of injustice?” and “What do we do when empathy is not enough?” allow students to create personal meaning with the text and engages them further because these characters are no longer just words on a page but people. Additionally, connecting literature to one’s emotions moves students past rote memorization and surface-level skill application to synthesis and extended thinking. Students succeed more both academically and emotionally when they are given the space to process their own emotions and how they would handle a particular situation.

Representation of readers’ race also plays a large factor in how we approach literature. In her 1990 article entitled “Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors,” Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop explains the detriment of the “singular white story”—that is, stories that primarily focus on the white experience—not only to students of color but also white students who are considered the “norm.” Bishop notes,

When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part.... In

[America], where racism is still one of the major unresolved social problems, books may be one of the few places where children who are socially isolated and insulated from the larger world may meet people unlike themselves. If they only see reflections of themselves, they will grow up with an exaggerated sense of their own importance and value in the world—a dangerous ethnocentrism. (1)

Seeing oneself in the surrounding world, especially as an adolescent, provides a degree of self-affirmation that is necessary to one's developing identity. Never relating wholly to a piece of media only furthers the isolation that adolescents frequently feel, and that lack of solid identity and belonging can lead to higher rates of mental illness (Wakefield and Hudley 147). And learning to relate to another's experience—no matter how different from yours—through fiction can allow for a greater sense of empathy in all students, no matter race or ethnicity. So, even if I only have white students, they need to see stories of people and by people to whom they do not completely relate. Imploring students to examine difference aids in diminishing the barriers that separate communities and helps to build empathy that allows us to connect with and appreciate others. By doing so, we can construct a culture that feels less like an “us vs. them” and more like a united “us.”

However, providing this representation is much easier said than done. When I began my thesis, I had one central question: how do I, as a white educator, incorporate that necessary racial representation into the classroom?

#### Rationale and Form

While writing my proposal, I realized I wanted my thesis to be applicable to my future in teaching English/Language Arts at the high school level. I first intended to create a ten-day unit that centered around analyzing fiction: poems, short stories, or a novel. However, I soon realized

that such a unit, designed for an imaginary class and curriculum, is unrealistic, at least for my purposes. For one, if I used a novel, I would have to fit the reading into the curriculum, and as a new teacher, I likely won't have that control. Of course, I could use short stories or poems, but form-based units aren't effective for learning, often leading to repetition that bores students. Instead, I decided to create a "curriculum guide," so to speak, of Arkansas standards-based activities featuring fifteen short stories for English Language Arts, grades 9-12.

Pairing short stories with different activities and standards not only allows for flexibility but also allows me to provide more representation for my students. By pulling fifteen stories from five different collections within the last decade by authors of color, I can include various genres, themes, and perspectives with which my students may or may not be familiar. Both offer students opportunities to grow and build understanding, either of themselves or others. Most of these stories can also be used to address Arkansas English Language Arts standard RL.9-10.6 (analyze a particular point of view, perspective, or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature, including works from outside the United States). I include background on each author in the guide under "Author Profiles," giving a short introduction to each author's particular history and themes prevalent in his or her work.

While I wanted to find stories from as many cultures as possible, I know that I have holes to fill in my guide—in particular, I haven't included stories by Native American writers. This is largely my fault in planning; I didn't allow enough time or space. However, my goal was not to create this guide as a "token," or "end-all-be-all" or representation, but simply as one supplement option for a curriculum. By having this framed as supplemental to rather than a replacement for what is considered classic literature, I can avoid—as a new teacher—the backlash that often

comes when teachers attempt to remove “the classics” for the purpose of antiracist curriculum.<sup>1</sup> I can still include rigorous works that are important to Western literature while offering different perspectives that can help provide nuance to themes and issues.

Additionally, I recognize that many stories we see about people of color end up being stories of trauma. For example, Ex-NFL player Martellus Bennett made the move in 2020 to writing children’s literature because “[w]hen Black characters do show up as protagonists in children’s entertainment, too often it’s in service of recounting a tragedy, their Blackness inevitably rooted in pain” and he wishes to change that (Bryant). Although I have included stories that deal with difficult subjects—which have merit on their own, as we can explore complexity when discussing stories of hardship—I also needed to include stories of love and family, stories of happiness. In her TED Talk, “The Danger of the Single Story,” writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explains that when one only consumes one kind of story about a group of people, there is a strong possibility that we will use that story as a way to define groups. Thus, only hearing a “single story” often leads to stereotyping and prejudice. While I include many stories by the same authors, these stories are not meant to be the *only* stories. What Enebeli experiences in Lesley Nneka Arimah’s “Light” does not define the Nigerian experience; it only provides a glimpse at *one* experience.

#### A Note on Cultural Responsiveness

Before I continue, I would just like to note that, once again, although I have worked to select stories and design activities that will serve my future students well, I understand that I do

---

<sup>1</sup> In September of 2020, the Burbank Unified School District removed five books from the middle and high school’s required reading lists due to fears of potential harm that could come to black students in the district. This decision was met with intense community and nationwide backlash (Pineda).



not experience the world the same way others do. Furthermore, one activity I've provided may work well with some students, while other students may have experiences that lead them to react differently. The best way for educators to avoid unintentionally hurting students is by listening to them: ask questions, involve them in their learning, and get to know their families (Alrubail). So, for me as a new teacher, I may want to wait until I know my students better and we have built a safe classroom of respect and rapport to discuss works that may be troublesome. These stories and activities are merely starting points for providing one's students with opportunities to connect with each other and themselves.

**New Short Stories to Supplement Curriculum:  
A Guide**

## Table of Contents

<b>Author Profiles</b> .....	10
Lesley Nneka Arimah.....	10
Ken Liu.....	11
Kirstin Valdez Quade .....	12
Shobha Rao.....	13
Deepak Unnikrishnan .....	14
<b>Short Stories</b> .....	15
“The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species” by Ken Liu .....	15
“Curfew” by Shobha Rao.....	16
“Dog” by Deepak Unnikrishnan .....	17
“Tvdav (Here). Avday (There).” By Deepak Unnikrishnan .....	18
“Jubilee” by Kirstin Valdez Quade.....	19
“Kavitha and Mustafa” by Shobha Rao .....	20
“Light” by Lesley Nneka Arimah .....	21
“Nemecia” by Kirstin Valdez Quade .....	22
“Night at the Fiestas” by Kirstin Valdez Quade .....	23
“The Paper Menagerie” by Ken Liu.....	24
“Second Chances” by Lesley Nneka Arimah.....	25
“State Change” by Ken Liu.....	26
“War Stories” by Lesley Nneka Arimah.....	27
“What It Means When A Man Falls from the Sky” by Lesley Nneka Arimah.....	28
“Who Will Greet You at Home” by Lesley Nneka Arimah.....	29
<b>Standards &amp; Activities</b> .....	30
W.11-12.3.....	30
W.11-12.3B .....	31
RL.9-10.3.....	32
RL.9-10.6.....	35
RL.11-12.3.....	36
RL.11-12.5.....	37
SL.9-10.1.C .....	38
<b>Appendix</b> .....	39

## Author Profiles

### ***Lesley Nneka Arimah***

#### **Background**

Born in the United Kingdom in 1983, Arimah grew up in Nigeria and “wherever else her father was stationed for work” (VCFA). Then, in her early teenage years, she moved to the United States and spent a decade in Louisiana before relocating to Minnesota, where she now resides as a writer. Because of her frequent traveling, she considers her relationship with place to be “transient,” an idea that is reflective in her short story collection, *What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky: Stories* (2017), which is included in this resource guide. While Arimah is often identified as a Nigerian writer, she often emphasizes that her writing is not necessarily representative of either the Nigerian experience or even her own. For *What It Means*, Arimah explains in a PBS Hour interview that “the events [that take place in the stories] aren’t biographical,” but the emotions are “emotions, specifically, that deal with understanding how one’s experiences shape their worldview and being.” However, “War Stories” (see p. 27) does take from her own life. In it, a young girl’s father tells her stories of the Biafra War as a way to cope with his trauma, and this—though dramatized—is reflective of Arimah’s own childhood filled with her father’s stories of war.

#### **Accolades**

Though *What It Means* served as her debut short story collection in 2017, Arimah has garnered critical acclaim for her work, being selected for the National Book Foundation’s 5 under 35 and serving as a 2019 United States Artists Fellow in Writing. Her work has garnered numerous honors, such as National Magazine Award, a Commonwealth Short Story Prize, and an O. Henry Award. *What It Means* won the 2017 Kirkus Prize, the 2017 New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award and was selected for the New York Times/PBS book club. Additionally, she received the 2019 Caine Prize for African Writing for her short story “Skinned.”

#### **Genre and Theme**

In *What It Means*, Arimah refrains from having an intended message or central theme that ties the short stories together. While she may not have a singular message, she explains, “I wanted to interrogate the many different ways that we... are creating these false shapes of womanhood and girlhood and what that does to the people who live through that” (PBS News Hour). Thus, *What It Means* deals chiefly with stories that surround women and young girls, with Arimah exploring themes of family, identity, loss, motherhood, and forgiveness. Additionally, because of her desire to read broadly, Arimah’s work comprises multiple genres, including science-fiction, folk tale, magical realism, realism, and fantasy.

#### **Works included in Resource Guide**

*What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky: Stories* (2017)

“Light” (p. 21)

“Second Chances” (p. 25)

“War Stories” (p. 27)

“What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky” (p. 28)

“Who Will Greet You at Home” (p. 29)

## ***Ken Liu***

### **Background**

Born in 1976 in Lanzhou, China, Liu grew up surrounded by industry and science. When he was four years old, his family moved abroad, with his father studying statistics in Germany and his mother pursuing a graduate degree in chemistry in the United States, but Liu stayed in China with his grandparents, who were both science professors (Alter). Liu was drawn to Mandarin Chinese translations of American science-fiction novels like *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick, and he learned English when he moved with his mother to America at eleven years old (Alter). In 1998, Liu graduated from Harvard and began working as a software engineer, first for Microsoft and then at a start-up, eventually attending and graduating Harvard Law School, writing speculative fiction throughout it all (Alter). Liu has translated numerous science-fiction works from Mandarin Chinese to English such as the Hugo Award-winning *The Three Body Problem* by Liu Cixin. Liu translates his own work into both English and Mandarin Chinese, and he has published multiple novels and over a hundred short stories.

### **Accolades**

Ken Liu has earned over sixty awards and honors for his writing and translations. “The Paper Menagerie” was the first short story to win the World Fantasy Award (2012), Hugo Award (2012), and the Nebula Award (2011) along with other nominations and awards. “The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species” was a finalist for the 2013 Theodore Sturgeon Award and a nominee for the 2012 Nebula Award. Among other awards, *The Paper Menagerie and Other Stories* (2011) earned a Locus Award in 2017 and a nomination for the 2017 World Fantasy Award. Liu is also a three-time Hugo Award winner.

### **Genre and Theme**

Liu's writing firmly falls into the realm of speculative fiction — using Liu calls “silkpunk,” an engineering language he invented to use in his work — with *The Paper Menagerie and Other Stories* (2011) exploring themes of capitalism, tradition, communication, free will, fate, progress, and knowledge (Wang). The philosophy of Daoism is also an influence on his writing. In an interview with *Public Books*, Liu explains that, “one of the key teachings of Daoism is that there is no static state of balance. That’s not human nature; we don’t stay still. You have to embrace change with constant movement” (Admussen). Themes of balance and change thus permeate all of his writing but particularly the stories included in this guide.

### **Works included in Resource Guide**

*Paper Menagerie and Other Stories* (2011)

“The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species” (p. 15)

“The Paper Menagerie” (p. 24)

“State Change” (p. 26)

## ***Kirstin Valdez Quade***

### **Background**

Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Quade spent her childhood living all across the Southwestern United States, but many of her high school and college summers were spent with her grandparents in Santa Fe (Runk). Being New Mexican serves as a crucial part to Quade's identity, as does her being raised Catholic. According to Quade, the landscape of New Mexico and Santa Fe are the “primary fuel” for her fictional stories, especially those in the collection included in this guide, *Night at the Fiestas: Stories* (2015). However, as a teenager, Quade moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, with her family, and her Catholicism clashed with the strong Mormon community there. This religious and cultural conflict is also present throughout her writing. In an interview with the magazine *Pasatiempo*, Quade explains, “I wrote fiction because there were always details that my grandparents or great-aunt couldn’t supply, questions that they couldn’t answer. So I began to fill in the gaps myself” (qtd. in Runk). Quade received a B.A. from Stanford University and was named Wallace Stegner and Truman Capote Fellow at Stanford University. Additionally, she received her M.F.A in Fiction at Oregon University in 2009 and served as a Jones Lecturer in Creative Writing at Stanford University, (Runk). After publishing *Night at the Fiestas: Stories*, Quade accepted a position as Associate Professor teaching Creative Writing at Princeton University in 2016.

### **Accolades**

Although *Night at the Fiestas: Stories* (2015) was her first short-story collection, Quade has had her short fiction published in literary magazines like *Guernica*, *The New Yorker*, *Narrative*, *The Southern Review*, *The Best American Short Stories*, and *The O. Henry Prize Stories* (“Kirstin Valdez Quade”). Furthermore, Quade has won numerous awards for *Night at the Fiestas*, such as the “5 Under 35” award from the National Book Foundation in 2014, Rome Prize, John Leonard Prize from the National Book Critics Circle, the Sue Kaufman Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Rona Jaffe Foundation Writer’s Award, and the 2013 Narrative Prize, as well as fellowships from Yaddo and the MacDowell Colony (“Kirstin”).

### **Genre and Theme**

In *Night at the Fiestas*, Quade draws on her own experience growing up as a New Mexican Catholic and the stories from her own family to write short stories that fall into the genre of realism. Family, then, is also a central to her work, particularly family in the context of heritage and conflict. One major theme that is present throughout much of *Night at the Fiestas* is that of faith and religion. She explains, “[F]aith is so much about longing. It's about longing for transcendence, it's longing to be closer to the infinite and longing to connect with others; it's about empathy” (“Night At The Fiestas’ Spins Stories Of Faith And Family”). With that, many of her characters long for escapism from stereotype, class, and systems of oppression. Overall, her stories are about transformation and coming of age.

### **Works included in Resource Guide**

- Night at the Fiestas: Stories* (2015)
  - “Jubilee” (p. 19)
  - “Nemecia” (p. 22)
  - “Night at the Fiestas” (p. 23)

## **Shobha Rao**

### **Background**

Born in India, Rao moved to the United States with her family at the age of seven. For Rao, this move was “the most profound event in [her] life” (Schwalbe). While she still lives in the United States, Rao explains in an interview with *Literary Hub* that she returns to India frequently. She elaborates, “One of the best things my parents did was to insist that my sister and I learn Telugu, our native tongue, once we emigrated to America, and that has lent a connection of language, poetry, music, and it has humanized a distant place, made it mine” (Hong). In *An Unrestored Woman* (2016), Rao explores the complicated feelings regarding migration, both forced and voluntary. For this collection in particular, she writes stories that surround the India-Pakistan Partition of 1947, an event with which Western audiences are not often familiar. In her Author’s Note, Rao gives background on the Partition, which occurred when “the decline of the British Empire on the Indian Subcontinent led to the formation of two new sovereign states: India and Pakistan,” with India becoming a secular state with a majority Hindu population and Pakistan an Islamic republic with a largely Muslim population (Rao xi). An estimated eight to ten million people were displaced from their homes, resulting in the largest “peacetime” human migration in history, but women and children were vulnerable, with nearly a hundred thousand Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh women abducted before being forcibly returned to families who often did not want them (Rao xii).

### **Accolades**

A resident of Hedgebrook—a program in which writers are invited to stay and write on Whidbey Island—and recipient of the Elizabeth George Foundation grant, Rao has received many accolades for her writing. Her story “Kavitha and Mustafa,” included in this guide, was chosen by T.C. Boyle for Best American Short Stories 2015. Additionally, Rao is the winner of the Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Fiction, and she is currently the Grace Paley Teaching Fellow at The New School in New York City (“About”).

### **Genre and Theme**

The stories of *Unrestored Woman* solidly ground themselves in reality as Rao offers fictional perspectives of real women and children affected by the Partition. While centering around the Partition, the stories take place both before and after the split, with “Kavitha and Mustafa” occurring during the Partition and “Curfew” taking place in the twenty-first century. However, each story is linked to another, serving as companion stories; such is the case with “Kavitha and Mustafa” and “Curfew.” By showing different perspectives in various time periods and locations, *Unrestored Woman* explores themes of migration, love, grief, loss, race, and sexuality. In particular, Rao concerns herself with the idea of the “restoration” of abducted women who had been recovered but could never fully return to their original selves (Rao xii).

### **Works included in Resource Guide**

*An Unrestored Woman* (2016)

“Curfew” (p. 16)

“Kavitha and Mustafa” (p. 20)

## ***Deepak Unnikrishnan***

### **Background**

Unnikrishnan was born and raised in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, before moving to the United States in 2001 to attend college (Krishnamurthy). Unnikrishnan earned his BA and MA at Fairleigh Dickinson University, then his MFA at the Art Institute of Chicago. Unnikrishnan has been the Writer in Residence at WATERLINES (2018), Brown University (2018) and Sangam House (2016), as well as a Margaret Bridgman Fellow in Fiction at Bread Loaf (2019). Currently, Unnikrishnan serves as the Assistant Arts Professor of Literature and Creative Writing at NYU Abu Dhabi. The short stories included in this resource guide, "Dog

and "Ivday (Here). Avday (There).", are from his novel *Temporary People* (2017). Each story in the novel serves as a "chabter." The novel is set in Abu Dhabi and concerns itself with the temporary immigrant workers who make up a substantial part of the city's population but do not have the same rights as citizens. In an interview with Elle India, Unnikrishnan explains, "I wrote the book for people like my parents, and for my uncles and aunts, and for the boys I went to school with... [b]ut it's also a shout-out to sound and language, and strangers and food, and hope and loss" (Krishnamurthy).

### **Accolades**

*Temporary People* serves as Unnikrishnan's debut novel and is the winner of the 2017 Restless Books Prize for New Immigrant Writing and 2017 The Hindu Prize. It has also been included on the "Best Books of 2017" list for *Booklist*, *Kirkus*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, with *Kirkus Reviews* calling it "[a]n enchanting, unparalleled anthem of displacement and repatriation" ("Temporary People").

### **Genre and Theme**

As mentioned, Unnikrishnan considers *Temporary People* a novel, with each story related to one another and called a "chabter," which somewhat is a reference to how Arabic—the language spoken by many immigrant workers in Abu Dhabi—does not use the letter "p." Unnikrishnan elaborates on this in an interview with *Guernica*, specifically noting that he "is telling the reader, 'You're in a place that's odd and strange, and you've probably never been there before,'" with the feeling of otherness for the reader intentional and a consistent theme throughout the novel (Wimbish). Unnikrishnan also explores themes of family, loss, separation, and identity among exploitation. The stories themselves are at times both surreal and absurd, with Unnikrishnan's writing being compared to Franz Kafka (Krishnamurthy).

### **Works included in Resource Guide**

*Temporary People* (2017)

"Dog" (p. 17)

"Ivday (Here). Avday (There)." (p. 18)



## Short Stories

### ***"The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species" by Ken Liu***

**Grade Range:** 9–12

**Content Warnings:** N/A

**Themes:** Literature, Tradition, Greed, Power of Words

**Summary:** In this short story, Liu chronicles the storytelling traditions of five fictional alien species: the Allatians, the Quatzoli, the Hesperoe, the Tull-Toks, and the Curu'ee.

**Standard(s):**

W.11-12.3 (p. 30)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Is writing just visible speech? Why or why not?
2. The Hesperoe are a species that believe "an idea was worth keeping only if it led to victory" (5). To what extent is this true? What role might colonization play in art and literature?
3. Why are the Tull-Toks so controversial in their method of reading?
4. Why have the Curu'ee been given so many books to read? What do they do with them? What *should* they do with them?
5. For you, which is the best storytelling method? Are there any alien storytelling methods that are similar to our own?

**"Curfew" by Shobha Rao****Grade Range:** 11–12**Content Warnings:** Mentions of Miscarriage, Mild Language**Themes:** Grief, Loss, Love, Immigration, Race**Background Information:** This is a companion story to "Kavitha and Mustafa" (see p. 20) and follows a young woman who was forcibly moved from her home in Pakistan to the United Kingdom.**Summary:** Set in the modern day, "Curfew" follows a Pakistani woman named Safia as she is on holiday with her white husband to Italy. The narrator flips back between her childhood (which includes her emigrating from Pakistan to the United Kingdom with her mute grandfather), her marriage and loss of her child, and the present-day anniversary dinner she has with her husband.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (p. 34)

RL.9-10.6 (p. 35)

RL.11-12.5 (p. 37)

SL.9-10.1.C (p. 38)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. What happens to Safia's grandfather's pebble? What does it mean when Safia later says, "I feel like a pebble"?
2. Why does Safia's family oppose her marriage?
3. Why are Safia and Ethan in Italy? What happened prior?
4. Why does Safia's mother want to leave London? Why does Safia say no?
5. Why can Safia only talk about Minou while in Italy—in a foreign place? Is it easier to have tough conversations away from home? If so, why?
6. What do you think happens with Safia and Ethan's marriage after Italy? Why?

**"Dog" by Deepak Unnikrishnan****Grade Range:** 11–12**Content Warnings:** Mild Language, Some Disturbing Imagery**Themes:** Life, Death, Family, Loss**Summary:** "Dog" takes place on the Gulf of the United Arab Emirates in a decrepit house, with the past members of the house scattered about the United Arab Emirates. After an elderly woman dies, her children decide to leave this house alone to the care of a man named Mathai. However, he doesn't just look after the property—he also cares for her dog, who was left behind in her death.**Standard(s):**

RL.11-12.3 (p. 36)

SL.9-10.1.C (p. 38)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Describe the house. What led to the house's current state?
2. Why does the dog need to be taken care of? Where did it come from?
3. Despite the low pay and strict conditions, Mathai agrees to look after the dog. Why?
4. What kind of person is Mathai? Why doesn't he sleep in the house—is it just the rules, or something else?
5. In the end, what happens to the dog? What's the point of taking care of it—and, by extension, the house—if both will be destroyed eventually?

**“Ivday (Here). Avday (There)” by Deepak Unnikrishnan****Grade Range:** 11-12**Content Warnings:** N/A**Themes:** Family, Immigration, Coming of Age, Communication, Displacement, Identity, Isolation**Summary:** This is a short phone conversation between a boy who has moved to America for college and his mother living in the United Arab Emirates.**Standard(s):**

W.11-12.3.B (p. 31)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Who is Amma? How would you characterize the relationship between Amma and the narrator?
2. Why did the narrator leave?
3. What is the significance of the words "Ivday" and "Avday"? How are the terms different to Amma in comparison to the narrator?
4. Does the narrator regret leaving? If so, why?
5. Why do the narrator and Amma both repeat the words "OK" and "A-OK"?

**"Jubilee" by Kirstin Valdez Quade****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Language, Mentions of Attempted Suicide**Themes:** Pride, Family, Identity, Appearance vs. Reality, Childhood, Stereotypes**Summary:** After her freshman year at Stanford, Andrea returns home to attend a party hosted by her father's employer, Mr. Lowell. At the party, Andrea intends to show everyone that she has exceeded all expectations others may have of her as a young Mexican-American woman, but she still finds herself embarrassed by her family and hostile towards the Lowells.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (p. 33)

SL.9-10.1.C (p. 38)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. What do Andrea's parents do for work? Describe Andrea's relationship with her parents. How does she view her family in comparison to herself?
2. How does *Parker* view her own family?
3. At one point, when thinking about her own family, Andrea states that "she hated it, the constant alert hunger to move up in the world" (Quade 179). Does Andrea have that same hunger? If so, why and how do we know?
4. Is Andrea justified in her feeling that the Lowells view her and her family as lower-class? How does that compare to reality?
5. Could Parker and Andrea ever become friends? What would it take for that to happen?

**“Kavitha and Mustafa” by Shobha Rao****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Mild Sexual Innuendo, Violence**Themes:** Marriage, Family, Survival, Communication**Summary:** This story follows Kavitha, a woman trapped in both a toxic marriage and a train robbery. The narrator flips between the two stories using flashbacks to Kavitha’s marriage, in which she has always felt lonely and undermined. She finds a chance to escape both the robbery and her relationship through the help of a young boy (Mustafa) on the train.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (p. 34)

RL.9-10.6 (p. 35)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Describe the nature of Kavitha and Vinod's relationship. How does Kavitha view it in comparison to Vinod? How does he view her? Why are they traveling in the first place?
2. Why are both Kavitha and the unnamed boy so calm? What happens to the boy's brother?
3. Why does Kavitha watch her neighbors? Why does Kavitha flashback to this when Cabbage Leaf begins demanding from the passengers their jewels?
4. How do Kavitha and Mustafa ultimately escape? What do they do afterwards?
5. Why is the story called "Kavitha and Mustafa"? How does that change

**“Light” by Lesley Nneka Arimah****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Some Mild Sexual Innuendo**Themes:** Growing Up, Family, Tradition, Communication, Gender Roles**Summary:** When Enebeli Okwara's wife temporarily moves to the United States to pursue her degree, Enebeli is left to raise their unnamed daughter. For three years, Enebeli grows closer to his daughter, but at fourteen years old, she is forced to move to the United States with her mother.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (pp. 32, 33)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Why does Enebeli only refer to his daughter as "the girl" and his wife as "the mother"? How does he feel about them throughout the text?
2. Why doesn't Enebeli's wife live with them? How does that affect her relationship with both the girl and Enebeli?
3. Does reading from Enebeli's perspective impact your understanding of the daughter? If so, how?
4. How does the girl's relationship with her parents change? Why does it change?
5. At the end of the story, Enebeli remarks that the girl is "under the mothering of a woman who loves but cannot comprehend her" (Arimah 63). Is he right? Does *Enebeli* truly understand his daughter? How do you know?

**"Nemecia" by Kirstin Valdez Quade****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Abuse**Themes:** Childhood, Abuse, Death, Family, Identity**Summary:** "Nemecia" focuses primarily on the complicated, strained relationship between two cousins — the narrator Maria and the eponymous Nemecia — throughout their childhood. However, the narrator seems to be the only person in her family who sees Nemecia for who she truly is: a killer.**Standard(s):**

W.11-12.3 (p. 30)

RL.9-10.3 (p. 33)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Throughout the story, the narrator repeatedly calls attention to Nemecia's eating habits, which are peculiar and hidden from the rest of the family. Why does the narrator fixate on it? Is Nemecia's relationship to food similar to her relationship with anything else in the story?
2. Nemecia first comes to live with Maria and her family before Maria was even born, with much of the story being told while she is a young child. How might the narrator's age and perspective impact her reliability as a narrator?
3. Maria spends much of the story hurt and confused by her mother's treatment of Nemecia compared to Maria. Did Maria's mother favor Nemecia? If so, why? How do we know?
4. Why does Maria's mother send her away to live with her great-aunt Paulita instead of having Nemecia sent away?
5. When Maria was born, Nemecia had a porcelain doll that she broke. At the end of the story, when Nemecia has gotten married and started her own family, Maria returns the doll, only for Nemecia to claim she'd never seen it before. What caused this reaction? How is the Nemecia we see at the end different from the Nemecia we meet at the beginning?



**"Night at the Fiestas" by Kirstin Valdez Quade****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Mild Language**Themes:** Deception, appearance, coming of age, identity, escapism, greed, sexuality**Summary:** "Night at the Fiestas" is the titular story from *Night at the Fiestas*, and it concerns itself primarily with the journey of a sixteen-year-old girl named Frances who longs to escape her mundane life for one of academia and progress. As she travels on her father's bus from her small hometown of Raton to Santa Fe for the *Fiesta de Santa Fé*, she meets a painter who leaves behind an innocuous lunch sack filled with hundreds of dollars in small bills. Her night and life, then, take on a whole new course.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (p. 33)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Despite his friendly and upbeat demeanor, Frances claims that her father is "sad" and "friend[less]" (87). Do you agree? Is he actually happy, or is his attitude just a mask? How do you know?
2. At the beginning of the story, Frances is reading *Tess of d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, a scandalous Victorian novel that follows a young woman's tragic downfall and loss of her "virtue." In particular, Frances "enjoyed the image of herself reading this fat book with its forbidding, foreign-sounding title. It was a prop, exactly the book a girl with a powder-blue valise would be reading" (95). What does this tell us about how Frances perceives herself in comparison to how she wants others to see her?
3. Who is the painter? Is he a grifter, like Frances suspects, or is he telling the truth?
4. For Frances, everyone creates their own story. What does each story told—that of the painter, her father, her cousin Nancy—tell us about each of the characters?
5. Did the painter leave the money on purpose? If so, why? What does Frances do with the money after the Fiesta?

***“The Paper Menagerie” by Ken Liu*****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** References to Death**Themes:** Family, Death, Tradition vs. Change, Grief, Race, Culture**Summary:** Jack grows up with a white American father and a mother from China, and he finds himself conflicted about his identity. His mother doesn't speak much English, and Jack — after facing bullying and pressure from peers — begins to distance himself from her. All the while, his mother makes magic origami animals as a way to connect, a practice that Jack only realizes its meaning until after his mother has passed.**Standard(s):**

RL.11-12.3 (p. 36)

SL.9-10.1.C (p. 38)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Why does Jack stop speaking to his mother?
2. Jack's mother makes origami animals out of paper, which then come to life. Why does she do this?
3. How does Jack's mother not speaking English impact her ability to communicate and build bonds with others? How does it impact her family? Why does Jack get angry at her rather than at his father?
4. How are Jack and his mother similar, especially when it comes to "lying"?
5. What happens to the origami animals Jack's mother made?
6. After his mother dies, Jack finds the origami tiger. What is written on the wrapping paper from which it's made? How does this affect Jack's view of her?

**“Second Chances” by Lesley Nneka Arimah****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Mentions of Drugs, Mental Illness**Themes:** Family, Death, Identity, Reconciliation, Loneliness**Summary:** In "Second Chances," a daughter's mother returns home after being gone for a long time. The daughter is shocked and must re-evaluate their tumultuous relationship. Ultimately, the daughter wonders: should she and *can* she give her mother a second chance?**Standard(s):**

W.11-12.3 (p. 30)

RL.9-10.3 (p. 34)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Why is the narrator shocked when she sees her mother again?
2. How does each member of the family react to the mom's return? Why?
3. The narrator explains that she and her family emigrated from Nigeria to live in America. Does that affect the narrator's perception of herself and her family? How?
4. How does the narrator's relationship with her mother compare to her own relationship with her father and sister? What causes the differences?
5. The short story is called "Second Chances." Who in the story is getting a second chance? How do you know?

***“State Change” by Ken Liu*****Grade Range:** 11–12**Content Warnings:** Vague Sexual Situations, Minor Drug References**Themes:** Fate vs Free Will, Change, Death, Identity, Love, Friendship**Summary:** In the world of "State Change," every individual's soul is represented by an object, and it is believed that the individual's survival and personality depends on that object's continued existence. Rina's soul is represented by a block of ice, which causes her to be very careful, until she meets a new coworker.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (p. 33)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Why does Rina check her refrigerators every night before going to bed?
2. What is Rina's work environment like? How does she interact with her coworkers?
3. What precautions does Rina take to ensure her survival? How do these interactions impact her ability to live?
4. What happened to Rina's friend Amy?
5. At the conclusion, we read a letter from Amy, who says she went through a "state change." What does she mean by this? And does Rina go through a state change herself? If so, how?

***“War Stories” by Lesley Nneka Arimah*****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Language, Suicide Mention**Themes:** Family, Grief, Loss, Childhood, Power**Summary:** After overthrowing the leader of an all girls' club on the playground, twelve-year-old Nwando inherits her own Girl Army, then loses her newfound popularity in a fit of rage. Her harrowing rise and fall is framed by her relationship with her parents. Over games of chess, her father tells her the story of a war and of his fellow soldier, Emmanuel, who she learns committed suicide.**Standard(s):**

RL9-10.3 (pp. 33, 34)

SL.9-10.1.C (p. 38)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Why does Anita start the Girl Club? Is Nwando's Girl Army any different from it?
2. Why does Nwando replace her father's friend, Emmanuel? What happened to him?
3. From what perspective is Nwando telling this story—as a little girl or as a grown woman? How does this affect our reading of "War Stories"?
4. Why does Nwando's father tell her his "war stories"? How do her mother's stories compare?
5. What is Nwando's war? How is it similar to her father's? How is it different? How is childhood like going to war?

***"What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky" by Lesley Nneka Arimah*****Grade Range:** 11-12**Content Warnings:** Language, Discussion of Death**Themes:** Death, Science, Morality, Grief, Family**Summary:** In this speculative future, scientists (called “Mathematicians”) have cracked the code for human flight and a variety of other abilities, like absorbing someone’s grief. However, the news report that a man, in the middle of a flight, has fallen and died—essentially that the code has failed. “What It Means” primarily follows a Mathematician named Nneoma as the world collapses around her.**Standard(s):**

RL.11-12.3 (p. 36)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. What does Nneoma do for a living? What exactly does her job entail?
2. Why are the Britons in New Kenya? What do they do there? What does Nneoma think of them?
3. When visiting a class of thirteen to fourteen year olds, Nneoma explains, "Most Mathematicians remove pain, some of us deal in negative emotions, but we all fix the equation of a person. The bravest [...] have tried their head at using the Formula to make the human body defy gravity, for physical endeavors like flight" (Arimah 163). What is the reaction of the children when they remember the man who fell from the sky? Why do they react that way?
4. Who has access to "grief workers"? Are they really all that effective?
5. What is the symbolism of the man falling from the sky, as suggested by the story's title?
6. Can science truly explain everything? Why or why not? If not, what can't it explain?
7. According to Arimah, can you ever truly remove grief? Can you be the same person after grief as you were before? Why or why not? Should you?

***"Who Will Greet You at Home" by Lesley Nneka Arimah*****Grade Range:** 9–12**Content Warnings:** Some Disturbing Imagery and Violence**Themes:** Family, Motherhood, Class, Identity, Death, Love, Nature vs. Nurture**Summary:** "Who Will Greet You at Home" follows Ogechi, a poor, working-class woman living in a matriarchal society. In this society devoid of men, women have children by making dolls, participating in a ritual with their mother, and once the doll becomes animated, the prospective mothers need to keep them intact for a year. At the end of the year, the doll will transform into a human baby. Ogechi has tried over and over again to have a baby, but she is only able to make them out of weak materials, which inevitably fall apart. In a last-ditch effort to have a child, Ogechi collects hair from the salon at which she works and makes a doll out of it, which is taboo. When her doll animates, it slowly becomes a monster, leading to Ogechi eventually killing it herself.**Standard(s):**

RL.9-10.3 (pp. 32, 33, 34)

**Guiding Questions:**

1. What kind of child does Ogechi want in the beginning?
2. After many failed attempts, what does Ogechi choose to make her child out of? What danger does that pose?
3. While riding the danfo (bus), Ogechi is shocked by a doll one woman carries. Describe the doll. What's so out-of-the-ordinary about the doll? With the fictitious society set in Nigeria, does the setting impact your view of the doll?
4. What role does the call-and-response throughout the story play in Ogechi's world?
5. How does Ogechi feel about her child?
6. What does she make her final child out of? Why?
7. In real life, does the kind of material you're made of (say, genes) dictate the kind of person you will be? What makes you who you are?

### Standards & Activities

<b>W.11-12.3</b>	<b>Write narratives to develop real and/or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</b>
<p>“Nemecia”</p> <p>“Second Chances”</p>	<p><i>Flipped Perspectives</i></p> <p>In both “Nemecia” and “Second Chances,” the narrators struggle with forgiving family members who have wronged them. However, both stories are in first-person point of view and from the respective narrators’ perspectives, which suggests that bias might play a role in the interpretation of events. After reading either “Nemecia” or “Second Chances,” have students write a letter from the perspective of the antagonistic character (for “Nemecia,” students would write from the perspective of Nemecia; for “Second Chances,” students would write from the perspective of the mother). Students should choose three key scenes from one of the stories to explain from the point of view of the antagonist. See Appendix F for rubric and possible form.</p>
<p>“The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species”</p>	<p><i>The _____ Habits of Select Species</i></p> <p>In “The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species,” author Ken Liu takes an ordinary human action—in this case, the making and reading books—and imagines how various alien species would approach the task. This imagining allows students to see something ordinary from various perspectives. For this assignment, students will each brainstorm (either independently or in pairs) ordinary human habits (such as cooking) to write about in a similar way. Students will choose one habit, then four different alien species, either from Liu’s story or of their own creation, and write about this habit from each alien perspective. Encourage students to consider the following questions as they write:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What values make up each species’ society?</li> <li>• How do those values affect how each species approaches this habit?</li> <li>• How would each species approach the habit differently?</li> </ul>



<b>W.11-12.3.B</b>	<b>Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</b>
“Ivday (Here). Avday (There).”	<p><i>Phone-a-Friend</i></p> <p>After reading the story once out loud with a singular narrator, listen to <a href="#">32:10-34:20</a> of the Asian American Writers Workshop's discussion panel "AAWWTV: Surreal Lives with Alex Kleeman, Deepak Unnikrishnan, Katie Raissan", in which Unnikrishnan talks about his own feelings of estrangement with his family. Then, assign parts for the role of Amma and the narrator and have the class read it aloud once more. Use the Guiding Questions to lead a class discussion as a way to break down the story to ensure student understanding. Then, ask students to free-write for five minutes about a time they felt homesick or estranged from their loved ones. After this, in pairs, have students draft a script of a 1 to 2-minute phone conversation they could have with their own parents, family members, or loved one that communicates this feeling of estrangement, and then have them read aloud to the class or in small groups, depending on the atmosphere of your class.</p> <p><u>Resources:</u> "AAWWTV: Surreal Lives with Alex Kleeman, Deepak Unnikrishnan, Katie Raissan." <i>YouTube</i>, uploaded by Asian Americans Writers' Workshop, 18 April 2017. <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLqfDM5HQD8">www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLqfDM5HQD8</a></p>

<b>RL.9-10.3</b>	<b>Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the <i>theme</i>.</b>
“Light”	<p><i>Relationship Graphs</i></p> <p>While reading ‘Light,’ students should focus on significant moments between the father, the mother, and the daughter. Once finished, have students create a relationship timeline for each of the three characters, with three different lines being present: father-daughter, daughter-mother, and mother-father. Have students choose three colors to represent each relationship, create a color key for the timeline, then in pairs or small groups create a color timeline of each relationship, with each line moving above and below the access based on how they view that relationship, with lines above the baseline representing a positive relationship and lines below the baseline representing a negative relationship. Model the color timeline using the mother-father relationship. Students can either layer the relationship timelines on the same graph or use separate sheets of paper. After students have created their lines, they need to choose two to three points on each line to explain in further depth, using textual evidence from "Light." See Appendix D for the worksheet. Once students have finished, have students individually reflect via an exit ticket on whose relationship is actually the best for the daughter.</p> <p><u>Resources:</u> Relationship Graph: Appendix D</p>
“Who Will Greet You at Home”	<p><i>What Are You Made Of?</i></p> <p>In “Who Will Greet You at Home,” the mother Ogechi tries to craft different children out of different materials, and she emphasizes that what one is made out of (literally and figuratively) defines who he or she is and who he or she will be. In groups, have students pick three materials of which children in the stories are made: wool yarn, mud/twigs, cotton, wrapping paper, porcelain, raffia, clay. Students will answer the following questions regarding each material:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this material durable? Is it soft? Is it breakable?</li> <li>2. What kind of personality will this child likely have?</li> <li>3. Who would likely have access to these materials? (Think about class and occupation)</li> </ol> <p>Once students have answered the question, they will free-write for five minutes about what material <i>they</i> would be made out of. Then, students will make dolls representing themselves out of their chosen materials. If available, bring in yarn, palm fronds, wrapping paper, cotton, clay, and other possible building materials. Let students use these materials to "build themselves." If materials aren't available or if students want to use another material, they can draw the material on a doll outline (see Appendix E). Students may also choose multiple materials, if they so desire. Once students have finished, have students share with others, verbally explaining why they those their specific materials.</p>

	<p>At the end of class, have students reflect on and discuss in class these questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do your circumstances influence your personality and potential success?</li> <li>2. How does our early childhood shape who we are? How do we change?</li> </ol> <p><u>Resources:</u> Doll Outline: Appendix E</p>
<p>“War Stories” “Night at the Fiestas” “Jubilee”</p>	<p><i>Character Mixtape</i></p> <p>After reading either “War Stories,” “Night at the Fiestas,” or “Jubilee,” have students choose one character (for “War Stories,” they can choose either Nwando or Nwando’s father; for “Night at the Fiestas,” they can choose Frances; for “Jubilee,” they can choose Andrea or Parker). Students will create a “mixtape” for this character using either Spotify or creating playlists of <i>school-appropriate</i> songs on YouTube. This mixtape must include at least five songs that specifically reflect the mood of or the character’s inner monologue from key scenes in the text. Students then choose at least three other songs that they feel encapsulate each character. After students have chosen their songs, they must explain how each scene from the story or aspect of the character relates to each song. Students should also create an appropriate title for the mixtape. See Appendix B for the worksheet and Appendix C for the rubric.</p> <p><u>Resources:</u> Spotify or YouTube playlists Worksheet: Appendix B Rubric: Appendix C</p>
<p>“State Change” “Nemecia” “Light”</p>	<p><i>Mood Board</i></p> <p>Young adults often struggle with creating their own identities; this is certainly the case for many of the characters in “State Change,” “Nemecia,” and “Light.” At times, students may struggle with accurately describing the nuances of characters through words, but they may be able to show their analysis visually through a “mood board,” which is simply a collage of images and words that represents a character. Based on the assigned story, students may choose one of the following characters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “State Change”: Rina, Amy, Jimmy</li> <li>• “Nemecia”: Nemecia, Maria</li> <li>• “Light”: Enebeli, Daughter</li> </ul> <p>Once students have chosen a character, they should brainstorm for three to five minutes personality traits for this character. After brainstorming, students should then go back to the text to find evidence for these character traits. Then, students can then begin constructing mood boards for their chosen characters. These mood boards can be created digitally, using websites like Matboard, Pinterest, and even Google Slides. Students can also physically</p>

	make these mood boards using posterboard and cutting out images from magazines.
<p>“War Stories”</p> <p>“Curfew”</p> <p>“Kavitha and Mustafa”</p> <p>“Who Will Greet You at Home”</p> <p>“Second Chances”</p>	<p><i>Genogram</i></p> <p>Family is complicated, and “War Stories,” “Curfew,” “Kavitha and Mustafa,” “Second Chances,” and “Who Will Greet You at Home” highlight these complicated dynamics. With any of the stories, students can create “genograms” in order to represent these relationships. When teaching any of these stories, have students first create a family tree of relationships in the story, even if the characters aren’t technically family. Students should cite at least one key quotation for each individual relationship and explain how that quotation effectively illustrates the relationship between the two characters. After students have done this for all characters, have them then—in groups, partners, or independently—create a genogram for that “family” tree (use the resource below as the guide). This genogram can be done electronically, on printer paper, or on butcher paper (butcher paper preferred) to then present to the class, focusing on one key dynamic.</p> <p><u>Resources:</u>  “How to Make a Genogram Online.” Wondershare EdrawMax, <a href="http://www.edrawmax.com/genogram/how-to-make-a-genogram">www.edrawmax.com/genogram/how-to-make-a-genogram</a>. Accessed 3 April 2021.</p>

<b>RL.9-10.6</b>	<b>Analyze a particular point of view, perspective, or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature, including works from outside the United States</b>
<p>“Kavitha and Mustafa” “Curfew”</p> <p>Note: This activity can be used with either story or in conjunction with both</p>	<p><i>Survivor Profiles</i></p> <p>Prior to students reading "Kavitha and Mustafa" and/or "Curfew," they should have some background on the India-Pakistan Partition of 1947. Before the activity, have students either read the Mohsin article or watch the YouTube video below that provides <i>some</i> context for the Partition, as it's likely that most students may not have ever heard of the Partition. After students have some familiarity with the events, students should read "Kavitha and Mustafa" and/or "Curfew," breaking down each story using the provided discussion questions. Once students have taken time to understand each story, introduce them to the Stanford Libraries' 1947 Partition Archive below, which consists of fifty-one interviews with Indian and Muslim survivors of the Partition. Students should—individually or in pairs (teacher discretion)—each focus on a different survivor's set of interviews and background and create a profile for him or her. Then, students will connect that survivor's story to that of any character in "Kavitha and Mustafa" or "Curfew."</p> <p><u>Resources:</u></p> <p>"The India-Pakistan Partition Explained." <i>YouTube</i>, uploaded by TRT World, 14 Aug. 2020, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnTYLyNUPMc">www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnTYLyNUPMc</a>.</p> <p>Mohsin, Moni. "'The Wounds Have Never Healed': Living through the Terror of the Partition." <i>The Guardian</i>, 2 Aug. 2017. <i>The Guardian</i>, <a href="http://theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/02/wounds-have-never-healed-living-through-terror-partition-india-pakistan-1947">theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/02/wounds-have-never-healed-living-through-terror-partition-india-pakistan-1947</a></p> <p>"Survivors and Their Memories: Interviews." The 1947 Partition Archive, Stanford Libraries. Stanford Libraries, <a href="http://exhibits.stanford.edu/1947-partition/browse/interviews">exhibits.stanford.edu/1947-partition/browse/interviews</a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2021.</p> <p>Note: Some students who have family from either Pakistan or India who were impacted by the Partition of 1947 may be especially affected by the violence portrayed in the stories and the linked YouTube video. Make sure to ask students beforehand what they know of the Partition to understand what their feelings and knowledge may be going into the activity and adjust accordingly.</p>

<b>RL.11-12.3</b>	<b>Analyze how characterization, plot, setting, and other elements interact and contribute to the development and complexity of a text.</b>
<p>“What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky”</p> <p>“Dog”</p> <p>“Paper Menagerie”</p>	<p><i>One Pager</i></p> <p>One Pagers allow students to convey significant aspects of a story, TED Talk, or novel visually. For the purposes of this assignment, students will visually represent the major themes, key ideas, significant quotations, and so on for one of the applicable stories (left).</p> <p>Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must fill an entire sheet of 8x11 blank white paper with images, color, and text.</li> <li>• A border which somehow represents the key themes or motif from what you have read.</li> <li>• Images with quotations woven into or around them (at least two). The images should somehow represent what you consider to be the most important symbols in the text.</li> <li>• Images and/or words that show connections between the themes and ideas in the writing and what is going on in the world today (and or how we’ve evolved (or haven’t) based on the setting of the novel)</li> </ul> <p><u>Resources:</u>  Rubric: Appendix A  Potash, Betsy. “A Simple Trick for Success with One-Pagers.” Cult of Pedagogy, 26 May 2019, <a href="http://www.cultofpedagogy.com/one-pagers">www.cultofpedagogy.com/one-pagers</a>.</p>

<b>RL.11-12.5</b>	<b>Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.</b>
"Curfew"	<p><i>Flash to the Past</i></p> <p>Prior to students reading "Curfew," they should have some background on the India-Pakistan Partition of 1947. Before the activity, have students either read the Mohsin article or watch the YouTube video below that provides <i>some</i> context for the Partition, as it's likely that most students may not have ever heard of the Partition. After students have some familiarity with the events, students should read "Curfew," making sure to take note of how Rao structures the story. "Curfew" is structured around a series of flashbacks that cut away from the present, in which the protagonist is at dinner with her husband. In pairs or small groups, have students put each flashback in order chronologically, title each, and write 2-5 words to describe the emotions experienced by the protagonist. This helps students break down what happened in the story and understand the emotional state of the main character. Once students have shared their titles, ask: "Why do these flashbacks come to her while at dinner with her husband?" Follow up with: "Why is the protagonist able to begin healing at the end of the story?"</p> <p><u>Resources:</u></p> <p>"The India-Pakistan Partition Explained." <i>YouTube</i>, uploaded by TRT World, 14 Aug. 2020, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnTYLyNUPMc">www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnTYLyNUPMc</a>.</p> <p>Mohsin, Moni. "'The Wounds Have Never Healed': Living through the Terror of the Partition." <i>The Guardian</i>, 2 Aug. 2017. <i>The Guardian</i>, <a href="http://theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/02/wounds-have-never-healed-living-through-terror-partition-india-pakistan-1947">theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/02/wounds-have-never-healed-living-through-terror-partition-india-pakistan-1947</a></p> <p>Note: This activity can be used in conjunction with "Kavitha and Mustafa" but does not need to be</p> <p>Note: Some students who have family from either Pakistan or India who were impacted by the Partition of 1947 may be especially affected by the violence portrayed in the stories and the linked YouTube video. Make sure to ask students beforehand what they know of the Partition to understand what their feelings and knowledge may be going into the activity and adjust accordingly.</p>

<b>SL.9-10.1.C</b>	<b>Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</b>
<p>“Curfew”  “Dog”  “Jubilee”  “War Stories”  “Paper Menagerie”</p>	<p><i>Literature Circle Podcast</i></p> <p>Based on student interest, personality, and group size, students should choose one of the following texts: “Curfew,” “Jubilee,” “Dog,” “War Stories,” or “Paper Menagerie.” Each of these stories have similar themes of family, identity, and rejection.</p> <p>Once students have formed their groups, read the stories independently, and informally answered the corresponding guiding questions, students will have a chance to create their own “podcast.” Using the website <a href="http://www.anchor.com">www.anchor.com</a> and either a computer with recording abilities or a cell phone, students will record their own podcast episode discussing the story. Before their discussion, each student must come up with at least five discussion questions (they may use DOK 2 and DOK 3 level question stems; see below). After students have developed their own questions, each student will choose one leadership role to take on for their group alongside participating in discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion leader: This is the group member who will primarily lead discussion by asking other group members questions.</li> <li>• Prompter: If an answer is too brief or surface-level, this group member will ask follow-up questions (“What do you mean by that?” and “How is that important to X topic?”) to prompt deeper discussion.</li> <li>• Summarizer: Once the discussion has come to a natural close, this group member</li> <li>• Note-taker: This group member will take notes on any important insights students bring to the table, which will be used to create the summary for the podcast.</li> </ul> <p>Once students have created their podcast episodes, they can edit out long pauses if needed. They will creatively title the episode and upload it to the teacher’s Anchor classroom, which will then allow the teacher and other students in the class to listen to the discussion.</p> <p><u>Resources:</u>  Anchor, <a href="http://www.anchor.com">www.anchor.com</a>.  Webb, Norman &amp; Collins, Myra. “DOK Question Stems.” <i>Depth of Knowledge — Descriptors, Examples and Question Stems for Increasing Depth of Knowledge in the Classroom</i>. Ohio Department of Education,  <a href="http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Evaluation-System/How-to-Design-and-Select-Quality-Assessments/DOK-Question-Stems.pdf.aspx">education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Evaluation-System/How-to-Design-and-Select-Quality-Assessments/DOK-Question-Stems.pdf.aspx</a>.</p>



## One Pager Rubric

	<i>Mastery (4)</i>	<i>Proficient (3)</i>	<i>Progressing (2)</i>	<i>Needs Improvement (1)</i>
<b>Quotations</b>	The two key quotations used from the text are copied word for word, written in quotation marks, and have line numbers. They are truly key quotations from the story.	Two quotations are used from the text but they have spelling errors in them or do not have quotation marks or line numbers. One of the quotations really reflects the main point of the story.	Only one quotation used, has spelling errors, and/or does not have quotation marks or page numbers. Not the best quotations to relate the essence of the story.	Only one quotation used. It is random and does not really capture the essence of the story.
<b>Illustration/Symbol</b>	Illustration/symbol was created with effort (not hurried); large enough to see; does a good job capturing the story. Explanation is well-done and thorough. Entire page is colored.	Illustration/symbol was created with “some” effort; illustrates some concept from the novel. Explanation makes sense and fits the story. Most of the page is colored.	Illustration/symbol was created with “some” effort; picture/explanation does not necessarily illustrate the essence of the novel. Some of the page is colored.	Illustration was created hastily; does not clearly illustrate the novel. Some or none of the page is colored.
<b>Theme</b>	Theme is truly well-developed and fits the novel; support texts are excellent examples of the theme.	Theme indicates some understanding of the text; support texts can clearly be related.	Theme does not really capture the main message of the story (or) support texts do not go with the theme.	Theme barely developed and/or no support texts given.
<b>Appearance</b>	The project is extremely neat and visually pleasing. Color is used well and writing is easy to read. Student took pride in creating an excellent final product.	The project is not as neat as it could be, but the information is organized. Some time/effort was spent on the project.	The project lacks neatness and looks like little effort was put into it; the information isn’t organized well on the paper	The project is sloppy and disorganized; it looks like it was done on the “bus.” (last minute!)

Adapted from Susan KoHa

# Character Mixtape

Story: \_\_\_\_\_ Character: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Mixtape: \_\_\_\_\_

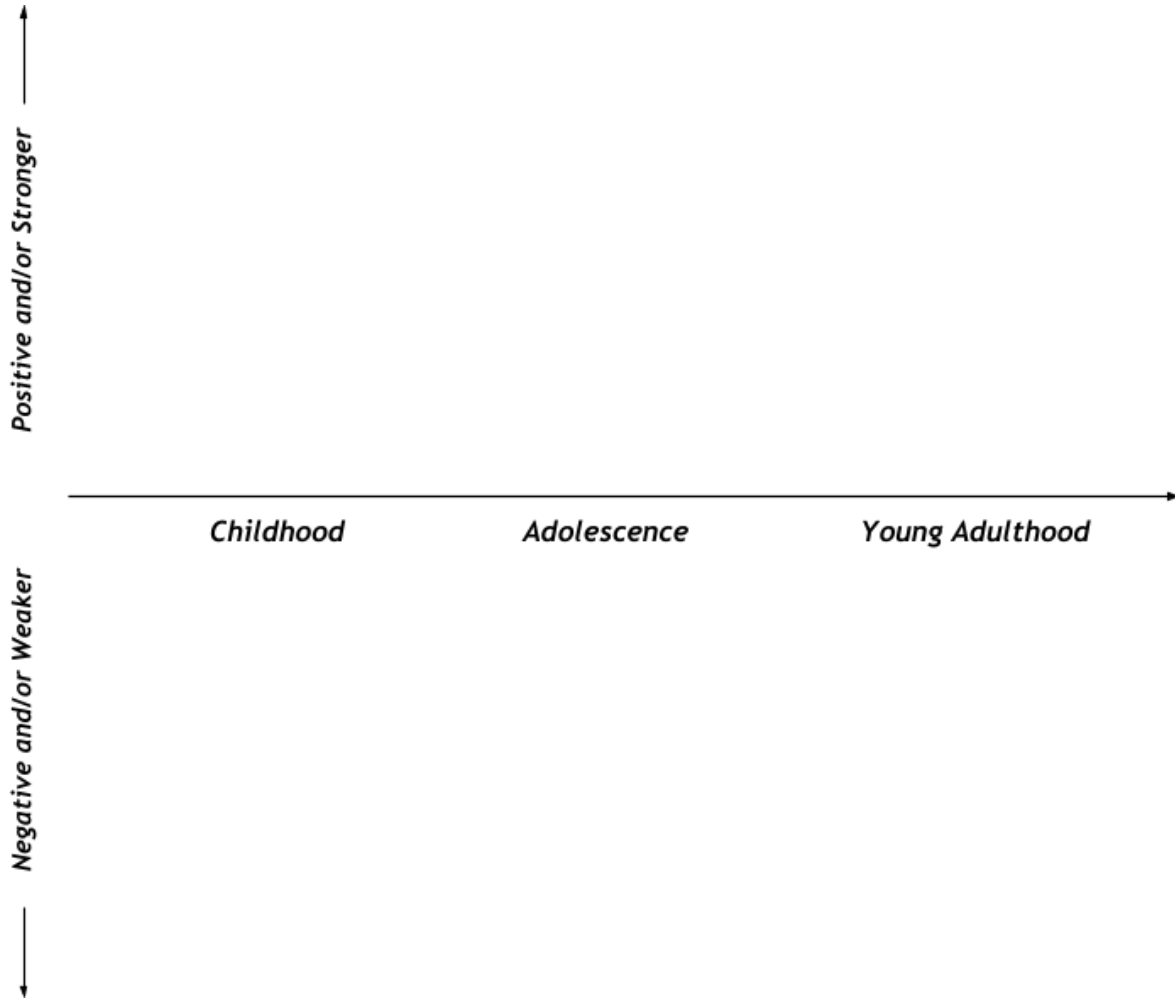
Song Title & Artist	How Does This Song Connect to the Character?

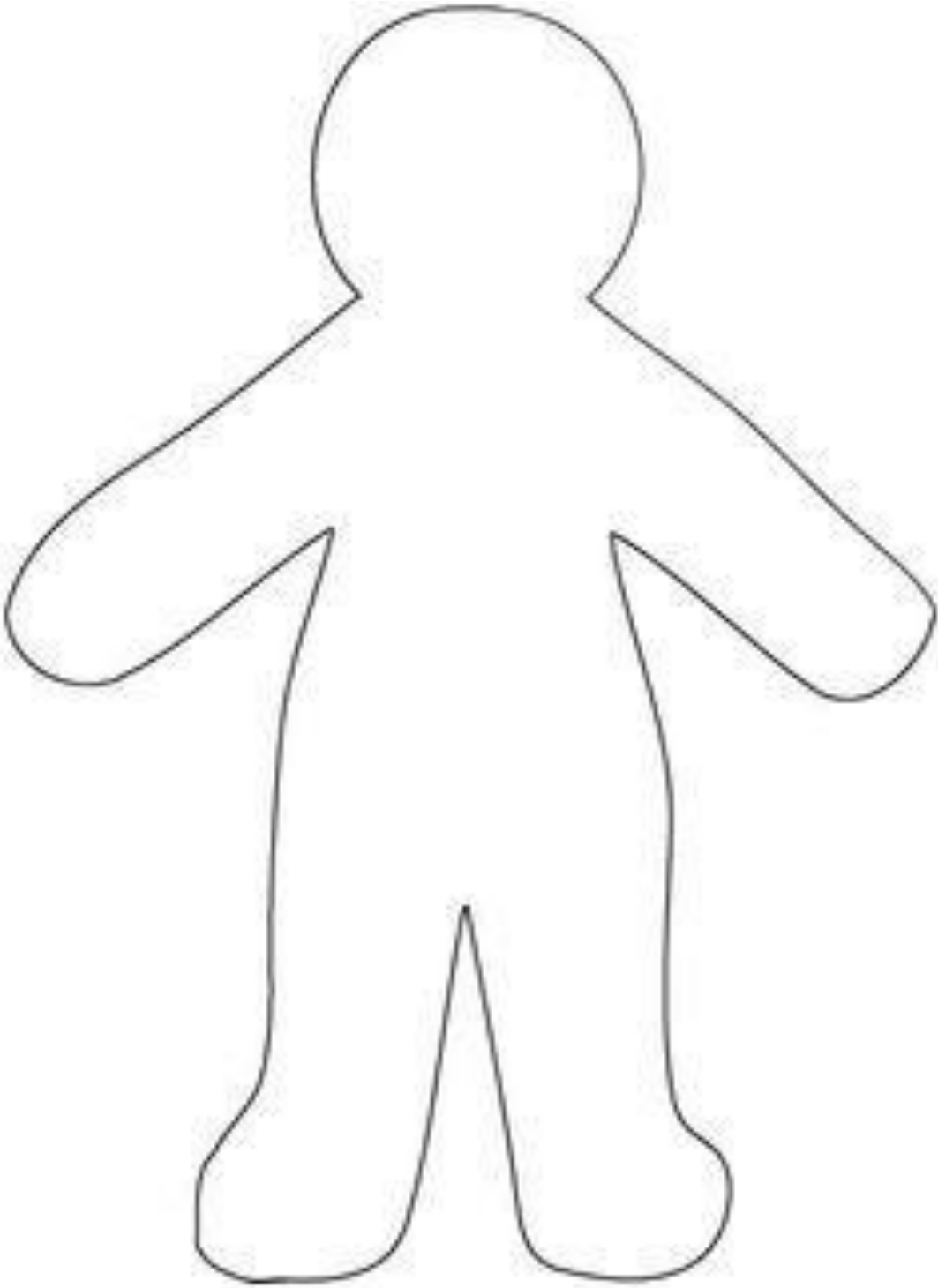
### Character Mixtape Rubric

	<i>Needs Improvement (1)</i>	<i>Progressing (2)</i>	<i>Proficient (3)</i>	<i>Mastery (4)</i>
Appropriate Song Choice	No thought was put into the song selection.	Some thought was there but it is a stretch to make the connection.	Thought was there but connection is not strong.	Thought was there and a strong connection.
Explanation of Song Choice	No explanation of song choice.	Weak explanation of song choice; 1 sentence.	Average explanation of song choice; 2 sentences.	Strong explanation of song choice; 3-4 sentences.
Utilization of the Story	No citing from the story in explanation.	Little and incorrect citation from the story.	Some citing from the story.	Citing from the book in explanation.
Grammar/Mechanics	9 or more mistakes in writing. Incomplete sentences.	6-8 mistakes in writing. Weak sentences.	3-5 mistakes in writing. Average sentences.	0-2 mistakes in writing. Strong sentences.

### RELATIONSHIP GRAPHS

- Father-Daughter
- Mother-Daughter
- Mother-Father





## Flipped Perspective Format & Rubric

### Letter Format:

- Dear \_\_\_\_\_,
- Paragraph 1: Introduction
  - Explain the misconception about the character a reader may have
- Paragraph 2: Key Event #1
  - Explain how readers may have misinterpreted the key event because it was presented through another character's eyes; explain how that event may have actually occurred.
- Paragraph 3: Key Event #2
  - Explain how readers may have misinterpreted the key event because it was presented through another character's eyes; explain how that event may have actually occurred.
- Paragraph 4: Key Event #3
  - Explain how readers may have misinterpreted the key event because it was presented through another character's eyes; explain how that event may have actually occurred.
- Paragraph 5: Conclusion
  - Provide a final defense of the character and why the reader should sympathize with him or her

	<i>Needs Improvement</i>	<i>Progressing</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Mastery</i>
Persuasiveness of Letter	Writer does not attempt to persuade reader to understand the specific character	Writer somewhat attempts to persuade reader to understand the character but is largely unsuccessful	Writer attempts to persuade reader to understand the character and is mostly successful	Writer clearly attempts to persuade reader to understand the character and is successful in providing new insights or nuance to the character.
Explanation of Events	No explanation of 3 key events	Some explanation of all three events or three events are not clearly identified	Some <i>relevant</i> explanation of all three event	Strong explanation of events from the point of view of character.
Letter Format	There is no clear letter format present.	Follows part of the format and does not use first-person language throughout	Follows most of the format or does not use first-person language throughout	Clear letter format that follows above template; uses first-person pronouns throughout
Grammar/Mechanics	9 or more mistakes in writing. Incomplete sentences	6-8 mistakes in writing. Weak sentences	3-5 mistakes in writing. Average sentences	0-2 mistakes in writing. Strong sentences

## Bibliography

- AAWW Radio: New Asian American Writers & Literature*. Asian American Writers' Workshop, 2017.
- "About." *Shobha Rao Writes*, shobharaowrites.com/about. Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.
- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The Danger of a Single Story." *YouTube*, uploaded by TED, 7 Oct. 2009, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg).
- Admussen, Nick. "How Ken Liu Translates, and Why He Writes." *Public Books*, 13 Sept. 2019, [publicbooks.org/how-ken-liu-translates-and-why-he-writes](http://publicbooks.org/how-ken-liu-translates-and-why-he-writes). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.
- Alter, Alexandra. "How Chinese Sci-Fi Conquered America." *The New York Times*, 3 Dec. 2019, [nytimes.com/2019/12/03/magazine/ken-liu-three-body-problem-chinese-science-fiction.html](http://nytimes.com/2019/12/03/magazine/ken-liu-three-body-problem-chinese-science-fiction.html). Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.
- Alrubail, Rusul. "Being Mindful of Cultural Differences." *Edutopia*, 14 Jan. 2016, [www.edutopia.org/discussion/being-mindful-cultural-differences](http://www.edutopia.org/discussion/being-mindful-cultural-differences). Accessed 28 Feb. 2021.
- Arimah, Lesley N. *What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky*. Headline Publishing Group, 2017.
- Bishop, Rudine Sims. "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors." *Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom*, 6(3), 1990.
- Bryant, Howard. "He Won a Super Bowl. Now for the Real Challenge." *The Atlantic*, 17 Dec. 2020, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/01/the-second-career-of-martellus-bennett/617256/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/01/the-second-career-of-martellus-bennett/617256/).
- Davis, Millie. "Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Doors." *National Council of Teachers of English*, 3 Feb. 2016, NCTE, [www2.ncte.org/blog/2016/02/windows-mirrors-sliding-doors/](http://www2.ncte.org/blog/2016/02/windows-mirrors-sliding-doors/).

- Eva, Amy. "Making SEL More Relevant to Teens." *Edutopia*, 5 April 2019, [www.edutopia.org/article/making-sel-more-relevant-teens](http://www.edutopia.org/article/making-sel-more-relevant-teens). Accessed 1 March 2021.
- Hong, Terry. "The Recovered & The Unrestored: Q&A with Shobha Rao." *Bloom*, 7 Dec. 2016, [bloom-site.com/2016/12/07/the-recovered-the-unrestored-qa-with-shobha-rao](http://bloom-site.com/2016/12/07/the-recovered-the-unrestored-qa-with-shobha-rao). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.
- "Ideas for Podcasting in the Classroom." Florida Center for Instructional Technology, [fcit.usf.edu/podcasts/literature\\_circles.html](http://fcit.usf.edu/podcasts/literature_circles.html).
- Jambon, Ashleigh. "iRubric: Spotify Playlist Rubric." Rcampus. <https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?sp=true&code=A2229CC&>
- "Kirstin Valdez Quade." *Community of Writers*, [communityofwriters.org/bio/kirstin-valdez-quade/](http://communityofwriters.org/bio/kirstin-valdez-quade/). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.
- Krishnamurthy, Akhila. "It Took Novelist Deepak Unnikrishnan 10 Years to Write His Award-Winning Ode to the Immigrant Worker." *Elle*, 6 April 2018, [elle.in/article/deepak-unnikrishnan-debut-novel-temporary-people](http://elle.in/article/deepak-unnikrishnan-debut-novel-temporary-people). Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.
- Liu, Ken. *The Paper Menagerie and Other Stories*. Saga Press, 2016.
- Maxwell, Rhoda J., et al. *Teaching English in Middle and Secondary Schools*. 5th ed., Pearson, 2010.
- Mohsin, Moni. "'The Wounds Have Never Healed': Living through the Terror of the Partition." *The Guardian*, 2 Aug. 2017. *The Guardian*, [theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/02/wounds-have-never-healed-living-through-terror-partition-india-pakistan-1947](http://theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/02/wounds-have-never-healed-living-through-terror-partition-india-pakistan-1947)
- "Night At The Fiestas' Spins Stories Of Faith And Family." *NPR*, 28 March 2015, [npr.org/2015/03/28/395304257/night-at-the-fiestas-spins-stories-of-faith-and-family](http://npr.org/2015/03/28/395304257/night-at-the-fiestas-spins-stories-of-faith-and-family). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021



Pineda, Dorany. "In Burbank Schools, A Book-Banning Debate over How to Teach Antiracism."

*Los Angeles Times*, 12 Nov. 2020, [www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/books/story/2020-11-12/burbank-unified-challenges-books-including-to-kill-a-mockingbird](http://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/books/story/2020-11-12/burbank-unified-challenges-books-including-to-kill-a-mockingbird)

Potash, Betsy. "A Simple Trick for Success with One-Pagers." *Cult of Pedagogy*, 26 May 2019, [www.cultofpedagogy.com/one-pagers](http://www.cultofpedagogy.com/one-pagers).

Runk, Steve. "Writer Kirstin Valdez Quade to Join Princeton's Creative Writing Faculty."

*Princeton Lewis Center for the Arts*, 23 Dec. 2015, [arts.princeton.edu/news/2015/12/writer-kirstin-valdez-quade-to-join-princetons-creative-writing-faculty](http://arts.princeton.edu/news/2015/12/writer-kirstin-valdez-quade-to-join-princetons-creative-writing-faculty). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.

Rao, Shobha. *An Unrestored Woman*. Little, Brown Book Group, 2016.

Schwalbe, Will. "Shobha Rao on Moving Between Cultures and Loving 'Little House on the Prairie.'" *Literary Hub*, 19 Nov. 2018, [lithub.com/shobha-rao-on-moving-between-cultures-and-loving-little-house-on-the-prairie/](http://lithub.com/shobha-rao-on-moving-between-cultures-and-loving-little-house-on-the-prairie/). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.

Simmons, Andrew. "Literature's Emotional Lessons." *The Atlantic*, 5 April 2016,

[www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/04/educating-teenagers-emotions-through-literature/476790/](http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/04/educating-teenagers-emotions-through-literature/476790/). Accessed 2 March 2021.

Strauss, Valerie. "List: What Common Core authors suggest high schoolers should read."

*Washington Post*, 5 December 2012, [www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2012/12/05/list-what-common-core-authors-suggest-high-schoolers-should-read/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2012/12/05/list-what-common-core-authors-suggest-high-schoolers-should-read/).

"Temporary People." *Book Reviews, Kirkus Reviews*, 15 Dec. 2016, [kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/deepak-unnikrishnan/temporary-people](http://kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/deepak-unnikrishnan/temporary-people). Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Unnikrishnan, Deepak. *Temporary People*. Restless Books, 2017.

Valdez, Kirsten Q. *Night at the Fiestas: Stories*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Wakefield, David W. & Hudley, Cynthia. "Ethnic and Racial Identity and Adolescent Well-Being." *Theory into Practice*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2007, pp. 147-154. *JSTOR*,  
[www.jstor.org/stable/40071481](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40071481)

Wang, Mary. "Ken Liu: 'We Get to Define the Stories We Want to be Told about Us.'" *Guernica*,  
28 May 2020, [guernicamag.com/miscellaneous-files-ken-liu](http://guernicamag.com/miscellaneous-files-ken-liu). Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Wimbish, Whitney C. "Deepak Unnikrishnan: We Didn't Talk About Pain." *Guernica*, 30 Oct.  
2017, [guernicamag.com/deepak-unnikrishnan-didnt-talk-pain](http://guernicamag.com/deepak-unnikrishnan-didnt-talk-pain). Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.